Practice makes improvement

A contribution of the **Normative Practice Approach** to an ethics of international development cooperation in the agro-food domain

Corné J. Rademaker

Propositions

1. Development cooperation is a domain-relative normative practice characterized by facilitation.
   (this thesis)

2. Development professionals and organizations should pay attention to and embody in virtues the plural normativity that holds for their own acting.
   (this thesis)

3. A big challenge for Reformational philosophy itself is to do justice to the normativity that holds for communication.

4. The use of randomized controlled trials within development economics is valuable both for theory formation and having practical impact.

5. Farm animals' nitrogen use efficiency should be assessed relative to the use of feedstuffs as human food.

6. Having experienced the thrills of angling in one's youth, but becoming more and more sensitive to the plight of fish, to angle or not to angle becomes an existential experience of a conflict between values.

7. Beyond cultural-historical reasons, woven hedges should be re-established in agricultural landscapes for aesthetic reasons.

Propositions belonging to the thesis, entitled

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Preface

The first ideas for this PhD thesis were developed in 2014, when my current promoter Henk Jochemsen had a meeting with the Christian development organization Woord en Daad Foundation. Woord en Daad was triggered by the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy's observation that development policy lacks an "intervention ethics." Woord en Daad wanted to fund research into such an ethics, and approached Henk Jochemsen. Very soon, however, it became clear that such a task was too big for a small project, and that long-term research by a PhD candidate was needed. Henk Jochemsen approached me, and soon afterwards I found myself working on my PhD thesis. The plan was that I would work two days a week at the Woord en Daad office in Gorinchem, and two days a week at the Philosophy Group in Wageningen. Embedded philosophy, so to say.

The embeddedness within Woord en Daad fitted nicely with the Normative Practice Approach I would employ in my thesis. One central element in this approach is that to philosophize about practices, one cannot circumvent the actual shape those practices have assumed. Working at the Woord en Daad office, and interacting with colleagues, would make me acquainted with the everyday dealings of development work.

One of the things I noticed when working in this context was that a "will to improve" is very much part of development cooperation, most basically a will to improve the life conditions of those living in poverty. Development cooperation as practice brings along, implicitly, the promise of improvement. This development and improvement is symbolized on this book's front and back cover by the European ploughman and the Asian farmer: the latter working the land with the help of a tractor, the former working the land with the help of a horse. Although much can be said about the fossil fuel dependency of current agriculture, it is undeniable that the introduction of technology has brought much relief.

At the same time, development cooperation can be too pretentious. One of the interpretations of *Landscape With the Fall of Icarus* – of which only a fragment is shown

on the front cover – is precisely that Icarus was too presumptuous and overconfident. Despite his father Daedalus' advise to keep the "middle way", or the path of virtue, he flew too close to the sun, and the bees' wax, which held his wings to his body, melted. (Pieter Bruegel the Elder painted Icarus drowning in the sea to the right of the shepherd.) Humbleness and a sound understanding of one's possibilities in a broken world are therefore called for. As Les Brown says, practice does not make perfect but does make improvement. The book's title *Practice makes improvement* thus refers to this dual aspect of improvement of life conditions and the incremental steps to be taken in this process.

1

General Introduction

1.1   The Need for a Development Cooperation Ethics

In the autumn of 2014, I moved to Ommeren, a small village in the Dutch region the Betuwe, in order to make commuting to Wageningen and Gorinchem – where I had my offices – easier.[1] Until then, I had always lived in my home town of Zoetermeer. The curious thing was that this move to a new place raised an inquisitiveness for the history of that part of the Betuwe. I never had experienced such an historical inquisitiveness for the history of my home town.

So, when a member of the church in Lienden, which I started to attend, offered to loan me a book on the history of both Lienden and Ingen – two villages next to Ommeren – in the twentieth century, I gladly accepted. It was the book *Een jongen van het dorp* [*A boy from the village*], personally annotated by the writer Van Estrik himself. What me struck in the book was the description of the period after the Second World War when The Netherlands underwent a gigantic, state-initiated land consolidation, coupled with extension campaigns. As Van Estrik (2003) writes, in the Betuwe

> agricultural engineers, driven by the post-war mentality of reconstruction, vigour, and rationalization, discovered a tremendous development area . . . It was just before the discovery of the Third World and the consolidation of land became the biggest national development aid project in The Netherlands. Scientific researchers from Wageningen [meaning the Agricultural University in that city, CJR] travelled to the rural areas and investigated the mentality of the population. Equipped with a world picture [*wereldbeeld*] of progress, mechanization, and rationalization, they reported with bewilderment what they encountered, as if it concerned just discovered Indian tribes in South-America . . . An investigation into 'the status of agriculturalists in Rumpt and Gellicum'. . . established: 'Living with a eighteenth century mentality, forgotten between our big rivers, passive, and placidly waiting whether they will be aroused one day by the spirit of the modern world.' (pp. 185–187)

What me struck was twofold. First, the suggested historical link between the rationalization of Dutch agriculture and later development efforts in "the Third World" sponsored by the Dutch government. Indeed, if one looks, for instance, into Dutch livestock development efforts in countries like Kenya, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, Egypt and Peru, it was characterized in the early phase between 1960 and 1980 by sending modern, potentially high-yielding calves and pregnant heifers, as well as the promotion of large-scale, technology- and capital-intensive dairy farms (De la Rive Box, 1992; Operations Review Unit, 1987).

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1 I follow in this thesis the style rules of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA, 2013). In contrast to APA, however, I follow British spelling as laid down in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) (Soanes & Stevenson, 2004), although I do opt for the "-ize" spelling where possible (OED allows for both "-ize" and "-ise" spelling).

The second thing that called my attention was what Van Esterik calls the world picture of progress, mechanization, and rationalization that was operative behind the project of land consolidation and the extension campaigns. Speaking about world picture, or rather worldview[2], in this context signals two things: that development is something that is *done* and that *alternative* worldviews and associated ways of acting are possible. Clearly, the worldview of the agricultural engineers differed to an important extent from the farmers they encountered in the Betuwe. This also led to critical reactions by those farmers, such as: "The more learnedness, the more mistakenness" and "They act as if they are prophets" (Wichers, 1958, p. 20). This means modernization was not some autonomous process, but something that had to be accomplished and presupposed crucial choices (see also A. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1994). Choices with respect to very practical matters, such as the role of local committees, subsidies, and buy-outs in the project of land consolidation and the extension campaigns. But implicitly also choices with respect to what normative boundaries to observe. Apparently, (most of) the agricultural engineers thought that intervening in farmers' lives on behalf of the Dutch state, and in the name of modernization, was legitimate.

Van Esterik's book struck me precisely because it shares themes with present-day development cooperation. Granted, the time of big, state-led development programmes, so sharply analysed by, for instance, Scott (1998), lies behind us. The field of development cooperation is now covered by governmental-, non-governmental-, and business organizations, working together in all sorts of consortia. However, if we may believe critical scholars like Li (2007), the underlying spirit of modernization or "will to improve" is still with us. Is this a problem? It seems to be so if it neglects normative boundaries, as I just suggested.

In fact, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy did indeed sense the need for – in our words – a development cooperation ethics in their influential report *Less pretention, more ambition* (Van Lieshout, Went, & Kremer, 2010). They point out that in practical development work, ethics usually does not extend beyond indicating the presence of accountability mechanisms, which furthermore commonly work upwards to the donors of development programmes rather than towards intended beneficiaries (see also Ebrahim, 2003; Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Kilby, 2006). Furthermore, they notice that

> aid not only has 'first order' effects, in the form of a school, a clinic or fertilizer subsidy, it also has a 'second order' effect, in the sense of a dependency relationship. Aid goes beyond the alleviation (or not) of a problem. It also constitutes a new relationship between people, creating expectations and dependencies, establishing

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2 The term *world picture* is more static and objective as it refers to what is "seen" rather than to the point from which it is seen. Worldview precisely refers to the latter, and is therewith more dynamic and subjective. Given the context within which Van Esterik uses the term – the at that moment yet unfinished project of rationalization –, he has more the latter than the former in mind, so the term worldview is more appropriate.

> habits and teaching people how to act, whether they want it or not. . . . Although attention is paid to a number of negative effects of aid, such as the possible environmental effects of a dam, or the disruption caused by a road being built through an area which is home to 'indigenous' people, there is no focus on how to take account of how aid changes the world view [*sic*] of the people involved. (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, pp. 133–134)

With this, the council explicitly goes beyond focusing on the unintended and negative material effects of development programmes, and points to the need for accounting for, what we can call, the "existential effects" of development cooperation. Yet, it could be added that development cooperation has not only existential effects on intended beneficiaries, but also on development professionals themselves (Quarles van Ufford, Giri, & Mosse, 2003). In fascinating ethnographic work, Mosse (2011) shows that the dominant conception of development professionals as neutral experts leads to skepticism and an escape into irony, self-criticism, spoof, and humour, because as situated professionals they *have* to deal with relations, politics, and commitments. The starting-point of this thesis is that these negative existential effects on development professionals can be interpreted as the result of a performance of development cooperation that does not live up to its inherent meaning and destination.

      In this thesis I therefore want to try to articulate the inherent meaning of development cooperation. Accordingly, the main research question is: *how should an encompassing development cooperation ethics look like?* I try to answer that question by investigating the normative structure of development cooperation as practice. I do so by linking up with the Normative Practice Approach (NPA) (for a recent introduction, see M. J. De Vries & Jochemsen, 2019). The NPA was developed by Reformational philosophers and ethicists (Jochemsen, 2006b; and the authors mentioned in his footnote 2) based on work of MacIntyre (1985), especially his concept of social practice, and Dooyeweerd (1969a), especially his theories concerning modal aspects, entities, and ground motives. The NPA is meant to "provide a conceptual and normative framework that enables professionals to disentangle and remedy the tensions and ambivalences within their professional practices" (Glas, 2019c, p. 1). Furthermore, it is "normative, or norm-responsive, because it defines the norms and principles that hold for professional practices, and because it sketches how these norms and principles cohere and interact" (Glas, 2019c, p. 7; de-emphasized).

      In fact, in the early phase of the NPA, it was even called the Normative Reflective Practitioner (NRP) model, which more clearly conveyed the intention to get professional practitioners *themselves* to critically reflect on their *own* acting. Of course, this will not suffice without actually acting in line with certain normative principles. For the latter, an embodiment of these normative principles into virtues is indispensable. Both of these elements are integral to the NPA and we will elaborate

them for development cooperation, because we think this is precisely what is needed in development cooperation.

1.2   The Role of Faith and Religion for a Development Cooperation Ethics

In 2012, I visited the poor Karamoja region in northern Uganda together with a friend. We were tasked by a Dutch group of Christian entrepreneurs to investigate what type of agribusiness they could best invest in. Best not in the limited sense of maximizing profit for their own pockets, but best in the sense of being both economically viable and good for local development through contributing to food security and employment generation.

I think we recommended laying hen and pig farming. But that is not that important. What is important in the present context is the nature of this group of entrepreneurs. It was what is usually called a group of *social impact investors*. They were not busy trying to grab as much money as they could. The poverty-stricken area of Karamoja just did not offer bright business futures. They were rather societally engaged and wanted to harness their capital to contribute to the livelihoods of others. Behind this willingness to attend to others was a profound awareness that also the far neighbour is a neighbour who appeals to one's love. We may call this the *caritas* motive, from which the English word *charity* is derived. Throughout the ages, Christians and Christian churches, among others, have been inspired by this *caritas* to attend to the poor, the hungry, and the sick (Buijs, 2004, 2012), and it remains an important motive today (Van Lieshout et al., 2010).

Here we touch on the role of faith and religion in relation to development cooperation. Ter Haar and Ellis (2006) distinguish four different manifestations of religion that are relevant to development cooperation: *religious experiences* (e.g., experiences of inner peace), *religious ideas* (what people actually believe), *religious practices* (habits and rituals), and *religious organizations* (the organizational shaping and control of the transfer of religious idea's, experiences and practices). The motivation of the group of Christian entrepreneurs to engage with social impact investing can be classified as a combination of a religious experience and a religious practice: it concerns a being appealed to by (the misery of) the other, and a subsequent "caring about", out of a spirituality of thankfulness. Likewise, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy notices that "the endeavour to help your fellow man elsewhere is a leitmotiv for a great deal of development aid" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, pp. 27–28).

In this thesis I will indeed argue that this "motivational base" is highly relevant for a development cooperation ethics, especially in relation to the required virtues. Yet, on the whole I particularly try to come to grips with what Ter Haar and Ellis call religious

ideas and its relevance for a development cooperation ethics. This preoccupation with the role of faith and religion in development cooperation is called for because of the omnipresent influence of religion and religious practices – including animism – in many development contexts (Ellis & Ter Haar, 2007; Haverkort, Van 't Hooft, & Hiemstra, 2003; Kimmerle, 2006; Ter Haar & Ellis, 2006, 2009), as well as the important role of so-called faith-based organizations within international development cooperation (Clarke, 2006, 2007; McDuie-Ra & Rees, 2010; Tomalin, 2012). It is, however, also motivated by my own religious background, and the type of philosophy, rooted in the Christian tradition, which I pursue.

1.3   Changing Context of Development Cooperation

Coming back to our group of Christian entrepreneurs, we must note that they did not want to relieve in a direct way the needs of the poor and hungry in the Karamoja region, through providing food aid, for instance. Neither did they just want to give money or goods like tractors or improved seeds to local farmers. They rather took a *business approach*. They wanted to invest, rather than donate, their money. Ultimately, their money had to render a financial interest, even though they were well aware that this could take much longer and would be lower than if they had invested in a more lucrative industry elsewhere. They thought that merely donating money or goods would ultimately not be helpful at all, because in that case people would not build up their capacity to earn an income and would remain dependent on the aid provided. It would just not be sustainable. Maybe they even thought that it would be disrespectful of poor and hungry people to bring them into such a condition of aid dependency.

Especially since around 2010, the business approach and the active involvement of business actors gradually has become in vogue in the field of development cooperation (Kazimierczuk, 2015). I also experienced this later when I started working for the Woord en Daad Foundation, a Christian non-governmental development organization. In that context I frequently heard certain colleagues using the term "geefgeld" ("money-to-donate") in a pejorative way, opposed to the real thing: investment money (from entrepreneurs collaborating with Woord en Daad).

What these experiences suggest, is that the role of enterprises and entrepreneurs has become much more prominent alongside development cooperation than fifty or even twenty years ago. Indeed, in 2016 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) even published a report with the subtitle *The Sustainable Development Goals as Business Opportunities*. The message of the report was that "investing in sustainable development is smart investment" (OECD, 2016, p. 17) and the OECD sought ways to foster collaboration between "the private sector" and traditional development cooperation. They spoke, for instance, about "development strategies

around the complementary and mutually reinforcing qualities of private investment and development co-operation" (OECD, 2016, p. 18). The Karamoja-example is one, small-scale, instance of such private investment.

I emphasize this increasingly prominent role of the private sector within and around development cooperation, because it comes with its own ethical challenges. Most obviously, we can think here about "economic loss, environmental degradation, poor labour conditions, and in the most serious of cases, injury and loss of human life" due to irresponsible business practices (OECD, 2016, p. 119). However, on a more institutional level, questions can also be raised with respect to who should be responsible for what in the complex world of development cooperation and associated practices. That is, what are their respective structural tasks and what normative boundaries should be observed by the different types of actors involved? Indeed, in line with the research question, my proposal for a development cooperation ethics focuses on these structural tasks and normative boundaries.

1.4   Thesis Outline

Professional development cooperation is a broad field: it involves the domains of basic education, health care, infrastructure, agriculture, etc. I have therefore chosen to focus on the agro-food domain, which comprises agricultural production in a broad sense as well as supporting industries such as food processors. Chang (2012) gives an insightful overview of the different ways governments, but we would like to add non-governmental- and business organizations, try to influence and shape the agro-food domain (see Table 1.1). For instance, the Dutch domestic project in the Betuwe concerning land consolidation was a form of *land policy*, while the extension campaign was an example of *knowledge policy*; these are two of the ways in which the development of the agro-food domain can be influenced. More examples can be found in Table 1.1.

In this thesis I do not zoom in on specific policies or measures, although I do touch on agricultural research and extension (as forms of knowledge policy). Given that development cooperation can involve all these kinds of policies and measures, the aim of this thesis is rather to explore the normative structure of the development cooperation practice as such.

Table 1.1. Overview of types of possible policies and measures to foster agricultural development.

Side of production process	Type of policy/measures	Examples
Input	Land policy	Land tenure reform, land quality improvement
	Knowledge policy	Support to research, extension, education, and information
	Credit policy	Support to specialized banks, agricultural credit cooperatives
	Physical inputs policy	Provision of irrigation, transport, electricity, fertilizers, seeds, farm machinery
Output	Measures to increase farm income stability	Price stabilization measures, insurances, trade protection
	Measures to improve agricultural marketing and processing	"Modernizing" marketing channels, product quality management, fostering cooperative and group processing

Note. Based on Chang (2012).

Accordingly, Chapter 2 has a rather programmatic character as it tries to answer the question *whether development cooperation can be conceptualized as a normative practice*. It explores the actual context of development cooperation, that is, what specific actors are involved, addresses the potential of a conception of development cooperation as a practice for the desired development cooperation ethics, and evaluates the proposal for a development cooperation ethics by the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy (Van Lieshout et al., 2010). I draw attention to the modernist worldview that informs the council's conception of societal, and in its vein agricultural, development. Alternative development paths for agriculture and the agro-food domain are left unexplored in the report. Elaborating on a suggestion of the council, I therefore emphasize the practical character of both farming and development cooperation.

Chapter 3 has an empirical intent as it deals with the question *in how far a Cartesian worldview is operative in the conceptualization and evaluation of dairy development programmes in Kenya*. It describes the results of an extensive document analysis of ten evaluations of eight dairy development programmes in Kenya, investigating whether those evaluations and evaluated programmes demonstrate characteristics of a modernist or Cartesian worldview.

Chapter 4 focuses on the question *what role there is to play for faith commitments and worldviews in agricultural research and development cooperation*. I go into dialogue with Jens Andersson and Ken Giller and focus specifically on the case of Farming God's Way, probably the most influential and visible agricultural development approach from a Christian perspective in southern Africa.

Whereas the Chapters 2 to 4 are mostly of an exploring and analytical character – although making suggestions with respect to a development cooperation ethics – the

Chapters 5 and 6 offer full-blown normative conceptions of, respectively, livestock farming and development cooperation. In Chapter 5 I give a normative analysis of a practice from the agro-food domain that has often been pivotal in development cooperation: livestock farming. The question addressed in this chapter is: *what normativity holds for the practice of livestock farming?* In this chapter I link up with the dominant discourse around sustainability, and show the value of understanding sustainable livestock farming first from the perspective of livestock farming as a normative practice. That is, before formulating – as policy makers, scientists, citizens, or farmers – the desirable goals livestock farming should contribute to, I suggest an analysis of the structural identity of livestock farming. Sustainable livestock farming – understood as livestock farming that is able to continue in time – is farming that takes into account the normativity holding for the livestock farming practice. I work out this normativity in more detail in this chapter.

Chapter 6, finally, deals with the question *what normativity holds for the practice of development cooperation in the agro-food domain.* It offers a proposal for a development cooperation ethics, the core of which consists in a set of normative principles, although I also draw attention to the ethos and virtues required by practitioners and organizations, as well as the role of the organizational context.

Importantly, the proposed development cooperation ethics offers orientation for development professionals within their everyday practice, which is often full of tensions and ambivalences. My hope is that in this way development cooperation practice really realizes its inherent promise of improvement of life-conditions.

2

Beyond Modernization: Development Cooperation as Normative Practice

Co-author:
Henk Jochemsen

2.1   Introduction

In 2010, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy published an influential report titled *Less pretention, more ambition* (Van Lieshout et al., 2010). The report was well received in Dutch policy circles and praised for its nuanced analysis of Dutch development policy. Specifically, one of the conclusions of the report was that policy on international development cooperation lacks an explicit and adequate "intervention ethics." With this, the council meant that "there has not been enough reflection on when and when not to intervene, in light of what aid interventions actually do with aid recipients" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 133). One of the examples the council gave was aid dependency – the phenomenon that the free giving of aid makes people dependent on this aid and stifles personal and institutional initiatives. Other ethical issues in this respect are the use of provided resources by intended beneficiaries for their own strategic and potentially immoral or unjust ends,[3] and the observation that accountability is demonstrated towards donors but, for the most part, not towards the intended beneficiaries. A more recent concern is the involvement of businesses in development cooperation that receive money from donor governments to initiate business activities in developing countries. The latter comes with a fear of inappropriate use of tax money for what in the end is ordinary business profit (see, e.g., the Dutch TV documentary *Hollandse Handel*, broadcasted by Zembla in spring 2016).

In order to contribute to the desired intervention ethics, in this paper we want to provide a careful reading and analysis of the Dutch Scientific Council's report, with a specific focus on what it says about agricultural development. In our view, the outspoken modernist worldview of the council hinders the fruitful development of such an intervention ethics. Instead, we will point to another strand in their thinking, namely concerning practical knowledge, which provides for a better starting point to develop an intervention ethics.

In the second part of the paper we will elaborate this in an analysis of agricultural development cooperation as *normative practice*. With this attention to practice, we build on the work of MacIntyre (1985) and earlier work of the authors (Jochemsen, 2006b, 2015; Rademaker, Glas, & Jochemsen, 2017; Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019). At least one of the potential benefits of the focus on normative practices is that the appearance of theoretical (ethical) reflection as alien and unhelpful to the actual practitioners is prevented, because the reflection starts *from* practice. This in contrast to the "simple" application – tempting from a policy perspective – of mainstream ethical approaches, such as consequentialism and deontology.

Before we turn to a critical analysis of the council's report and the subsequent analysis of agricultural development cooperation as normative practice, we first will provide some background information and try to map the most important institutional actors – and their interrelationships – involved with agricultural development cooperation.

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3 This is especially well known from emergency relief (e.g., Hilhorst & Jansen, 2010), but also extends to structural development cooperation (e.g., Wenar, 2006).

2.2 Mapping Development Cooperation

Contemporary development cooperation is complex, because a multitude of actors from different domains and at different organizational levels are involved. Figure 2.1 gives a good impression of the main institutional actors involved, even though the overview simplifies. At the bottom of Figure 2.1 we find what are usually called the *intended beneficiaries* – the ones for whom the whole development conglomerate is said to be working. Focusing on agricultural development, the intended beneficiaries consist of a heterogeneous mix of all different kinds of farmers who may be affiliated with and represented in cooperatives, community-based organizations (CBOs), self-help groups (SHGs), and producer organizations (POs) – farmer groups, for short. This is what is often called the *grassroots level*.
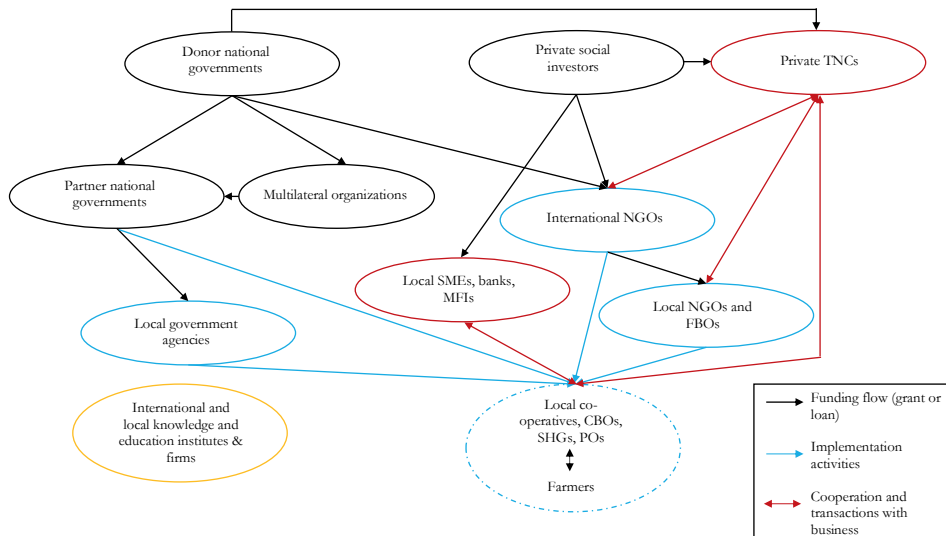
Figure 2.1 Simplified overview of main (institutional) actors involved with agricultural development cooperation and the main interactions among them. Black ovals represent actors primarily involved with financial background support (donor level), although also expertise and networks (for instance, embassies) or legitimacy (in the case of the relationship between national governments and local government agencies) can be part of the support. Solid blue ovals represent actors at the intermediate level that work directly with the intended beneficiaries, represented with the blue dotted oval. The red ovals represent private companies, which are sometimes transnational. The orange oval represents international and local knowledge organizations that typically have a supportive role in the whole development cooperation conglomerate. Note that the many interactions with knowledge institutes and firms, that is, consultants, are not depicted for the sake of clarity.

At an intermediary level we find local government agencies, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and faith-based organizations (FBOs).[4] Those organizations work directly with the intended beneficiaries. Their activities may consist, for instance, in the provision of training in (new) agricultural techniques, business management, and leadership. As a matter of fact, international NGOs do not always work directly with intended beneficiaries. Many of them work via local NGOs and/or FBOs. Furthermore, some intermediary organizations prefer to work with individual farmers, whereas others work especially via farmer groups.

At the intermediary level we also see a mixture of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), commercial banks, and micro-finance institutions (MFIs). SMEs provide, for instance, specific inputs or services for the agricultural process, while commercial banks and MFIs are often facilitated by international NGOs and private social investors to develop financial products for the agricultural sector. The relationship between these banks and MFIs and farmers and farmer groups are typically of a commercial character.

At the top of Figure 2.1 we can discern a heterogeneous layer of organizations that do not directly work with the intended beneficiaries themselves, but provide (financial) resources for intermediary organizations to do so. These organizations can roughly be subdivided in public and private organizations. Public organizations include what in common parlance are called donor governments and partner governments, and multilateral organizations. The latter include United Nations organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and multilateral development banks and financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These public organizations materially support intermediary organizations, but usually also want national public policy to implement their recommendations for the agricultural sector.

Private social investors invest money with an explicitly social and environmental focus – that is, profit maximization is not the goal. Important players in terms of financial capacity are the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and Yara Foundation.[5] Many of these private social investors are philanthropic "spin-offs" of big transnational companies (TNCs). For instance, Yara International is the world leading supplier of mineral fertilizers.

Finally, contemporary development cooperation is no longer thinkable without the involvement of private TNCs. Even though donor governments have aimed at private-sector development in partner countries since the Second World War (as Kazimierczuk,

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4 With the term *FBOs* we refer to organizations that explicitly position themselves as such. For convenience sake we also include local churches, mosques, etc., in the term FBOs.
5 Strictly speaking, these organizations should be institutionally considered as international NGOs. We depicted them as a separate category because usually international NGOs have a firmer embedment at the grassroots level and are involved with a range of other activities next to funding (e.g., training of local NGO staff).

2015, shows for Dutch development policy), the difference between present and previous development cooperation is the involvement of TNCs under the banner of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Dolan & Rajak, 2011; Mosse, 2013). The TNCs deliver products to, or buy products from local farmers and farmer groups, though from a profit maximization and/or risk assessment perspective this would not be the most profitable or safe action. Yet, the partnering of TNCs with donors and NGOs reduces the investment risks for the TNCs and also contributes to their corporate social responsibility image.[6]

2.3   Call for an Intervention Ethics

Having sketched the rough contours of the development cooperation landscape, we are now in the position to engage with the earlier mentioned Dutch Scientific Council's report. We will start with linking up with criticisms voiced by several development practitioners and theorists.

2.3.1   State-Centrism

Shortly after the appearance of *Less pretention, more ambition* in 2010, several development theorists and practitioners voiced their unease with the *state-centrism* in the report (De la Rive Box, 2010; Dietz, 2010a, 2010b; Jochemsen, 2010; Lock, 2011), which finds expression in the preoccupation with and far-going proposals to improve bilateral rather than multilateral and civilateral forms of development cooperation.[7]

In a sense, the report's state-centrism threatens to repeat the technocratic development aid of the 1960s. As De la Rive Box (2010) notes, "whereas the report pays considerable attention to (the failures of) state-funded NGOs, it gives much less attention to the successes of civil society movements (which may or may not have been supported by the former)" (para. 6). Also,

> *local governance* issues are treated less elaborately than national governance institutions. Yet for development to take hold, it is at the local level that changes have to take place. By stressing the need to strengthen Dutch aid offices at the national level, one may well wonder if the classical mistakes in bilateral aid will

6 For instance, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs co-funds Heineken's Community Revenue Enhancement through Agricultural Technology Extension (CREATE) program in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda. In Ethiopia, the international NGOs ICCO and EUCORD and the local NGO HUNDEE also participate in this programme. EUCORD provides training to farmers and assures farmers' access to seeds, while HUNDEE helps farmers to organize themselves into cooperatives. Heineken, finally, buys the barley grown by the farmers.

7 Bilateral partnerships consist of a direct relationship between a donor and a recipient national government (top-left of Figure 2.1). In contrast, in multilateral partnerships several donor countries channel money to partner national governments via multilateral organizations (top-left of Figure 2.1), while in civilateral development donor governments channel money mainly to international and local NGOs (middle of Figure 2.1).

not be made again. (De la Rive Box, 2010, para. 6)

The technocratic, top-down approach associated with bilateral (and multilateral) macro-partnerships came under serious critique starting in the 1970s, for technical and ethical reasons. The technical reason was – and still is – that participation of intended beneficiaries in development programmes makes for more informed and more responsive development interventions. The ethical reason was that the technocratic approach treated intended beneficiaries as to-be-developed objects rather than knowledgeable, capable, and active subjects in their own right (Chambers, Pacey, & Thrupp, 1989; Chambers, 1994; Pretty, 1995).

Because of those developments, participatory development – also called bottom-up, community-driven and democratic development or empowerment – became the catch-word in the 1980s, with an associated increasing role for NGOs and CBOs in development cooperation. Donor governments increasingly channeled their development funding to NGOs and CBOs because of the latter's (presumed) embedment at local levels (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). Important in participatory development is that the group(s) affected by an activity are involved in the "process of discussion, information gathering, conflict, and eventual decision-making, implementation, and evaluation" (Alkire, 2002, p. 129). As a consequence, in agricultural development local farmer groups have methodologically been put central stage. In development cooperation circles, this has taken the forms of microfinance *Self-Help Group* approaches (e.g., Weingärtner, Pichon, & Simonet, 2017) and *Farmer Field Schools* for joint learning approaches (e.g., FAO, 2016), while in formal agricultural research and extension circles *Farmer First* approaches appeared (Chambers et al., 1989; Scoones & Thompson, 1994, 2009).

Even though those approaches are still used by civil society actors, they do not figure in the professionalized aid that the council envisages.[8] Admittedly, the council still sees value in providing budget support to civil society actors and their initiatives, but the suggestion is that *professional* aid is "programme aid" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 220ff.). In this regard they note that

in the past, the emphasis was often on transferring specific insights and skills to concrete individuals, ranging from the best way to build a chicken run so that the birds remained healthy to designing forms for the clerk of a court. That form of support is progressively making way for knowledge at system level, varying from the way water management is organized to improving the quality of teachers, and

8 The council consistently speaks about "professional aid" and "development aid" rather than "development cooperation." They do this "because the term development cooperation implies an equality that not only does not exist but also conceals the reality of the situation" (Van Lieshout, Went, & Kremer, 2010, p. 24). In what follows, we will use *professional aid* and *development aid* when discussing the view of the council, but in the rest of the paper we will use the term (*professional*) *development cooperation*. Our reason for this is that *aid* implies too much a one-way relationship where there is no need for the helping party to change its own (economic and political) behaviour.

consists mainly of supporting a country in its efforts to upgrade these activities to a higher level. (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 221)

In brief, programme aid results from a donor's management of "a process of change in a way that local parties, hampered by all kinds of traditions and conflicts of interest, are unable to do. This applies particularly where multiple stakeholders have to be brought together" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 221). It is unclear whether the council includes donors other than public government donors here. Anyway, professional aid is seen to be a case of managing based on knowledge, itself unhampered by tradition(s) and vested interests. Yet, an extensive critical literature in development studies have debunked claims to such a type of knowledge (Ferguson, 1990; Li, 2007; N. Long, 1997, 2004; N. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1989; Mosse, 2005; Scott, 1998). Central in these critiques is that (1) development interventions only get shape and form through the involvement of actual people with their different ways of working and knowing, and (2) governmental authorities engaged with development have their own vested interests. We want to elaborate on these two issues subsequently in sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4, but first, in section 2.3.2, we will take a closer look at the council's understanding of *development*, with particular reference to *agricultural development*.

2.3.2 Tradition and Modernization

The council's view on professional aid as being "unhampered by tradition" is rooted in how they interpret (societal) *development*. In chapter 3 of the report the council deals with the question of how development should be understood. They follow what, in their view, is "a common thread in public debates and academic literature," namely, an interpretation of development as a

> deliberate acceleration of modernization, interpreted as the synchronized fourfold transition of economy, government, political system, and society. Modernization is envisaged as what has been achieved in the West since the nineteenth century: the creation of a well-developed and productive economic system embedded in international trade relations, a government apparatus that is able to provide or help provide essential services in the fields of education, healthcare, housing, and security, a political system that ensures collective decision-making processes resulting in citizens feeling connected to the outcome and each other, and a society which is sufficiently open and offers space for various individual and collective ambitions. (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 49)

This idea of development as deliberately accelerated modernization – where modernization is conceived of as having been achieved in the West since the nineteenth century – is also central to what the council says specifically about *agricultural* development. In this

context, they mention that a productive agricultural sector is a precondition for further societal development. This is what the First Green Revolution brought in Europe through mechanization, the use of artificial fertilizer, and new crop varieties, according to the council. This is also what the Second Green Revolution brought in Asia through the introduction of a package of new crop varieties, artificial fertilizer, irrigation methods, and pesticides in the 1960s to 1980s. Yet, as the council notes, a Green Revolution did not take place on the African continent.[9] The reason why the Green Revolution did not happen in Africa is sought in the much more diverse physical and institutional conditions, compared to Asia. Africa by and large is said to lack institutions providing fertilizer, large-scale organized irrigation, and a well-structured system of agricultural extension.

For the council, the upshot of this agricultural development narrative is that

large parts of Sub-Saharan Africa are therefore still dominated by self-sufficient farmers with only limited access to markets, who still farm in very much the same way as their fathers and forefathers did for centuries. . . . With soil frequently depleted, rains that increasingly fail to materialize, disease and very limited access to capital, knowledge and technology, failed harvests are the order of the day. Although the cities of Africa now have a guaranteed food supply through the world market, 200 million African farmers still lack food security. (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, pp. 56–57)

So, the image that arises of the farmer in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is opposite to that of the modernized farmer as we know it in the West. The status of farming in SSA is characterized by the council as *traditional* ("the same way as their fathers and forefathers did for centuries") rather than *modern*. To be a modern farmer is to make use of and have unrestrained access to markets, capital, knowledge, and technology. Of course, for modernity to be brought into this area, the solution is clear: farmers in SSA have to be connected to markets and given access to capital, knowledge, and technology. The "rediscovered state" is to play an important role in facilitating this economic process (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 58ff.).

2.3.3 Practicing Modernity

With their interpretation of development as deliberately accelerated modernization, the council comes close to the now much criticized *modernization theory* of the 1960s and 1970s. Central in this theory is that economies develop in a linear, necessary way and through a succession of stages, starting from the traditional society and moving

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9 The council speaks here about the African continent in general, but it is probably safer to speak of sub-Saharan Africa specifically. Later on they suddenly switch – without indicating the switch – to the situation of sub-Saharan Africa specifically.

progressively to modern – technologically and institutionally more complex – ones. The process is set in motion and continued through increasing involvement in commodity markets and interventions involving transfer of technology, knowledge, resources, and organizational forms from the more developed world or sector of a country to the less developed parts (N. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1988, 1994). Admittedly, the council critically discusses the failure of modernization theory to define the "stages" and as such seems to take some distance from it (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 120ff.). Also, in the report the council emphasizes time and again that development is not linear and that countries can and should follow their own, contextualized development paths ("multiple modernities"), albeit within the contours of the "synchronized fourfold transition of economy, government, political system, and society." Furthermore, at one – but an exceptional – place, the council says that *knowledge transfer* has become an obsolete notion, because "innovation arises from learning by seeking local applications of methods developed elsewhere and feeding back these lessons" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 223). Still, the central tenet of the report remains that development is a break with tradition and entrance into the modern world, where tradition is only connected to the local intervened-upon (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 221; see also Jochemsen, 2010). As such, it fits what A. Long and Van der Ploeg call – in relation to agricultural development – the "practice of modernization":

> [This] practice of modernization was (and still is) shaped by sets of external interventions, mostly centralized in state-agencies aiming to introduce new organizational models for farming, new interlinkages between farming, markets and market-agencies, new technological innovations meant to replace existing techniques and knowledge, new forms of socialization and techno-economic training, and, last but not least, new models for the definition of roles and identities for farmers and their wives. (A. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1994, p. 2)

Yet, the question is whether this practice of modernization does not itself feed on a particular tradition. The anthropologist Stirrat argues that it does. In this regard he speaks of a "culture of modernity," by which he means "a formal commitment to a particular view of reality and a faith in 'rationality'" (Stirrat, 2000, p. 35). Central in this culture of modernity is the opposition of rational objectivity – which is what the modernizers have – to irrational, non-objective culture – what most other people have. That is, modernizers present themselves as *acultural*. In turn, the assumed irrationality to be found with other people takes different forms: "it may be economic – not following the logic of market principles; it can be technical – following what appear to be irrational agricultural practices or whatever; it may be social – the seclusion of women or their exclusion from education" (Stirrat, 2000, p. 38). In fact, Stirrat argues, even the participatory turn in development cooperation, with its imperative to build on

"local knowledge" and "empower" local people (Stirrat, 2000, pp. 39–40), is embedded in this Enlightenment tradition of thinking. Local knowledge is only recognized by the experts when it can be understood in terms of its instrumental benefits. Knowledge which does not have a clear instrumental rationale is consigned to the dustbin of culture or superstition. As such, instrumental rationality is firmly embedded in the culture of modernity.

Other scholars have made a similar point by looking at the professional identities of actors at the level of policy practices and the lifeworlds of actors in implementation or intervention practices. Mosse, for instance, focuses on the situatedness of specifically development professionals at the level of policy practices. He argues that development professionals – by which he means international staff in multilateral institutions, consultants, fieldworkers, NGO staff, anthropologists – have, on the one hand, to secure their place in particular institutional and social contexts. This includes maintaining a diverse array of relationships, negotiation of their position within institutions or consultancy teams, dealing with delivery targets and spending budgets, etc. Yet, on the other hand, conceiving of themselves as neutral experts and professionals requires them "to make themselves bearers of 'travelling rationalities,' transferable knowledge and skills, context-free ideas with universal applicability," which denies context, the relational, and even their own agency (Mosse, 2011, p. 16). What is more, they have to shore up their motivations and commitments in moral-ethical or religious frameworks that are to remain private. As such, the professional identity of development professionals is in a continual crisis and struggle: on the one hand conceiving of themselves as neutral experts, on the other hand having to deal with relations, politics, and commitments.

This crisis in professional identity has been even further intensified with the participatory turn in development, for participatory programmes require professionals to "conceal their own expertise and agency (and their practical role in programme delivery) in order to preserve an authorised view of themselves as facilitators of community action or local knowledge" (Mosse, 2011, p. 17).[10] As Mosse notes, professionals are often intensely aware of this dilemma in their everyday practice, which breeds skepticism and an escape into irony, self-criticism, spoof, and humour.

While Mosse concentrates on development professionals and their professional identity in the development of policy, Norman Long has focused on the lifeworlds at the implementation or intervention level. His point is that policy is never simply implemented, but that this can only happen via a multiplicity of actors with their different lifeworlds or everyday understanding of the world and their practice. For instance, opinions on agricultural development expressed by technical experts, extension workers, and farmers seldom completely coincide. This is partly due to "differences laid down by differential patterns of socialisation and professionalisation" (N. Long, 2004,

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10 We forego Mosse's distinction between *professional altruists* and *professional technocrats*, precisely because his focus is on the (alleged) *formal* character of the knowledge involved.

p. 29), but also due to experience, or what Long calls "historical imprint." This historical imprint can be found with the intervened and contains the accumulated experiential knowledge of earlier interventions of various sorts. However, something similar holds for those who are intervening, such as governments or NGO development agencies or individual development professionals. Thus, the historical imprint "is both collective, in the sense that it [is] shared as a legacy by a particular group of people, and individual, in that the biographies of particular actors contain within them specific 'intervention' experiences" (N. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1989, p. 230). Importantly, implementation or intervention then involves the confrontation or interpenetration of these different lifeworlds and experiences. Agricultural or rural development is not only a matter of development professionals, but comes about in the encounter among many social actors involved – "local farmers, traders, government officials and front-line workers, transnational company managers, politicians, agricultural scientists and others" (N. Long, 1997, p. 2).

The point is that tradition is not absent in professional development cooperation. The crisis in professional identity identified by Mosse illustrates the impossibility to conceive of the acting of development professionals as the simple application of scientific knowledge to a concrete case. Rather, as situated people they have to make decisions and choices. Not being able to take recourse to a particular tradition on how to act and justify those acts appears here as a crisis in professional identity. Furthermore, Long makes clear that the acting of actors involved with (agricultural) development is significantly shaped by their everyday lifeworld. As Leeuwis and Van den Ban (2004) add, this lifeworld with its accumulated experience provides for *practical* or *tacit knowledge*, a knowing-how rather than a knowing-that. This knowledge is not easily transferred, but rather learned from more experienced practitioners. As such, a particular tradition of doing things is transmitted. Without learning in this way, we would not know how to act in practice.

Significantly, the council seems to recognize the importance of practical knowledge for professional development cooperation,[11] saying that

> people who work in developing countries cannot blindly follow rules or best practices; copying existing recipes without question will lead to bad interventions. It is therefore crucial for organizations to allow scope for experiment and to take on personnel with creativity and nerve. (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, pp. 225–226)

Yet, what the council seems to forget is that this creativity will always innovate *upon* the thus far developed rules and ways of doing things. Without having first acquired an understanding, transmitted in the tradition, of how to act in practice, one would not know where to start to innovate upon existing practice.[12]

11 They refer to Scott's *mētis*, which can be understood as "a wide array of practical skills and acquired intelligence in responding to a constantly changing natural and human environment" (Scott 1998, 313).
12 Scott notes that practical knowledge is sometimes depicted as "indigenous technical knowledge" and

While the council recognizes to a certain extent the importance of practical knowledge for professional development cooperation, they do not seem to recognize that also in the farming practice, practical knowledge, and innovation upon this practical knowledge, are paramount. This becomes clear when they depict SSA farmers as traditional – farming "in very much the way their fathers and forefathers did for centuries" – and in need of modern capital, knowledge, and technology. Yet, this ignores that external factors such as market conditions, technology packages and agrarian policies never simply determine agricultural practice, since farmers *organize* the relative balance between the use of own resources and the dependence on external elements (N. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1989, 1994; Mango, 2002). In this organization by farmers, experience and practical knowledge will play an important role as well. For instance, even though there may be a bank in the farmer's area, the farmer may decide not to take a loan from this bank because of past bad experiences with the bank or with taking loans in general.

Furthermore, while the practice of modernization may change one or more aspects of marginal regions – where *marginal* may be understood as being "less market-dependent and less organised along the lines of the newest technological designs than is the case for so-called growth poles" (Van der Ploeg, 1994, p. 10) – it simultaneously may increase marginalization in other aspects. Productive output at farm level generally does rise steeply (which does not necessarily mean that it will also rise at a regional level), but "dimensions such as rural employment, landscape preservation, defence of the environment, intrasectoral interlinkages and possibilities for tourism, might easily deteriorate" (Van der Ploeg, 1994, p. 12).

While the council does observe that modern agriculture has resulted in a 75% decline in genetic diversity of plant and animal breeds (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 46), the future of agriculture is only discussed in terms of the desired productivity increase to enable further societal development and economic growth. The council would have done better to link up this discussion with what they say about the importance of public goods – such as protecting biodiversity – in Chapter 8, and the importance of involving the private sector and civil society "to facilitate and stimulate new initiatives" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, p. 248). That could also have provided for a broader critical look at the way agriculture has (been) predominantly developed in the West. Problems that are associated with the industrial agriculture dominant in the West include pollution of surface and ground water because of high applications of manure and fertilizer, natural resource depletion, loss of biodiversity, overproduction, and significant animal welfare problems (Tilman, Cassman, Matson, Naylor, & Polasky, 2002; Pretty, Toulmin, & Williams, 2011; Hardeman & Jochemsen, 2012; Rollin & Thompson, 2012; Röling, 2016), as well as a range of socio-economic and community social fabric problems (Lobao & Stofferahn, 2008; Thompson, 1997). In this regard it is significant that also from "the

"folk wisdom." However, this confines this knowledge to "traditional" or "backward" peoples, whereas Scott wants to emphasize how these "practical skills that underwrite any complex activity" are implicit "in the most modern of activities" (Scott, 1998, pp. 311, 424n8).

global South" voices can be heard that call for another agricultural development path (e.g., Rajkumar, 2016). Yet, this remains out of sight in the council's report.

What, then, is the significance of this discussion of the council's modernist outlook for an intervention ethics? This is, first, that the council's own mentioning of the role of practical knowledge in professional development cooperation should receive more serious attention, for it enables the recognition of the inherent normativity of professional development cooperation. The way one should act as development professional is given with this practical knowledge, and constitutes a particular tradition. The question for an intervention ethics is whether we can spell out further this inherent normativity. Second, practical knowledge is internal to farming as well. A key question is what this means for an intervention ethics more specifically. In other words, what is the normative relationship between professional development cooperation as a practice and farming as a practice?

Before we turn to these questions, we first want to continue another questionable strand in the council's thinking; namely, professional development cooperation as being free of vested interests.

2.3.4   Interests and Professionalism

The council's characterization of SSA farmers as by and large traditional and only very limitedly connected to markets reminds of Ferguson's analysis of the Lesothian Thaba-Tseka Development Project (TTDP) (Ferguson, 1990; Ferguson & Lohmann, 1994). In the TTDP, the status of Lesotho was described as follows: "Virtually untouched by modern economic development . . . Lesotho was, and still is, basically, a traditional subsistence peasant society" (World Bank 1975, cited in Ferguson & Lohmann, 1994, p. 176). In reality, however, the Lesothian economy was firmly integrated with that of South-Africa – for instance, through wage labour earned by Basotho men in South-African mines, and through sales of livestock from Lesotho to South-Africa. Furthermore, surplus production of crops and livestock were sold by Basotho people on local and regional markets.

As to the reason why the reality of the Lesothian economy was so misrepresented in the TTDP, Ferguson suggests that this is due to the discursive need for justification of outside intervention, which in the end serves the survival and interests of the development agencies involved. Portraying the Lesothian economy as traditional and isolated suggested that the introduction of roads, markets, and credit could make a real change. What is more, the TTDP was in no position to challenge and change the South African system of labour, but it was in the position to devise agricultural improvement projects, extension, and credit and technical inputs to the agriculture of Lesotho. As such, according to Ferguson, the development discourse in the TTDP displayed a distinctive type of reasoning, namely, "backwards from the necessary conclusions – more 'development' projects are needed – to the premises required to generate those

conclusions" (Ferguson, 1990, pp. 259–260). The result was an unintended, yet systematic effect to increase bureaucratic state power and associated political interests through the establishment of a new district administration and government services such as a new post office, a police station, and an immigration control office (Ferguson, 1990, p. 252).

Even though Ferguson has been criticized, amongst other things, for his generalization from a single case (the TTDP) to broader development discourse (Gasper, 1996), his ethnographic analysis does show us that there clearly is an institutional aspect – with its interests – that threatens to pervert development practice.

In this regard, the council does have a high view of professional development cooperation:

> A new organization must not be bureaucratic and official, but professional and geared towards learning. . . . [This is] is not only a matter of knowing a country, but also of being known . . . [and] building up trust by a long-term presence and a thorough knowledge of the situation. (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, pp. 225)

It also involves "navigat[ing] between local practice and development theory" as well as providing "some kind of ethic for professional intervention, offering some idea of when you may intervene and when it is better not to" (Van Lieshout et al., 2010, pp. 225, 228). Yet, the question is what can sustain this high view of professional development cooperation, considering the council's simultaneous commitment to a culture of modernity unhampered by traditions. In our view, on the council's position this high view *cannot* be sustained. Yet, the ideal of professionalism as advocated by the council does require a certain commitment and ethos (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000), deposited in practical knowledge, which can prevent the perversion of development practice and which can motivate foregoing unlimited self-interest. Such commitments and ethoi are typically made explicit in worldviews. Therefore, an intervention ethics as called for by the council will also need to address the importance of ethoi and worldviews.

2.4 Development Cooperation as Normative Practice?

From our critical discussion of *Less pretention, more ambition*, we distilled several points. First, we have argued that the council's mentioning of practical knowledge as important for professional development cooperation should receive more thorough attention, particularly in relation to an intervention ethics for agricultural development. Furthermore, we have extended this practical knowledge to the farming practice, which – we suggested – should figure somehow in an intervention ethics as well. Finally, we have made an argument for more explicit attention for the role of commitments and

ethoi in development cooperation, especially because of vested interests which may threaten to pervert development practice.

In this section we want to turn to the Normative Practice Approach (NPA), because we think it is a helpful approach to further analyse and answer the questions just mentioned. Without giving NGOs the leading role in development cooperation, we will – because of reasons of space – in the following focus on the work of NGOs in agricultural development cooperation.

The NPA was developed by Reformational philosophers and ethicists (Jochemsen, 2006b, and authors mentioned therein in footnote 2) based on work of MacIntyre (1985), especially his concept of social practice, and Dooyeweerd (1969a), especially his theory of modal aspects.[13] In brief, in the NPA a *normative practice* is understood as a social structure that embodies a coherent form of socially established cooperative human activity aiming at the realization of a certain (internal) good, the end or telos of that practice.[14] This good can also be described as the normative task or qualifying function of the practice. In addition, in practices goods are pursued in accordance with "standards of excellence," or norms. These norms define good or competent performance of the practice and enable the realization of the central good (telos) of the practice.

2.4.1 Education as Practice[15]

The question we would like to pose and answer here is whether development cooperation as practiced civilaterally can be conceived of as a normative practice. At first sight, it does not make sense to pose this question, because development is always development *of* something, and above it was said that within practices human beings aim to realize the telos of that practice. Therefore, can development cooperation then itself be a practice, or is it merely a natural part of *every* practice? To answer this question, we can learn from a parallel discussion MacIntyre had with Dunne on precisely this question in relation to education and teaching (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002; Dunne, 2003).

MacIntyre's argument is that teaching always has to rely on sources outside itself (e.g., knowledge from biomedical science) for it to be able to exist. In education, students are taught to be able to participate in other practices. A teacher is first and foremost a biomedical specialist, a mathematician, or whatever other practices may exist. In teaching students, teachers merely perform something which is internal to any

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13 Harry Kunneman of the Universiteit voor Humanistiek also works with an understanding of professional practices as normative practices.
14 The extended definition given by MacIntyre reads as follows: "Any coherent form and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended." (MacIntyre, 1985, p. 187)
15 In this section we rely primarily on De Muynck's (2006) summary of the discussion between MacIntyre and Dunne concerning education as practice.

practice – namely, "to make themselves intelligible to and to engage in dialogue with all the members of the community of their discipline." Teaching is therefore "a set of skills and habits put to the service of a variety of practices" (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p. 5).

Dunne has levelled two arguments against MacIntyre's denial of teaching as practice. First, teaching is not only about "care for the subject" but also about "care for the student."[16] The teacher's insight into what students need is not only directed by the goods of particular subjects, but also by the students' greater good. To this belongs the teacher's searching for ways to capture the students' attention and create a fascination for certain subjects. For this the teacher also needs to attend to the individuality of the student in his or her specific learning development. Hence, teaching is not only directed at other practices, but has an internal good in itself – the formation of students.

Second, Dunne notes that education is connected with a way of life: the person of the teacher cannot be seen apart from his or her profession. Teachers connect other practices in which they may participate, such as dining or gardening, with their being a teacher: "This may be educationally interesting to tell in class!" Indeed, this requirement of the practice to be able to provide for a way of life is a pivotal part of MacIntyre's conception of a practice (MacIntyre, 1985, Chapter 14).

As a third argument against MacIntyre, it could be added that professionals that turn to education – as in technical vocational and educational training – usually first need to be trained in pedagogy and didactics before they can teach others well, based on their professional expertise.

2.4.2 Development Cooperation as Practice – Its Structure

With De Muynck (2006) we consider these arguments pro teaching as a practice convincing. The question now is whether we can discern something similar in development cooperation. In other words, what relationship (if any), with its concomitant good or qualifying function, is central in agricultural development cooperation?

To start with, we can note that the relationships depicted in Figure 2.1 denote *institutional* or *organizational* relationships surrounding the farmer. As such, they are analogically akin to the whole educational system or network surrounding the student at a school or university (to keep in line with the educational example). The school or university as an organization is situated within this educational network, and the relationship between teacher and student, in turn, is embedded within the school or university as organization. What would this, by analogy, tell us about the relationships in agricultural development cooperation?

Starting literally at the farmyard, we can note the relationship between the farmer and the extensionist or agricultural advisor (see also Leeuwis & Van den Ban, 2004). The essential role of the agricultural advisor is to provide the farmer with specialized

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16 *Subject* is not to be understood here in an epistemological sense, but in the sense of the content of what is taught (compare: *topic*).

agronomic support in an ever-changing context. Because of this specialized support, agricultural advisors are sometimes also called *agronomists*. Good agricultural advisors typically have an intimate knowledge of the farmer practice, which is a prerequisite for offering good advice to the farmer. On the other hand, they are traditionally well versed in sciences such as extension studies, and in agricultural sciences such as irrigation science, soil science, and animal science.

> Illustration
> *Woord en Daad Foundation's project* Cracking the Nut *aims at realizing an inclusive and competitive cashew sector in Benin and Burkina Faso. This is among other things achieved through the provision of training to cashew farmers to improve cashew farming practice, and to women to run small-scale processing units to produce juice extracted from the cashew apples. This training is delivered by agricultural advisors employed by an international NGO and a local NGO with which Woord en Daad Foundation has partnered.*

This relationship between farmer and agricultural advisor is comparable to that between school teacher and student in that both are located at the level of the primary practice. Yet, it must be noted that farmers are *farmers*, which is to say that they are already performing practitioners, in contrast to students, who – as we saw earlier – are still to be initiated into particular types of practices. This means that discussion about the particular goods pursued in the agricultural practice can be a matter of discussion in the relationship between farmer and agricultural advisor, as such constituting an intercultural dialogue about the further development, or disclosure, of the agricultural practice (Strijbos, 2011).

As in the educational example, we can also discern an organizational level in agricultural development cooperation, with which we mean the incorporated form of primary practices (Moore & Grandy, 2017).[17] Thus, farmers and agricultural advisors may operate as individuals, but also frequently unite themselves in producer organizations, cooperatives, or community-based organizations and (semi-)governmental agencies or consultancy bureaus, respectively. This organizational level in agricultural development cooperation matches with the level of the school or university in the educational example.[18]

Importantly, in agricultural development cooperation, the training of managers of, for instance, dairy cooperatives is an important activity. However, training of managers may also focus on managers and administrative personnel of the local NGO with which an international NGO partners, for instance, on planning, monitoring, and

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17 Organizations can have a governmental, for-profit or non-profit purpose (Moore & Beadle, 2006).
18 It must be noted that in the educational example, the teacher-student relationship is embedded within *one* organization; yet, the farmer–agricultural advisor relationship typically involves at least *two* organizations. That is, farmers and agricultural advisors are not housed within one organization.

evaluation within that organization.[19] Such training activities are usually called *capacity-building activities*.

> Illustration
> *Within the* Cracking the Nut *project, managers of cashew processing factories in Benin and Burkina Faso are trained how to increase mechanized de-shelling of nuts so as to improve processing efficiency and profitability.*

At the organizational level we can distinguish between two main orientations for managers of such organizations (see Glas, 2016). The first is internal and focuses on enabling practitioners to do their work in the primary practice – for example, the primary practice of milk processing within a dairy cooperative. The second orientation is external and focuses on negotiations with other relevant stakeholders on the way food demand is to be met in a particular area or how new food products can be developed and sold. Coalitions or configurations which result from such networking activities can be called *multi-actor networks*.[20] Now, an important part of agricultural development cooperation concerns inducement of new, and facilitation of new and existing, agricultural multi-actor network configurations (Engel, 1995; Groot, 2002; Leeuwis & Van den Ban, 2004). Leeuwis, Klerkx and colleagues have framed this facilitation of agricultural multi-actor network configurations as *(agricultural) innovation brokering* rather than the *knowledge brokering* associated with agricultural extension (Kilelu, Klerkx, Leeuwis, & Hall, 2011; Klerkx & Leeuwis, 2009; Klerkx, Schut, Leeuwis, & Kilelu, 2012). Organizations focusing on this innovation brokering "therefore act as 'bridging organizations' that facilitate access to knowledge, skills, services, and goods from a wide range of organizations" (Kilelu et al., 2011, p. 86; see also Banks, Hulme, & Edwards, 2015).

> Illustration
> *In the* Cracking the Nut *project the international NGO Woord en Daad Foundation has partnered, next to the already mentioned international and local NGOs, with a private company that trades in cashew nuts, a private social investor, a micro-finance institution, a Burkinabe government agency, a Beninese government agency, and a Dutch government agency. Through the project cashew farmers are linked to a company that exports and sells cashew nuts and cashew by-products. The international and local NGOs provide agronomic training to those farmers; yet at the same time*

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19 Moore (2013) notes that at the organizational level one can differentiate between administration, management, and leadership, but that these are often discussed under the general heading of management. 20 We leave aside the distinction made by Engel (1995) between *institutional configurations* and *non-governmental development organization networks*. As he also says, both can be interpreted as the social organization for (agricultural) innovation. What is more, the question is how helpful Engel's distinction is nowadays in the light of public-private partnerships.

> *Burkinabe and Beninese government agricultural advisory services are supported by the project to ensure the long-term sustainability of agricultural advisory services to cashew farmers. Also, to enable cashew farmers to invest in new technologies – with which they become acquainted, amongst others, via the agricultural advisory services of the NGOs – a micro-finance institution is involved in the project.*

What does this analysis of agricultural development cooperation yield so far? To start with, agricultural development cooperation does involve the level of the primary practice – that of the relationship between the farmer and the agricultural advisor – but cannot be reduced to this level. For while the role of agricultural advisors can easily be recognized as being important for agricultural development, and the relationship between farmer and agricultural advisor is, normatively speaking, one of cooperation,[21] we generally mean more when we speak about agricultural development cooperation.[22] As we have seen, professional agricultural development cooperation always involves an institutional or organizational component as well. That is, it focuses (1) on facilitation of the organizational practice within organizations which support one or more particular agricultural primary practices,[23] and (2) on the inducement and facilitation of agricultural multi-actor network configurations.

We therefore conclude that the internal good of the agricultural development cooperation practice consists in *the facilitation of practitioners in the agricultural domain in pursuing the goods of their practices*. In this process, linkages with other stakeholders and practices often need to be made as well. In order to be really facilitatory, this will require a *cooperative* effort by development professionals and those facilitated to disclose meaning in the facilitated practices, in which technique, in the broadest sense of the word, plays a pivotal role. Technically phrased, the agricultural development cooperation is qualified by meaning-oriented shaping (Jochemsen, 2009, p. 32), corresponding with the so-called formative aspect in Reformational philosophy.[24] Development cooperation is thus the meaningful shaping of practices, including organizational practices, through cooperation with the people in those practices (Jochemsen, 2009, p. 33). As such, it aims at the realization of values.

This facilitation is not merely a normal part of every practice, but has

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21 Ingram (2008) distinguishes between a facilitative and an expert role for agricultural advisors in the encounter with farmers, where only the first type are "equitable encounters where understanding, dialogue and shared knowledge are key elements" (p. 412). In our opinion, however, this erroneous view results from too high an appreciation of science and scientific knowledge. A farmer can be an expert in his/her profession, just as an agricultural advisor can be an expert in his/her profession. In this regard, perhaps we should speak of *excellence* rather than *expertise*.

22 We usually refer to the farmer–agricultural advisor level with such terms as *extension* or *agricultural advisory services*, rather than *agricultural development cooperation*.

23 Others have argued that management, or organization, is itself a (normative) practice practice (Brewer, 1997; McCann & Brownsberger, 1990; Moore & Beadle, 2006; Beabout, 2012).

24 Jochemsen (2009) argues that the formative aspect is not only qualifying, but also foundational for development cooperation. This means that technical knowledge first makes possible the execution of the practice.

evolved into a distinct practice itself, just like teaching in the educational example. Yet, although distinct, the agricultural development cooperation practice can only be properly understood *in relation to* the farming practice.[25] That is, there is no agricultural development cooperation practice without practices in the agricultural domain that are facilitated.

2.4.3   Regulative Side of Development Cooperation

Within the NPA, a distinction is made between types of norms that qualify a practice, types of norms that are foundational, and types of norms that are conditioning (Hoogland and Jochemsen 2000). In a structural analysis of agricultural development cooperation as practice, these three types of norms refer to the practice's *structural side*. In the previous section we have focused on facilitation, which we identified to be the qualifying norm of agricultural development cooperation. An analysis of – especially – the conditioning norms will have to wait for another occasion.

What we want to do in the rest of this paper is to make a brief remark about the *regulative side* of the agricultural development practice, referring to what practitioners think and choose, and what motivates them in their thoughts and choices.[26]

The regulative side of the agricultural development cooperation practice comes about rather clearly in the beliefs and convictions concerning the justification for agricultural development cooperation and the normative direction for agricultural development. As we saw above, in the modernist view the low productivity or low use of modern technology of (so-called marginal) agriculture justifies an intervention aimed at increasing agricultural productivity – that is, what Thompson (1995, Chapter 3) calls a productionist agriculture. As Rosin (2013) notes, such a productionist agriculture is often justified with an appeal to *food security* – "feeding the world" – where the latter is usually taken to be self-evident. Furthermore, as we saw above, the council's productionism does not leave space for other considerations in the development of agriculture, such as rural employment, nature and landscape preservation, and possibilities for tourism.

However, we have argued that what is constitutive for agricultural development cooperation is that it ultimately facilitates the farming practice – and associated practices such as feed manufacturing and milk processing – through (1) advisory services and (2) the provision of a favourable organizational environment. This facilitation is not without normative direction – as Mosse's professionals might think – for facilitation always (co-) enables certain agricultural development paths while (co-) constraining other paths. It is our contention that the best yardstick for the direction to choose is the flourishing

25 As such it is akin to the management practice which Beabout (2012) calls a "domain-relative practice" because it is "composed of activities with internal standards of excellence and . . . is always related to another particular domain" (p. 427). The likeness to organizational management is noticed by Engel as well who in that regard speaks about "*inter-institutional* interaction for innovation" as compared to "*intra-organizational* interaction for performance" (Engel, 1995, p. 119; emphasis added).

26 A *contextual side* can also be discerned in practices, which refers to the embedding of a practice in a broader environment.

of the facilitated farming practice (and associated practices). But this means that we will have to attend to the practices in the facilitated agricultural domain *themselves* and, in particular, their respective normativity, if we want to fruitfully perform agricultural development cooperation.[27]

2.5   Concluding Remarks

By both criticizing and building on the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy's report *Less pretention, more ambition*, we have argued that agricultural development cooperation as practiced civilaterally can be conceived of as a normative practice. In this normative practice, practical knowledge – transmitted within the practice, and as such constituting a tradition – is an important element. This practical knowledge on how to act within the practice points to the inherent normativity of the practice. The NPA enabled us to ask what the internal good or qualifying function in agricultural development cooperation is, which we identified to be *facilitation* – this provided the answer to the first question posed at the end of section 2.3.3. This facilitation always points to *another* practice – in this case, the farming practice. Importantly, if normativity is indeed inherent to practices, and if this normativity enables the realization of its internal good – two claims that we believe to be true – the facilitation practice should respect the intrinsic normativity of the farming practice, which answers the second question of section 2.3.3. An agricultural intervention ethics therefore requires an analysis of the constitutive normativity of the farming practice and other practices in the agricultural domain.

Against this background, a simple application of the well-known normative ethical approaches of consequentialism and deontology (which may be tempting from a policy perspective) to development cooperation becomes problematic, for rules and principles are always to be *interpreted* and *enacted* by the professionals involved. The lifeworld of professionals (Long) and their professional identity (Mosse) are important, implicitly formative elements here. As such, an intervention ethics for development cooperation must also accommodate the concrete professional who acts in a concrete context, pointing to a "practical moral sensitivity" (Quarles van Ufford et al., 2003, p. 23).

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27 This normativity has at once a general or structural character, open to a philosophical-ethical analysis – see Rademaker et al. (2017) for such an analysis of the livestock farming practice – and a unique character, requiring a "practical moral sensitivity" of practitioners in agricultural development cooperation (Quarles van Ufford, Giri, & Mosse, 2003, p. 23).

3

Faith in International Agricultural Development: Conservation Agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa

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3.1   Introduction

There is a debate in the development studies literature about the role of faith and religion in international development cooperation.[28] This debate ranges from the role of so-called faith-based organizations (FBOs)[29] within international development cooperation practice (Clarke, 2006, 2007; McDuie-Ra & Rees, 2010; Tomalin, 2012) to diverging epistemologies and worldviews due to different religious or secular starting-points of actors within international development cooperation theory and practice (Ellis & ter Haar, 2007; Jones & Petersen, 2011; Lunn, 2009). In general, since the 1990s it has increasingly been recognized that to understand and facilitate development processes, the religious outlook of intended beneficiaries and the many involved FBOs needs to be taken seriously.

Within the more specific development-oriented agronomy literature, the existence of diverging "knowledges" due to diverging vested interests, values and ideologies and their implications for agronomic research and development is hotly debated today (Andersson & Sumberg, 2015; Sumberg & Thompson, 2012; Sumberg, Thompson, & Woodhouse, 2013). Sumberg et al. (2013) therefore make a plea for a political agronomy analysis to bring to the fore the "contestation around framing and narratives, agenda setting, partnerships, and the validation and use of the results of agronomic research" (p. 79). The need for such an analysis results from the changed landscape of international agronomic research and development (Sumberg et al., 2013). Until the mid-late 20th century most formal research took place within state-funded institutions. This has changed dramatically due to critiques of state-led development as inefficient, environmentally damaging, and undemocratic. As a result, the long-standing congruence of purpose between government policy and agronomic research objectives has ended. Neoliberalization – exemplified by the infamous structural adjustment programmes in developing countries – set out to change public-sector agricultural research by improving focus, efficiency, and accountability to both funders and farmers. This both caused public-sector agricultural research to re-frame its role in terms of providing for "public goods" and led to a new emphasis on the formation of public-

28 Even though we will elaborate on the concept of faith – especially in relation to worldview – we would like to provide some provisional clarification here. Religion is a complex phenomenon that we will not try to define here, but in the literature often four different aspects, or manifestations, are distinguished (Ter Haar & Ellis, 2006): *religious experiences* (e.g., experiences of inner peace), *religious ideas* (what people actually believe), *religious practices* (habits and rituals), and *religious organizations* (the organizational shaping and control of the transfer of religious idea's, experiences and practices). In all four of these, faith is active as a *function* (trust, fiduciary function of faith), whereas religious ideas describe the content of what is believed. Worldviews have a bridging function as they provide for a translation of religious ideas into everyday practice, and back again. Acknowledging that not all people see themselves as religious, neither hold an explicitly articulated worldview, we do think it can be maintained that people that are not affiliated to a specific religion, do have faith in the sense of trust which significantly influences their worldview. See Jochemsen (2018b) for a more extensive explanation of religion in development.
29 With the term FBOs we refer to organizations that explicitly position themselves as such. For convenience sake we also include local churches, mosques, etc.

private partnerships and alliances. On the one hand, this has led to the opening-up of new spaces of contestation around the meaning, purpose and priorities of agronomic research and development, thereby enhancing "flexibility, diversity, adaptation and reflexivity." On the other hand, a tendency arose to close down discussion in favour of particular research agendas and development pathways (Sumberg et al., 2013, p. 76).

One such case, as Andersson and Giller (2012) argue, is the promotion of Conservation Agriculture (CA) by a "conglomerate of faith-based, science-based and policy organisations" (p. 22). Although its definition is contested, CA can be understood as a "resource saving agricultural crop production concept that strives to achieve acceptable profits together with high and sustained productivity levels while concurrently conserving the environment" (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO] & Regional Emergency Office for Southern Africa [REOSA], 2010). Andersson and Giller's case study focuses on the Zimbabwean FBO Foundations for Farming (FfF) and claims that the policy success of CA was due to the religious sanctioning of CA as "the only way to farm that is faithful to God" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 23). In this way, it broke off a trend towards more farmer-oriented, participatory research and development in Zimbabwe and as such closed down the space for contestation. Thus, according to Andersson and Giller, faith functioned as a barrier to meaningful agricultural development in Zimbabwe, namely a barrier to a development where farmers and their needs (co-)determine in a participatory way the agronomic research and development agendas.

In a sense, Andersson and Giller's analysis can be interpreted as an example of *negative instrumentality*: in pursuing meaningful agricultural development in Zimbabwe – and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) more generally – faith is seen as an obstacle rather than a helpful factor in pursuing agricultural development. The same negative instrumentality, but in a different form, can often be heard in the public media, for instance in the suspicion that FBOs use development projects as covers for proselytization (e.g., The Guardian, 2015).[30] This contrasts with the predominantly *positive instrumentality* we began with, namely*,* religious outlooks and FBOs need to be engaged with by academics to be able to understand and facilitate development processes. Yet, thinking about faith and religion only in instrumental terms, either positive or negative, leaves both unquestioned the possibility of the religious background of development cooperation as a practice *itself* and the potential role of faith through individual practitioners that operate within self-professed secular non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research and policy institutes (Jones & Petersen, 2011; Salemink, 2015).

The aim of the present paper is therefore to consider the structural role of faith

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30 In another (co-authored) publication Andersson and Giller also hint at this: "Brian Oldreive's River of Life Church has been at the forefront of its promotion in Zimbabwe. Viewing CA as a way to farm 'faithfully', he equated it with 'Farming God's Way' (Oldreive, 2005). Soil cover with mulch is referred to as 'God's blanket'. The promotion of CA thus becomes an *evangelising enterprise*" (Baudron, Andersson, Corbeels, & Giller, 2012, p. 401; emphasis added).

and religion in relation to agricultural development (cooperation) that moves beyond the discourse of instrumentality. We will pursue this through a philosophical analysis of especially Andersson and Giller's position in this respect. Even though Andersson and Giller focused on a specific Zimbabwean FBO, their argument has a broader relevance as the particular form of CA promoted by the FBO, which is also called Farming God's Way (FGW), is the most explicit, visible and elaborated form of agricultural development cooperation from a Christian perspective. As such, FGW is practiced by a host of other FBOs across diverse contexts. Furthermore, also from the Islamic faith CA is promoted as a proper way of farming, but then for Muslim farmers (Ahmad, 2014). This justifies a normative reflection on the general role of faith and religion in agricultural development.

Using the Normative Practice Approach, we will argue that a distinction should be made between religion as a normative practice of believers (religious practices and religious organizations) – that is empirically recognizable and practiced in, for instance, churches, mosques, shrines, temples and "holy places" – and faith functioning as a worldview in *every* normative practice. In addition, we argue that it is helpful to distinguish between different kinds of normative practices involved in agricultural development in SSA. The value of this philosophical analysis is that a dichotomous model of science-based versus faith-based approaches to agricultural development is challenged and a level-playing field is introduced between different worldviews from which science can be practiced (which is at least a matter of epistemic justice). Furthermore, specific *kinds* of normativity are identified as always already functioning *inside* practices, rather than practices being neutral spaces that are (subjectively) infused with normativity by applying external ethical standards. Altogether, the analysis will open the eyes for the responsibility of scientists in the daily work they perform, but also the contribution they make to agricultural development at a societal level.

3.2   Background of Conservation Agriculture and Foundations for Farming

As Andersson and Giller (2012) aptly write, CA has captured the imagination of an impressive array of organizations, including donors like the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID) and the European Union (EU), international research and development institutes like the International Wheat and Maize Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), policy institutes like the FAO, and numerous NGOs. Binding those different actors together is the promotion of CA "as a potential solution to the production problems faced by smallholder farming families in sub-Saharan Africa" (Twomlow, Urolov, Jenrich, & Oldrieve, 2008, p. 2). CA is a

package of land, water, and crop management techniques to improve farm productivity, profitability, and sustainability. Central principles are: (1) disturb the soil as little as possible; (2) implement operations, especially planting and weeding, in a timely manner; (3) keep the soil covered with organic materials (crop residues or cover crops) as much as possible; and (4) mix and rotate crops, that is, practice intercropping and crop rotation (Twomlow et al., 2008).[31]

The roots of this alliance around CA can be traced to the year 2004 when the Protracted Relief Programme for Zimbabwe (PRP) was formed, funded (initially only) by DfID. The involved FBO FfF had already extensive experience with extension of CA to smallholder farmers, as it had initiated and unrolled in the 1990s its Hinton Estates Out-Reach Program, followed in 2000 by Operation Joseph which ended in 2008. FfF, formerly named Farming God's Way, is a subsidiary of the River of Life Church in Harare, Zimbabwe, and was founded by Brian Oldreive, a large-scale commercial farmer in Zimbabwe. In the 1980s, Oldreive was a manager of a large-scale farm that faced problems of soil erosion, declining yields, and high operation costs. As a practising Christian, Oldreive observed during one of his prayer moments in the bush, that "there is no mechanism in nature in which the soil is inverted and there is a thick blanket of fallen leaves and grass which covers the surface of the soil [which] prevented the soil from being washed away" (Oldreive 2009, 7, cited in Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 30). This inspired him to develop a minimum-tillage technology to tackle the problems he faced on the farm. This minimum-tillage approach became known as Conservation Farming (CF) and is characterized by planting basins or shallow planting furrows in combination with mulch, seeds, fertilizer and a cereal-legume rotation. CF can be considered as a particular approach within the broader CA as it involves minimum tillage, soil surface cover and diversified crop rotations, but also requires planting basins or shallow planting furrows. The term Farming God's Way (FGW), once the name of the FBO, is still sometimes used to connote the *holistic* approach that is promoted by FfF. As such, it is broader than CF as it "is not just a technology but a well balanced [*sic*] biblical, management and technological solution for the agricultural domain, to equip the poor to come out of poverty, with what God has put in their hands and to reveal the fullness of His promised abundant life" (Dryden, 2009, p. 7).

The promotion of CF by FfF happens through training of (NGO) extension staff, demonstration plots, monitoring and evaluation, and research undertaken by institutes belonging to the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research

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31 Actually, there is much disagreement about the definition of CA and which principles are involved. In the agronomic scientific literature only three of the four principles mentioned return: minimum tillage, soil surface cover and diversified crop rotations (FAO & REOSA, 2010; Sommer et al., 2014; Vanlauwe et al., 2014). The principle of good management in relation to planting and weeding is absent, although some argue that appropriate use of fertilizer should be included as a fourth principle (Sommer et al., 2014). In addition to the four mentioned principles, the Zimbabwean Conservation Agriculture Task Force also mentions the principles of "not burning crop residues" and "efficient use of inputs" (Zimbabwean Conservation Agricultural Task Force [ZCATF], 2008, p. 3).

(CGIAR) (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 33). Activities have also spread to other African countries. For instance, FfF has trained project staff of the Malawian Synod of Livingstonia Development Department (SOLDEV), an organization of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) (Boone- van der Poel, 2016). International ties are also visible at funding level: FfF is or has been supported by the international FBOs Tear Netherlands (Heynis, 2014) and TEAR Australia (Stathis, 2014).[32] In addition, in 2015 Foundations for Farming Nederland has been established that supports development projects worldwide that practice FGW.

3.3   Agricultural Curses and Blessings

Even though the name change from Farming God's Way to Foundations for Farming mitigated political sensitivity, in the actual agricultural approach the reference to God remains important (e.g., Dryden, 2009). What has brought FfF to emphasize so strongly the religious component in their agricultural approach? In a sense, this is the same phenomenon that fascinated Max Weber in his study of the protestant ethic: the relationship – or absence of it – between spiritual salvation and earthly blessings. As Dryden (2009) writes in the Farming God's Way Trainer's Reference Guide: "The question is, if so much of Africa has come to [spiritual] salvation, why do we still see so much of the curse [namely, poverty and undernourishment] rather than the promise of His blessing?" (p. 1). The answer that is given is threefold: there are technological, managerial and spiritual reasons. First, unlike what happens in "nature", farmers practice ploughing and burning and/or removal of mulch from the field on a large scale. Next to that, management is often failing with respect to planting on time, maintaining high standards, and avoiding waste in the agricultural practice. However, spiritual reasons for the "yoke of poverty" are most fundamental (Dryden, 2009, p. 27). In this regard, FGW points to practices of witchcraft and ancestral worship. In much of SSA, witchdoctors are asked to pray over the land in order that it will produce a bumper harvest (Dryden, 2009, p. 30). Yet,

> the Bible clearly states that consulting witchdoctors and ancestral worship is witchcraft and demon worship. … The curse on those that practise these things is severe indeed; undernourishment, hunger, living in distress and darkness, depression and fear. If we see these things in evidence in communities, we have to understand that this is foremostly because God has removed His hand of blessing and the curse which comes from satan's [sic] rule has been instituted. (Dryden, 2009, p. 30)

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32 The Malawian organization SOLDEV is supported by Tear Fund UK (Boone- van der Poel, 2016).

In this light, it is understandable that FfF says that only tackling the technological and management issues will not be enough to tackle the "yoke of poverty." At bottom, personal *conversion* is needed.

If farmers do convert to "farming in God's way," it is believed that the result will be relief from the yoke of poverty and undernourishment, that is, real spiritual salvation will then be accompanied by earthly blessings. The basis for this belief is God's own promise in the Bible that those who turn to Him will have "abundant life" (Dryden, 2009, p.1; see also Bornstein, 2003, p. 50). The way it will come about is immanent, but at times God may "supernaturally [turn] to them and [bless] them far more abundantly than the science of the benefits allow [*sic*] for" (Dryden, 2009, p. 56). How it may come about *immanently* is precisely what Andersson and Giller focus on.

3.4   Andersson and Giller on Heretics and God's Blanket Salesmen

In *On heretics and God's blanket salesmen*, Andersson and Giller (2012) investigate the development of the CA conglomerate of "faith-based, science-based and policy organisations as a distinct epistemic community" (p. 22). They understand an epistemic community as "a network of professionals with recognised expertise in a particular domain, who help decision-makers to define problems, identify policy solutions and assess policy outcomes" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 22). More in particular, they are interested in how this epistemic community around CA *excludes* or *silences* alternative policy options and expertise, and as such closes down spaces for contestation (see above). To this end they undertake two lines of inquiry. The first is an analysis into the economic and political conditions that made this emergence of CA policy a success. The second is an agronomic analysis of the suitability of CA in the circumstances of smallholder farmers in SSA. Together, these lines of inquiry put forward that CA has become a policy success *because* it was sanctioned by religion and *despite* earlier agronomic research indicating other options and contestation over the suitability of particular CA techniques under particular circumstances. We will further unpack the first line of inquiry, because that line of inquiry is most relevant for our purposes.

Andersson and Giller start out by describing the history of scientific research on conservation tillage in what is now Zimbabwe. While after 1965 agronomic research had benefited mostly the large-scale farming sector, since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, research was reoriented towards the smallholder sector. However, with the intensification of the development and promotion of conservation tillage for the smallholder sector in the 1990s, research shifted from formal trials on research stations to on-farm experimentation with farmers, for instance in the Conservation Tillage for Sustainable Crop Production System (Contill) project. This shift was motivated not

only by the desire to adjust farming methods to the socio-economic circumstances of farmers in agro-ecologically marginal areas, but also to *empower* farmers. According to Andersson and Giller, the overall conclusion of those decades of research on conservation tillage is that "given the diversity in agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions, 'different techniques and systems should be promoted as options' . . . as 'it is impossible to develop blanket recommendations'" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 29).

The successful spreading of what they call a "faith-based approach to agriculture," at the expense of "adaptive scientific research," Andersson and Giller try to explain through Zimbabwe's political and economic conditions at that time. In their words: "the apparent epistemological contradiction between scientific experimentation and Oldreive's faith-based approach to CA can only be understood through an appreciation of Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis and the politics of humanitarian relief and development aid" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 32). What was the case in Zimbabwe at the time? Due to a violent land redistribution the Zimbabwean government had isolated itself internationally, while at the same time the economic situation of the country was in decline. In response to this and the droughts of 2001/02 and 2002/03, food aid and seeds for planting were provided by donors via NGOs. At first, these initial responses lacked coordination, but soon staff from donors, NGOs, government and international agricultural research institutes began to cooperate. DfID was willing to finance relief and development efforts, while international research institutes and NGOs like FfF could provide for the knowledge and extension services. Thus, an organization like DfID was critical in the formation of an epistemic community around CA because it provided for the financial resources in the "production of policy success" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 34). In addition, according to Andersson and Giller, the engagement of international agricultural research institutes gave the large-scale promotion of Oldreive's faith-based approach to CA under the PRP unintendedly a scientific legitimation. The upshot was that negotiations between those donor, policy, research and faith-based organizations resulted in a "standardized package" that was, however, not "evidence-based" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 33).

In addition, according to Andersson and Giller (2012), religion legitimized CA policy by providing a language to portray farmers who did not adopt CA or stepped out of the programme as "non-believers" who were stuck in the "mindset of the plough" and in need of "conversion" (p. 37). Also, practicing CA was framed by its proponents as the only way to farm that is faithful to God. In this way, critical questions concerning the value and suitability of CA – or particular technologies within it – for African smallholders could not be raised, for it were the *farmers* that needed to convert to what the CA proponents already knew was good for them.

Thus, Andersson and Giller conclude, "CA became a policy success sanctioned by religion, despite earlier agronomic research suggesting the value of other options, evidence of dis-adoption, and contestation over the suitability of particular CA technologies" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 23, see also 41).

3.5 Justifying Agricultural Knowledge, Technology, and Extension

In this section we want to problematize Andersson and Giller's conclusion that CA became a policy success because it was sanctioned by religion. Specifically, this conclusion is puzzling in the light of their own analysis where they put much emphasis on the political and economic conditions of Zimbabwe and subsequent development and relief efforts that enabled FfF to obtain both money and scientific legitimation. Following this analysis, it seems that precisely those unique political and economic conditions explain how it could be that FGW became scaled up to CA/CF within a broad epistemic community. And yet, what Andersson and Giller conclude is that *religion* explains the success of CA through its sanctioning effect.

This is a conclusion that itself begs for an explanation. Of course, it could be that the political and economic conditions of Zimbabwe *together with* the sanctioning of CA/CF as the only way to farm that is faithful to God enabled the policy success of CA.[33] That does, however, not explain why only the latter part ends up in Andersson and Giller's conclusion.

A better understanding of what is going on here might be achieved through considering a particular remark made by Andersson and Giller in more detail. Andersson and Giller state that "the *apparent epistemological contradiction* between scientific experimentation and Oldreive's faith-based approach to CA can only be understood through an appreciation of Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis and the politics of humanitarian relief and development aid" (Andersson & Giller, 2012, p. 32; emphasis added). On the one hand, we see here the move to an analysis of the Zimbabwean economic and political situation; yet, on the other hand, this move is thought to be necessitated by the *apparent epistemological contradiction between a science- versus a faith-based approach to agricultural development*. But that means that the problematization of the policy success of CA – what made it possible? – becomes intermingled with a problematization of Oldreive's faith-based approach – how is it possible that it gained momentum considering the agronomic scientific evidence available at the time?

In our interpretation, this problem in argumentation structure points to a deeper problem that Andersson and Giller have with CA/CF/FGW, namely an *epistemological* problem. It concerns, first, the question how agronomic knowledge is to be justified generally. Second, it has an explicit normative dimension when it comes to extension to farmers. Thus, Andersson and Giller complain that when CA principles come to be seen as universal prerequisites for sustainable agriculture – "the only way that is faithful to God" – the socio-economic and agro-ecological circumstances of the farmers stop to

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[33] As Andersson and Giller focus in their paper for the most part on Zimbabwe's economic and political situation to explain the policy success of CA, the empirical evidence they provide with respect to their claim that CA proponents indeed consistently sanction CA by reference to God is scanty. At least in policy circles, it is not very likely that just referring to God's will in promoting an agricultural approach is sufficient.

be structuring forces of agricultural practice. Hence, their rejection of (God's) blanket recommendations. In another publication they speak of the need for a radical shift away from "dogma and prescriptive approaches . . . such as CA" (Giller et al., 2015, pp. 1, 10) and "CA principles [that] also confer a value statement – norms that must be adhered to" (Giller et al., 2015, p. 9).

The normativity that they perceive in CA, Andersson and Giller connect with the religious source of CA: FfF and its Christian inspiration. Interestingly, Andersson and Giller (2012) do not mention that in the earlier research on conservation agriculture in Zimbabwe that they cite – the Contill project – researchers *also* battled against "blanket recommendations." Blanket recommendations not from the side of FfF or any other FBO, but from the side of AGRITEX, the Zimbabwean governmental agricultural extension service. Thus, researchers within the Contill project wrote: "Farmers are being taught normative, rigid blanket recommendations in a top-down manner which hardly encourages dialogical, interactive learning, adapting of technologies and developing their own solutions" (Hagmann, Chuma, & Murwira, 1996, p. 16). The researchers rather favoured "participatory research & innovation, development and extension" (Hagmann et al., 1996, p. 18), where learning is based on experience from the lifeworld of the actors. Extension then consists in dialogue via problem-posing, helping people to find causes and solutions themselves for the problems they face, rather than "teaching of 'foreign' knowledge and realities" (Hagmann et al., 1996, p. 17).

This shows that the problem of justifying normativity in agricultural extension is older than appears from Andersson and Giller's analysis. Also, considering that it is unlikely that explicit religious reasons provided a rationale for AGRITEX officials to justify their normative agricultural extension practice, we see that normativity cannot be limited to its alleged origin in explicitly religiously founded ideas like those of FfF, but can have a diversity of sources.

3.6   A Modern Problem

We have seen that for Andersson and Giller genuine agronomic knowledge and techniques are "science-based." As Andersson and Giller constantly refer to experimentation with particular agronomic techniques to see if and why they would work, we may safely assume it is the *experimental*, presumably *objective*, method of agricultural science that should provide for the justification of agronomic knowledge and techniques. Admittedly, the objectivity of the experimental method – "objective measurement" (Giller et al., 2015, p. 2) – functions as a normative ideal for them – but can they acknowledge that? – as they do realize that "agronomy is deeply embedded in political and power relations" (Andersson, Giller, Sumberg, & Thompson, 2014, p. 21) and consequently objective science as an accomplished fact can probably never be reached.

On the other hand, we have seen that when it comes to the proper role of agronomic science in relation to farmers and farming practices, prescriptive approaches are to be prevented, according to Andersson and Giller. What is needed is "a radical shift away from adapting principles or technologies to local circumstances, toward localised agronomic knowledge production" (Giller et al., 2015, p. 9).[34] The role of agronomic science is then to provide a "basket of options" (Giller et al., 2015), echoing a notion dating back to the Contill project (see also Hagmann, Chuma, Connolly, & Murwira, 1997) and even further back to Chambers and colleagues (1989, pp. 182–183) who spoke about a "basket of choices." This basket of options is understood as "explor[ing] systematically the needs and opportunities of the diversity of farmers in any given region"[35] (Giller et al., 2015, p. 9).

Given that Andersson and Giller criticize CA for being value-laden and normative, and arguing for a radical shift away from such an approach, the implicit suggestion seems to be that their basket of options is neutral with respect to values and norms. However, this does not fully accord with what they write in another (extensively co-authored) publication; there they do acknowledge that they have a "'partisan' role … primarily in the research questions we select. Much attention is given, therefore, to identifying researchable questions that are especially relevant to weaker groups" (Giller et al., 2008, para. Becoming and remaining legitimate). The latter does challenge any neutrality of the basket of options. At the same time, however, there remains a hint of what Bawden (2012), following Lawrence Busch, calls an "abdication of moral responsibilities," because privileging the questions and interests of weaker groups does not necessarily mean to contribute as scientists to a sustainable and just agricultural practice and development.

FfF, in contrast, is very explicit about normativity and connects it with God's will – God's way. Indeed, important for farmers is to submit to God's will:

> Why do we 'lean on our own understanding' and not trust in the way He has shown us how to farm? Do we presume to be better at farming than God? Or is it our pride to do it our way? Or is it that we still trust our earthly father's way?" (Dryden, 2009, p. 9)

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34 Andersson and Giller are not fully consistent themselves, as they write that "agronomy, and the identification and validation of new technologies or practices, thus becomes a 'place-based' science in which general production ecology principles (theory) and agricultural development aspirations (direction) are applied in specific local contexts and systems" (Giller et al., 2015, p. 10). So, also with them, principles play a role.
35 Interestingly, in this 2015 paper, Giller and Andersson and others do not speak of "participation," but stick to "farmer needs." This is a move away from the more Habermassian dialogue-approach articulated by Hagmann, Chuma, and Murwira (1996).

According to FfF, the way God has agriculture meant to be, can be observed from nature, as we noted in section 3.3.[36] This provides for the technological norms of no ploughing and no burning or removal of mulch from the field. Important is imitation: "We need to follow what we see Him do in creation as closely as we can, to simulate His laws in an agricultural environment where there are high demands and pressures" (Dryden, 2009, p. 33).

Yet, those technological norms, together with managerial norms, remain *proximate* norms to achieve food security and prosperity.[37] *Ultimately*, the spiritual norm of turning from the Kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of God – by abandoning witchcraft and ancestral worship – is considered most important to tackle the yoke of food insecurity and poverty. This is, for instance, illustrated by Dryden's deploring of the partial adoption of FGW by the Zambian agricultural extension department. As he notes, the Zambians "changed important fundamentals of the technology" and did not incorporate "the holistic teaching of Farming God's Way and only the technology was rolled out which was a great tragedy considering the potential for Farming God's Way to extend God's Kingdom" (Dryden, 2009, p. 14).

Thus, we can understand that the fundamental difference between Andersson and Giller and FfF is located in the *source and knowability of normativity*. In the broader Western philosophical history this source and knowability of normativity has increasingly become a problem.[38] Since the Enlightenment, the human self-understanding is characterized by both rationality and freedom. For Enlightenment thinkers, freedom means that the source of values and norms, the meaning of human being, is placed in the human subject itself. Freedom is autonomy. On the other hand, rationality is the instrument for controlling reality and realizing this human freedom. At the same time, this rationality is goal in itself as ideal of absolute and sure knowledge. The latter represents an inheritance from Greek philosophy, for it was there that human reason came to be seen as having access to true and sure knowledge. In this way, acquiring knowledge through reason equalled liberation from mere opinion.

Standing at the beginning of the Enlightenment period, Descartes still thought that God's existence was as sure as his own subjective (thinking) existence. However, over the centuries this idea gradually lost its appeal: God's existence became a question. Thus, although with the Greeks a rational order was conceived to be outside, given to human beings, possibly by a divine world, in modern times the foundation of the rational order is more and more located within the human subject. It is the human subject which has to give meaning to a reality that is in itself meaningless. This has become known as the Cartesian subject-object scheme.

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36 This argument from nature shows interesting parallels with the currently popular concept of *biomimicry*. See, for instance, Blok and Gremmen (2016). Note, however, that it always concerns an *interpretation* of what is normative in nature.
37 It is less clear where managerial norms are derived from by FfF.
38 We rely here on Geertsema's (1992) narrative of modernity, but this narrative is broadly shared (see also Taylor, 1989).

If we look at agriculture, we can note that the dominant, industrial way of farming, that has been shaped, among others by the Cartesian subject-object scheme (Rademaker & Van den Hee, 2018), has run into all kinds of different problems, which are well-known today. In this vein, the question as to the *meaning* of agricultural development beyond individual preference or profit has imposed itself. Also, as Geertsema (1993, 2000, 2011) has argued, the Cartesian subject-object scheme cannot account for our experience as finite and responsible beings, due to the emphasis on absolute and sure knowledge. Carefully we would like to suggest that the latter finds its equivalent in agricultural research when moral responsibilities are abdicated.

As we argued, the latter problem can be identified in Andersson and Giller's work. Their dismissal of CA, as promoted by FfF, in the name of neutrality is too stringent, because it ignores that we, as scientists, are always already co-responsible for the agricultural development we contribute to. For one thing, also something like *participation* is not necessarily an accomplished fact, but requires intensive effort (speaking to the scientist's responsibility). However, maybe more important is that the designed techniques and crops (the basket of options) will reflect the *direction* that has been chosen in the design process (Verkerk, Hoogland, Stoep, & Vries, 2015).[39] Even when there are several options in the basket, there will always be other options that are excluded. In our scientific practice we cannot avoid to contribute to a *particular* agricultural development. That is, the basket will never be *just* science-based.

Even though we have been most critical of Andersson and Giller's position, this does neither mean that FfF's agricultural approach is unproblematic, nor that the agricultural approaches of FBOs in general are necessarily unproblematic. We agree with Andersson and Giller that a hierarchical, prescriptive approach is to be eschewed. Yet, according to us, the problem is *not* that in a way normativity is seen as *inherent* to reality. In the next section we therefore want to give more philosophical flesh to this intuition.

3.7   An Alternative Approach

We start with the observation that we, as human beings, in our everyday dealings always already encounter a world full of qualitatively different relationships. Somewhat depending on our situation, we relate to parents, husbands, wives, children, friends, peers, employers, clients, patients, but also pets, bugs, trees, highways, chairs, etc. We do not treat them all alike: for instance, with my long-time friend I maintain a relationship of friendship that I do not entertain with my office chair. Thus, human being is primarily *relational* being, where relations have different *qualities*; we find ourselves in all different

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39 This often comes to the fore when agronomists describe the functions of artefacts and techniques. Thus, for instance, Woomer, Huising, and Giller (2014) speak of "good yields", "good price", "good inoculants", "good Lead Farmers", "seed of good quality", etc.

kinds of relationships to other entities that also influences how we behave towards them.

This has also implications for epistemology. To give some examples, we know what *care* is because we are already in care-relationships to fellow human beings, and not primarily because at a certain point we start to scientifically reflect on what care is. We know what *life* is because we are related to all different kinds of living beings: plants, animals and human beings. Scientific thought can sharpen and deepen this knowledge of things, but only at the price of being restricted: it abstracts from concrete reality as experienced and understood in everyday life (Dooyeweerd, 1969a). This means that science and scientific theories, being abstract, cannot provide for a comprehensive view of reality, that is, they cannot provide for a *worldview*. It is in everyday existence or "naïve pre-theoretical experience" (Dooyeweerd, 1969b, p. 3) that we experience coherence and unity in the diversity of reality. That is, there is not an original gulf between the thinking subject and the objective world around him or her that is to be bridged by knowledge; rather, the relationships we are already in – and which we encounter in everyday reality – provide the possibility for acquiring knowledge.

Now, to return to the different kinds of relationships to other entities we mentioned, this qualitative nature of reality implies *normativity*. This is best illustrated with an example offered by Geertsema (2008):

> Someone who enters a room where a court session is being held will not understand what is happening if he has no notion of what jurisdiction involves. The qualitatively distinctive nature of justice versus beauty, but also versus political power and economic benefit must be appreciated if someone is to understand what the judge is doing. The interest of justice may be at odds with the political advantage or economic benefit of those involved. The judge may include these aspects of the case in his considerations, but as such they should not be the deciding factor. The judgement must meet the criteria of the law, even if this involves political or economic disadvantage for parties. The quality of the law depends on the application of the law in a normative sense. (sec. 4.1)

For jurisdiction to be jurisdiction the actors like the judge, the prosecutor and the lawyer have to follow certain rules that are characteristic, even defining, for that practice; that is, the practice has a normative character. A judge advantaging economic interests above the juridical norm of justice violates the structure of that practice. If this would be consistently done, the juridical practice would lose any meaning *as* juridical practice. This means that juridical norms make the juridical practice possible.

Yet, we claim, norms do not only make possible the juridical practice, but they do so for all human practices. In the Normative Practice Approach (NPA) – that we would like to link up with – this has been further developed.[40] In the NPA, a normative

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40 The NPA is based on work of MacIntyre (1985) and Dooyeweerd (1969a).

practice – henceforth "practice" for short – is understood as a social structure that embodies a coherent form of socially established, cooperative human activity (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000; Jochemsen, 2006b). As such, practices have developed historically and embody normative choices that have been made by practitioners over the course of the practices' history. This can be further elucidated by distinguishing between the *constitutive, regulative,* and *contextual* side to practices. First, the constitutive side refers to the norms and values that really constitute practices: they are always already presupposed in practices. In the courtroom example, for instance, this centred around impartiality and doing justice. This is to say that established practices have an inherent purpose, end, or value. Also, norms pervade a practice that enable the realization of the inherent end of the practice and provide boundary conditions to it. Thus, normativity is always already part of practices. This normativity we can find first of all in the implicit knowledge of rules that allow the competent performance of the practice. We can refer to the knowledge of those implicit rules as know-how or tacit knowledge. However, this tacit knowledge can to a certain extent also be formalized in explicit rules, such as in teaching materials and codes of conduct.

Especially important on the constitutive side are *qualifying* norms (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000; Jochemsen, 2006b). Qualifying norms refer to the inherent end of a practice, that what it is all about. In the case of farming, for instance, this is about the production of food and fibre for human consumption.

Second, the contextual side of practices refers to the environment – including both the natural and societal environment – of practices that influences the roles and responsibilities of practitioners (Glas, 2017). Important here is the organizational environment; practices can be and often are embedded in organizations, the most familiar of which are public, for-profit, and non-profit or non-governmental organizations.

Third, the directional or regulative side rather refers to the overall orientation of practices at a certain point in time: some aspects are disclosed, others are not (Glas, 2009a). For instance, a just jurisdiction (disclosing the juridical aspect) that is so expensive so as to completely drain governmental resources violates an economic norm (not disclosing the economic aspect). This normative directedness of practices reflects the normative choices made by practitioners in the course of the practices' histories under influence of different – and often unarticulated – ethoi and worldviews (Jochemsen, 2006b, p. 106). For instance, a farmer in his or her everyday practice faces the choice "*how* to play her or his role, cheerfully or sullenly, carelessly or conscientiously, efficiently or inefficiently" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 326). This appeals to the *ethos* of the practitioner. However, as MacIntyre further notes, "the way in which the role is enacted presupposes not only an answer to a question posed to and by the role-player: 'How is it best for me to play this role?,' but also to such further questions: 'By what standards am I to judge what is best?' and 'Should I continue to play this role in this way?'" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 326). Those questions are pre-eminently of a worldview character as it asks for a stance concerning

my place, as a human being, in the world. In the world – and not merely in this practice, as those questions impose themselves across the diversity of practices and roles played.

At this point we note that it is through worldviews that faith and religion play an important role in practices. Even though worldviews arise from the lifeworlds of people, and hence have a contextual component, worldviews always also claim both our *assent* and *ultimacy* (Griffioen, 2012), that is, they express our deepest convictions and commitments with respect to our place, as human beings, in the world. Another way of saying this is that every human being is religious and has faith, in the sense that in our daily lives we all trust in and commit ourselves to something we consider Ultimate (Geertsema, 1993, 2000; Olthuis, 1989), which influences how we interpret and perform practices. Without this orientation provided by worldviews we would not know how to live our lives and perform our practices.

3.8   Faith and Religion in Agricultural Development

In our view, the NPA is highly relevant in the debate around science-based versus faith-based approaches in agricultural development, in particular because it problematizes the dichotomy of science versus faith. Furthermore, it provides a way to account for normativity, which, as we noticed in section 3.6, is hard on the modern, Cartesian understanding.

We cannot at this point recapitulate all the literature that has been produced concerning the relationship between science and faith/religion.[41] What we rather want to do here is to use the NPA to sketch an alternative to the conflictual model implied by the science-based versus faith-based position in agricultural development.

According to us, it is important to distinguish between (at least) three different normative practices in the case of agricultural development in SSA: the *farming practice* as practiced by farmers and fieldworkers, the *agronomic scientific practice* as practiced by scientists, and the *faith practice* as practiced by believers (be they Christian, Muslim or animist).[42] Whereas the farming practice is structurally characterized by the production of food and fibre crops for consumption, the agronomic scientific practice is structurally characterized by theory-formulation of production-ecological phenomena, possibly

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41 A classical work is that of Barbour (1990).

42 Our approach is in line with Briggs who proposes to reconceptualize *indigenous knowledge* in terms of *practice*, meaning "grounded and rooted in a particular context and [being] a clearly integral part of the everyday practice of production" (Briggs, 2013, p. 238). This shift also does justice to Agrawal's argument that common elements can be found in both Western and indigenous knowledge, such as agroforestry ("Western") and "the multiple tree cropping systems of small-holders in many parts of the world" ("indigenous"), thus undermining the idea of a strong difference between Western and indigenous knowledge (Agrawal, 1995, p. 421). Or, in Scott's words, we are talking here about a know-how that is "implicit in the most modern of activities" (Scott, 1998, pp. 313, 424n8).

with a view to practical application in the farming practice.[43] On the other hand, the faith practice is structurally characterized by trust and commitment, and because of that worship, of what is considered Ultimate – in the monotheistic religions God or Allah. Hence, in terms of the NPA, we could say that the farming practice is qualified by the *economic* aspect (see also Jochemsen, 2012), the agronomic scientific practice is qualified by the *analytical* aspect, and the faith practice by the *faith* aspect we can distinguish to reality.[44] Those aspects and those practices are irreducible to each other, that is, they differ qualitatively from each other.

The aspects that qualify the different practices are *normative* aspects. A central normative principle for the farming practice is to achieve a positive balance of benefits, namely, a valuable farm product or service for society, over costs (Rademaker et al., 2017). In contrast, in the agronomic scientific practice a central normative principle is to distinguish well between concepts so as to prevent contradiction and confusion. And, finally, in the faith practice a central normative principle is to trust in, commit oneself to, and worship what is considered Ultimate. As mentioned already in the context of the example of the juridical practice, this normativity is always already presupposed; without it the practice would be meaningless, and, stronger, would not exist as that practice.

In section 3.6 we noticed that the Cartesian way of thinking has problems to account for normativity. On the one hand human freedom is taken to be incompatible with normativity, but on the other hand it is expected of science to show how we ought to live and perform our practices ("science-based"). The NPA makes clear that normativity is *constitutive* for practices, including the (agronomic) scientific practice (see also Alrøe & Kristensen, 2002). Norms related to doing good science – such as scrupulousness and reliability in The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice (VSNU 2012) – need to be lived up to count for science *as* science.[45] This becomes especially clear in the light of sociological and anthropological analyses that have shown that scientific practice is frequently bound up with external interests and power structures. Clearly, also Andersson and Giller do not want to yield to a view that science is just expression of interests and power (Andersson et al., 2014). Yet, to maintain that, it would require an acknowledgement that

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43 Using this knowledge in the practical reality of farming is quite a different thing than just applying this knowledge (Gremmen, 1993), as many a graduated farmer's son or daughter will experience when trying to apply scientific knowledge in actual agricultural practice. As Glas (2009b) notes, the just graduated knows the principles and concepts, but does not know whether what he or she observes in the actual (farming) practice fits the concepts. He or she is uncertain about the relative weight of a particular explanation in light of the bigger whole. In this context, knowing how to act needs to be learned. This is often referred to as *knowing how*, as distinct from *knowing that* (e.g., Leeuwis & Van den Ban, 2004), and constitutes a tradition of how one ought to farm.

44 Philosopher Dooyeweerd (1969c) has argued that some fifteen *modal aspects*, or ways of functioning, can be distinguished to entities. Those include the analytical, economic and faith aspects, and the formative aspect that we will introduce later. These aspects relate to the diversity in reality we referred to earlier. For a practical application of this theory on (scaling in) agricultural development: Wigboldus et al. (2016).

45 Hence, Giller et al.'s (2008) remark that the scientific "'partisan' role . . . lies primarily in the research questions we select" is too limited ('Becoming and Remaining Legitimate,' para. 3). It also extends to the research process itself.

normativity is *inherent* to the agronomic scientific practice. Science cannot *itself* account for the normativity that nonetheless is presupposed in the scientific practice.[46] To account for this normativity we have to take recourse to worldviews (and philosophy), which, as we have shown, are intimately linked to faith as content (the regulative side of practices). In this sense, Andersson and Giller are right to link up normativity with faith, but are not right to limit this to explicitly faith-based approaches like FfF's. Faith commitments are operative in agronomic science as well, as they should.

In saying that agronomic science structurally presupposes an intimate relationship to normativity, we have not as yet said something explicit about the way different practices are (and ought to be) relating to each other. Yet, the NPA can provide guidance here as well. As noted, the three practices of farming, agronomic science, and faith are qualitatively different. They aim at different things. This has consequences for the way the agronomic science and faith practice ought to relate to the farming practice. To enable the flourishing and unfolding of the agricultural practice, as one manifestation of the rich *diversity* of reality, it should be kept in mind that it is primarily an economic practice, rather than an analytical or faith practice. For instance, overly stressing the scientific performance of the farming practice effectively denies farming practice its existence as farming practice, that is, it neglects that farming is qualified as an economic rather than analytical practice. If this is not observed, the danger is that the farming practice becomes instrumentalized by the other practices. In the past, for instance, Christian churches and missionaries have been accused of proselytization where provision of material rewards was conditional upon becoming a Christian. Something analogous is pertinent to FBOs like FfF, but also present for agronomic scientists if the focus is only on "scientificness" and effectiveness (Hardeman & Jochemsen, 2012).

The background of the problem of instrumentalization originates in practitioners' total identification of the diversity of practices we encounter in everyday life with the qualification of one type of practice. It seems this is the problem that Andersson and Giller associate with FfF: adopting a particular farming approach – CF/FGW – is framed primarily in terms of an act of faith. As such, the own nature of the farming practice threatens to become stifled. However, a discussion on what good farming means can never side-step the inherent end of agriculture. Indeed, in line with what we have argued, the aspect of faith does not qualify the farming practice, even though it is not absent from it. The farming practice is not the same thing as a church worship service. They have a different normative structure. For FfF – and FBOs in general – this means that in the discussion about the appropriateness of particular proposed agricultural (sub-)practices and techniques, arguments will have to relate to the production of food for consumption and ways to improve this, quantitatively *and* qualitatively. The faith understanding may then come to the fore especially in the way broader normativity is taken into account, besides the central values of effectiveness and efficiency in industrial

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46 And, we should note, it is precisely this normativity that *enables* scientific freedom.

agriculture (Glenna, 2002; Hardeman & Jochemsen, 2012; Thompson, 2010).[47]

3.9   Conclusion

Gray (2004) writes in *Heresies* that "believers in progress are seeking from technology what they once looked for in political ideologies, and before that in religion: salvation from themselves" (p. 23). In line with this, several scholars have argued that mainstream international development cooperation, with its belief in progress and improvement, can be seen as a *religious* endeavour (Plant, 2009; Rist, 2014; Salemink, 2015).

By now it must be clear that what is needed to evaluate the claim that international (agricultural) development cooperation is a religious practice, is a philosophical analysis of the structure of international (agricultural) development cooperation. This will articulate the normative characteristics of this practice that function as presuppositions for this practice. The most important question here will be whether the faith aspect, whatever its content, normatively *qualifies* the practice, for it is only then that we can speak about international (agricultural) development cooperation as a religious practice as such. However, if the faith aspect does not qualify the (agricultural) development cooperation practice – and we think it does not – this does not mean that faith is absent from the practice. The NPA makes clear that it will continue to function as a worldview (part of the regulative side), influencing the interpretation of all the normative rules of the practice (constitutive side), as we have argued in this paper.

Indeed, the most important conclusion of this paper is that every normative practice has a faith aspect, but not every practice is normatively qualified by the faith aspect; in fact, most practices are not. More specifically, we have argued that we should distinguish between farming, agronomic science, and faith practices, which are qualified by economic, analytical, and faith aspects, respectively.

The most important implication of the NPA is that it comprises a critique of a narrow science-based, or, as popular in policy circles, evidence-based approach. We emphasize "narrow", because clearly science and evidence do have an important role to play in relation to agricultural development. Yet, as we have argued, we will have to keep in view that farming is not a scientifically qualified practice, but an economically qualified practice. Science is important and scientific findings will always need to be integrated into the farming practice. But this integration happens from a broader outlook on the world and the place of human beings in it. That is, the direction agricultural development takes, is not only determined by the scientific evidence, but

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47 Andersson and Giller do realize that agriculture cannot do without "agricultural development aspirations" (Giller et al., 2015, p. 10). We could see aspirations as a manifestation of the regulative function of faith in agricultural practice: when in good order, we as human beings involved with farming do pose the question what makes for a *meaningful* agricultural development. And the farmer will ask him- or herself what his or her place is in this process.

in an important sense also by the worldview commitments of practitioners, be they farmers, scientists, or FBO staff. And it is precisely here that faith and religion play their crucial role.

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Modernizing Kenyan Dairy Farming?

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4.1   Introduction

Poverty and food insecurity are central concerns in international development cooperation. The number of people living below the poverty line of US$1.90 is on the decline worldwide from almost 2 billion people in 1990 to 700 to 800 million people in 2015, while the number of undernourished people has declined from just over 1 billion in 1990-92 to 797 million people in 2014-16. Nevertheless, poverty and undernourishment are persistent in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) where the number of extremely poor people *increased* from 290 to 350 million from 1990 to 2015, while the number of undernourished people increased from 173 million people in 1990-92 to 213 million people in 2014/16 (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], 2017).

Poverty and food insecurity are more concentrated in rural areas (FAO, 2012, 2017). Hence, many development projects and programmes[48] aim at improving the agricultural sector, including the livestock sector, in SSA. Livestock development can be helpful for poverty alleviation, because a large share of the rural poor keep livestock and the demand for animal products is growing rapidly in developing countries (FAO, 2012, p. xiii, 2018).

At the same time, development programmes in general have received critiques on their *results*, *methods*, and *motives* (Buijs, 2001; Quarles van Ufford et al., 2003). First, regarding results, development cooperation is frequently thought to be ineffective when it comes to helping poor people to overcome poverty. Indeed, specific to livestock development it has been concluded that the track record of sustained poverty alleviation is weak and only a minority of livestock keepers have benefitted from opportunities provided by livestock sector development (FAO, 2012; Livestock in Development [LID], 1999). On the other hand, livestock development has been criticized for the maintenance and further entrenchment of political power relations (Ferguson, 1990).

Second, development cooperation has received criticism related to the methods used. The critique concerns the view and practice that (implicitly) sees farmers as to-be-developed objects. What the critique puts forward is that farmers are knowledgeable, capable, and active subjects in their own right (Chambers, 1994; Chambers et al., 1989; Pretty, 1995). Central therefore is respect for human agency. Hence, programmes focus on oppressive structures and try to change those. Examples include programmes that aim to change trade policy for livestock products.

Third, development cooperation has received criticism in relation to motives. Critiques usually concern the charity motive and the enlightened self-interest motive

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48 Where policies respond to broad and often interrelated problems in a particular field and provide a vision for development in that field, programmes are directed at specific situations within that field (Fischer, 2006, p. 28). Projects can be seen as parts of programmes. Here we are specifically interested in programmes and projects. For brevity, in the following we will use the term *programme* to refer to both of them, except when otherwise stated.

(Gasper, 1999; Van Lieshout et al., 2010). Charity means giving to others beyond obligation, whereas enlightened self-interest means giving to others only when something is received in return. Governments often have dual motives for development cooperation, that is, charity at the micro-level (humanitarian assistance) and enlightened self-interest at the macro-level (trade) (Thompson, 1992; Van Lieshout et al., 2010). Those motives are criticized from a justice motive, arguing that more just international relations are required.

We could add a fourth type of critique related to the three other kinds of critiques, but nevertheless distinct from it. It is often found in (cultural-) anthropological and ethnographic works and can be called *critique of worldview(s)*. For instance, the anthropologist Stirrat argues that the development consultancy sector that assesses development efforts is pervaded by a "culture of modernity," by which he means "a formal commitment to a particular view of reality and a faith in 'rationality'" (Stirrat, 2000, p. 35; see also Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). Inherent to this culture of modernity is an opposition of rational objectivity to irrational and subjective culture, where development consultants supposedly possess the former rather than the latter. That is, modernizers present themselves as *acultural*. The point of this type of critique is not so much to privilege the beliefs and convictions of the people for whom development programmes say they work (although it has done that too), but rather to create an equal playing field in terms of knowledge claims. Knowledge claims remain connected to worldviews. Agricultural development programmes that really have taken this type of critique to heart seem to be scarce.

The question behind this study is whether the failure of livestock development cooperation in terms of results, methods, and motives can be explained, even if partly, by the dominant modern worldview which has been so influential in Western culture. Answering this question will need both an analysis of the operation of the modern worldview in livestock development programmes, as well as an analysis of the actual results of these programmes. In this article, we report on the first part: an extensive analysis of ten evaluations of eight dairy development interventions in Kenya. We show that there is a considerable difference in the degree to which the modern worldview can be found in the way those development interventions have been conceived and implemented, with generally bilateral and multilateral programmes showing a stronger Cartesian tendency in extension than NGO-implemented programmes.

4.2   Theoretical Framework

The central concept in this study is *worldview*. We will elaborate here what we understand by this concept. We are not the first to use the concept of worldview in relation to development cooperation. There is a body of literature that argues for endogenous

development to do justice to intended beneficiaries' own values and worldviews (Boogaard, 2019; Haverkort et al., 2003; Malunga & Holcombe, 2014). Even though the term worldview suggests it is merely an outward looking unto the world, it is better to conceive of it as a particular understanding of a group of people of themselves in the world. Accordingly, Buijs describes a

> worldview as a complex whole of shared basic notions, often no more than intuitions about how the world is and what matters in the world, about how life 'works' and what is really important in life, more or less articulated in shared symbols, rites, practices, and standard intuitions. (Buijs, 2008, p. 231)

As such, worldviews bear an inherent promise of leading the way to goods like "meaning, identity, even 'salvation', wholeness, and integrity" (Buijs, 2008, p. 231). Furthermore, worldviews organize human experiences, highlighting and legitimating some, and suppressing and delegitimating others. In this way, they provide "a more or less collectively shared map that can guide an individual human being through these basic experiences" (Buijs, 2008, pp. 231–232). Worldviews contain the concrete experiences of a particular group of people through time and as such they are vessels of contextual wisdom.

What we just described pertains to the structure of worldviews (Griffioen, 2012). However, this is not to deny that worldviews always also have a particular content, precisely because they point to the situatedness of human knowledge in the world (Heidegger), as well as in history (Gadamer) and language (Wittgenstein)(Schultz, 1992).

One such worldview is the *modern* or *Cartesian* worldview. We can consider René Descartes (1596-1650) – hence the term Cartesian – as one of the representatives of this worldview, even though "he codified philosophically a cultural trend that had already paved its way before him" (Kołakowski, 1990, p. 8).[49] Answers to all kinds of questions provided by "the" tradition were radically put in question. Radically, because Descartes wanted to pursue "contextless doubt" (MacIntyre, 2006, p. 8) and to construct new, rational knowledge, unhindered by tradition. Thus, Descartes took himself to stand outside of all tradition. Since then, the opposition of tradition to modernity has been firmly embedded in the Cartesian tradition of thought, as well as in Western culture broadly. Taylor notes in a lecture on the Catholic tradition in relation to modernity how strong the bell of "modern" rings for our ears:

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49 Several logical consequences of his worldview only showed up later with his followers and in Western culture in general (for instance, the role of faith and God in relation to knowledge). Do note, therefore, that Descartes is used here as a pivotal figure in the development of a broader modern worldview.

> such is the force of this adjective 'modern' in our culture, that one might immediately get the sense that the object of my search was a new, better, higher catholicism [*sic*], meant to replace all those outmoded varieties which clutter up our past. (Taylor, 1996, p. 7)

This also resonates in words like *modern science* and *modern technology*. Thus, the idea of *progressiveness* is deeply rooted in Western culture. At the same time, there is a deep ambiguity as the term modern seems to be value-free and neutral (Kołakowski, 1990).

Related to the opposition of tradition to modernity, is the opposition of subject to object. Descartes thought he had found absolute certain knowledge in his own thinking existence: *Cogito, ergo sum*. This absolute starting-point was to provide a sure fundament for the reconstruction of the edifice of knowledge. With Descartes therefore, a radical turn towards the individual subject took place (*individualism*). Yet, as Geertsema (2008) points out, this also had practical consequences, because Descartes took the mathematical method of natural science to be the surest way to build the edifice of knowledge, which application in practical life would lead to the improvement of life. Yet, with the move to the subject, all that is outside the thinking subject started to appear as object to be understood and controlled with the mathematical method. The practical result of opposing subject to object this way, was that everything outside the subject came to be seen as meaningless in itself. It is material for rational reconstruction, where meaning is given by the free and autonomous subject(s) who do the reconstruction. Objective reality, in contrast, is without intrinsic value and without normative limits to how it can be dealt with (Dooyeweerd, 1979; Geertsema, 2008). Rationality is therefore *instrumental rationality*.

Despite his fundamental orientation to his own subjective thinking existence, Descartes still thought that it was certain that God existed. A God who assured that there was meaning and order in the world (and assured that Descartes' own reasoning was not led astray by some evil genius). However, over the centuries this idea gradually lost its appeal: God's existence became a question. Internal to the Cartesian worldview was the seed of *secularization*, that only came to develop later. This led to a situation in which the human subject must give order and meaning to a meaningless reality.

Accordingly, the Cartesian worldview, just sketched, can be summarized with the keywords *progressiveness*, *individualism*, *instrumental rationality*, and *secularization*. Two things must be noted, however. First, we have no *claire et distinct* concept of the modern worldview, precisely because, despite enduring themes, it is, as a worldview, not static but subject to change.[50] Second, the Cartesian worldview is one amongst other worldviews, even though it may be related to other worldviews in a complex

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50 People involved in international development cooperation are all too aware of differences in worldviews and the frustrations this may bring along. In our view, we will have to do justice to this experience, as also the Ghanaian philosopher Gyekye (2011) does: "Despite the indisputable cultural diversity that arises from Africa's ethnic pluralism, there are underlying affinities in many areas of the African life; this is surely true in the African religious and moral outlook" ('On the terms 'Ethics' and 'Morality', para. 1). It seems to us, this can be best conceived of as a Wittgensteinian "family resemblance."

way. For instance, within the Western world Jürgen Habermas has severely criticized instrumental rationality and individualism, and argued that we also need a concept of communicative rationality. At the same time, he explicitly affirms the progressive and secular elements of the modern worldview.

In this article we focus on dairy development in Kenya. Several scholars have drawn attention to the African-animist worldview ubiquitous in SSA which differs significantly from the Cartesian worldview (Ellis & Ter Haar, 2007; Haverkort et al., 2003; Kimmerle, 2006; Van der Walt, 2006). We will briefly discuss the contents of this African-animist worldview in relation to the characteristics of the Cartesian worldview, namely progressiveness, individualism, instrumental rationality, and secularization.[51]

In his classical work *African Religions and Philosophy,* Mbiti (1969) stated that "African man . . . is a deeply religious man living in an intensely religious universe" (p. 109). Although dated, in general this claim still holds true (Ellis & Ter Haar, 2007; Ter Haar & Ellis, 2006, 2009). In the African-animist worldview, the world has visible (or natural and social) and invisible (or spiritual) dimensions (Haverkort et al., 2003; Kimmerle, 2006; Van 't Hooft, Wollen, & Bhandari, 2012). The visible world is populated by the now living people, as well as beings like rivers, plants, animals and human artefacts. Deceased family members or the "living-dead" and the yet-to-be-born are present as spirits in the spiritual dimension of the world. However, not all spirits are human-derived; there are spirits and divinities that were created directly by God or the Supreme Being (Mbiti, 1969, Chapter 8).

This explicitly religious worldview clearly deviates from the secular Cartesian worldview. In the African-animist worldview, reality is enchanted. Spirits may dwell, for instance, in trees and the land (Kimmerle, 2006). This also puts boundaries to instrumental action: not everything may be manipulated to suit humans' ends. However, the African-animist worldview also differs in terms of the status of the individual in society. In the African-animist worldview, the kinship community, including the living-dead, precedes the individual in a normative way. The community sets the norm and ideal for the individual, that is, the in-group is more important than the out-group (Van der Walt, 2006). Face-to-face interactions are therefore much stronger and important than impersonal relations. This resonates with a communitarian worldview which in some forms can also be found in Western countries.

Finally, in the African-animist worldview the future hardly figures in the thinking and lives of people. "African peoples have no 'belief in progress,' the idea that the development of human activities and achievements move from a low to a higher degree" (Mbiti, 1969, p. 23). Rather, actual time (or *Sasa*) moves "backward" into the past (or *Zamani*) rather than "forward" to an infinite future (significantly, there is no

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51 The African-animist worldview has a clear religious background in the sense that it refers to a spiritual dimension of the world. We do not claim that *conceptually* no African worldview is possible that is secular in the sense that it does not acknowledge a spiritual dimension of the world. Yet, whether that would really be possible in an *existential* sense is another question.

Swahili word to refer to "the future") (Mbiti, 1969).

The African-animist worldview shows a family resemblance to African worldviews of more recent origin, such as the African-pentecostalist worldview that also is heavily focused on "the spiritual" (Ellis & Ter Haar, 2007) or an African-communitarian worldview focusing on the normative importance of the community (Gyekye, 1997). On the other hand, with respect to ideas about time, rationality, the place of the individual in society, and the spiritual world, the African-animist worldview contrasts strongly with the Cartesian worldview. If the African-animist worldview is indeed so ubiquitous in SSA as reported in the literature, we may expect that development programmes which work from a Cartesian worldview will have difficulty to connect to the lifeworld of Africans and, hence, also face limited programme success. In this study, therefore, we investigate the extent to which livestock development programmes exhibit such a Cartesian worldview.

4.3   Methodology

Worldviews show themselves in the way people act, including (scientific) think acts. Accordingly, the degree to which the Cartesian worldview shows itself in livestock development cooperation can be assessed using the four elements of progressiveness, individualism, instrumental rationality, and secularization. Here we elaborate on their precise meaning in relation to development cooperation and clarify which search terms we used to analyse the evaluation documents.

4.3.1   Progressiveness
As discussed, the element of progressiveness is challenging because of the ambiguity between a descriptive and evaluative meaning. The latter meaning only reveals itself in the use of certain terms in a broader context, in this case the evaluation document. Accordingly, results from the search expression "progressiveness = modern* | progress* | tradition* | conservative" were interpreted from the broader narratives the documents conveyed.

4.3.2   Instrumental Rationality
In the Cartesian worldview, the individual is perceived to be part of machine-like reality where interactions among individuals are seen to be mediated by mechanisms – such as the market mechanism. Instrumental rationality is oriented to bringing about a certain state of affairs in this in itself meaningless world. Accordingly, the search term we used was: "instrumental rationality = mechanis* | instrument* | rational | design* | goal |to achieve | reali*e | enable | attain | bring about | accomplish | deliver | lead* | uptake | adopt*." Results from the search were interpreted whether they fitted the meaning of instrumental rationality just described.

4.3.3   Individualism

Individualism reduces the status of societal structures such as the family and government to its significance for individual human beings (see also Hoksbergen, 1986). The search term used was: "individualism = individual | household | communit* | group." Results were checked as to whether the status of collective structures were reduced to its significance for individuals.

4.3.3   Secularization

In the Cartesian worldview the focus on instrumental rationality relegates faith and religion, and ethical convictions rooted in them, to the subject-pole in programme design. Hence, any normative claims originating in religion and worldview are considered personal preference and as such without public legitimacy. Were secularization dominant in development programmes, we would expect to find little about faith, religion, and ethics. The search term was: "secularization = faith | religio* | spiritual | witchcraft | ethics."

4.3.4   Case Selection

A limited number of case studies was collected based on expert knowledge of recent dairy development programmes in Kenya. The focus on Kenya was due to the fact that the first author was involved with another research project on Kenyan dairy development (Rademaker, Bebe Omedo, van der Lee, Kilelu, & Tonui, 2016). Evaluations that were included had to evaluate whole projects or programmes and not one specific variable. Programme evaluation documents were imported as PDF document into the software programme ATLAS.ti 7.[52] A limited code scheme consisting of the four elements introduced earlier was created (categorical coding). The sublabels for the four elements were left to emerge from the text documents (open coding). As a whole, the study therefore employed mixed coding (Gough, Oliver, & Thomas, 2012).

4.4   Discussion of Findings

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the dairy programmes that were included in this study, as well as some characteristics of them. It must be noticed that for both the Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Programme (SDCP) and Farmers Fighting Poverty (FFP) programme two evaluation documents were available, which for SDCP were two different evaluations, while for the FFP it concerned an overall evaluation and a specific case-study into dairy.

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52 ATLAS.ti is a software program designed for qualitative data analysis. ATLAS.ti is a registered trademark of ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin.

Table 4.1. Overview of evaluated Kenyan dairy programmes as included in this study.

Project/Programme name	Abbreviation	Time period	Funding agencies	Main implementing agencies
Improving Livelihoods in the Smallholder Dairy Sector in Kenya	ILSD	2007-2010	UK Department for International Development (DfID)	Traidcraft Exchange, SITE Enterprise Promotion
National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Programme Phase II	NALEP II	2007-2011	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture, Kenyan Ministry of Livestock Development
Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Programme	SDCP	2007-2014	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Government of Kenya	Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries
Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program	KDSCP	2008-2013	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Land O'Lakes International Development
East African Dairy Development Project	EADD	2008-2013	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)	Heifer International, TechnoServe, International Livestock Research Institute, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), African Breeders Services-Total Cattle Management
Core Subsidy Funded Dairy Program Kenya	CSFDP	2009-2012	Dutch Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS)	SNV Netherlands Development Organisation
East African Agricultural Productivity Programme	EAAPP	2010-2014	World Bank	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa, Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture, Kenyan Ministry of Livestock Development, Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organisation
Farmers Fighting Poverty/Producenten Ondersteuning Programma	FFP	2012-2014	DGIS	Agriterra

Table 4.2 depicts the results of the analysis of the ten evaluation documents. The columns show the elements of the Cartesian worldview which were formulated beforehand. The rows show aggregation levels. The core labels which appeared from the data fill in the matrix. The numbers behind the core labels denote in how many evaluation documents the labels popped-up. In case several sublabels were found, a summative category was created with a subtotal count of original documents, which are shown in italics. In the formulation of the labels we stuck close to the wordings used in the evaluations. To gain focus and enable a detailed discussion, we present only the lowest aggregation levels of *farming practice* and *farm household* (the other levels were *farmer/trader organizations*, *dairy sector*, and *development programme*). This does not significantly alter the interpretation of the data, except that across all aggregation levels the elements of progressiveness and individualism had an even stronger prevalence (90 and 90 per cent versus 70 and 60 per cent).

As expected, dairy programmes differed in the degree to which they showed traces of the influence of a Cartesian worldview. Judged qualitatively, the Improving Livelihoods in the Smallholder Dairy Sector (ILSD) programme was the least Cartesian in character as it did not figure in any of the elements at the levels of the farming practice and farm household. The programme distinguished itself from the other programmes in that it was working with milk traders rather than with farmers, but, more importantly, explicitly focused on making public regulations more amenable to those milk traders, meanwhile actively involving the milk traders. Other programmes did include activities which addressed the regulatory setting of farmers, but it did not belong to the core activities of these programmes.

The programmes most strongly Cartesian in character were the National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Programme Phase II (NALEP II), the SDCP, the Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program (KDSCP) and the East Africa Dairy Development (EADD) programme, in the sense that all four elements were applicable at the levels of the farming practice and farm household.[53] At the same time, a programme like the Eastern Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (EAAPP), which was not found under the element of progressiveness, had a much stronger focus on instrumental rationality (together with the SDCP) than, for instance, the EADD programme. In the following we will elaborate on these nuances among programmes.

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53 Unfortunately, our analysis does not enable us to attribute particular language in the evaluation documents to either the writers of these documents or to the broader programme. Consultants writing those evaluations follow to a great extent the Terms of References provided by the organization requesting the evaluation – often the donor. However, we may not assume that consultants do not bring their own worldview along in writing these documents (Stirrat, 2000).

Table 4.2. The core labels as they emerged from the analysed Kenyan dairy programmes.

Criterion Aggregate level	Progressiveness	Instrumental rationality	Individualism	Secularization
Farming practice	Progressive farmers (1)	Receptive farmers (1)		
	Traditional dairy farming lacks technology (1)	Changing farmers' thinking from production- to commercially-based (1)		
	Moving away from traditional commodities (2)			
	Modern dairy farming is land- and cattle-intensive (2)			
	Modern dairy farming realizes higher milk yields (6)			
	Modern technologies and practices (5)	Transfer, adoption and up-scaling of improved technologies and practices (9)		
	Subtotal: 7	*Subtotal: 9*		
Farm household	Gendered roles in farm households with traditionally limited role for women in decision-making (2)		Women's control over farm household resources (6)	
Total documents	7	9	6	0
Percentage of all documents	70%	90%	60%	0%

4.4.1 Modernizing the Farmer Practice

The element of progressiveness was found especially in relation to the primary farming practice (7 out of 10 documents; 6 out of 8 programmes). Modern farming was associated with higher milk yields (6 out of 10 documents; 5 out of 8 programmes), as well as the use of technologies[54] and practices that contribute to increasing milk yields (5 out of 10 documents; 5 out of 10 programmes). Only the ILSD programme and

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54 The term *technologies* refers here to technical artefacts such as milk coolers. In the evaluations the word technologies is also used to refer to practices, but for clarity's sake we distinguish the two and refer with practices to (new) ways of doing things which require particular skills and competencies, such as using artificial insemination instead of bulls in cattle breeding.

EAAPP and their evaluations showed no such explicit "modernization language" when it concerns the primary trading/farming practice.

Instrumental rationality was the most frequently encountered of all elements of the Cartesian worldview. The farming practice was viewed by 9 out of 10 documents as fit objects for transfer of improved technologies and practices (equal to 7 out of 8 programmes), and hence a concern with adoption and, in some cases, up-scaling. Only in the ILSD evaluation no instrumental rationality could be detected.

If we take the two elements of progressiveness and instrumental rationality together, the image that arises from the data is a postulated intimate connection – in fact, a chain – between (1) modern dairy farming technologies and practices, (2) increased milk productivity, and (3) increased farm income, where (1) leads to (2), and (2) leads to (3). The EADD evaluation provides an excellent illustration of this chain:

> To achieve the overall goal of doubling farmer income, and to ensure the financial viability of EADD supported hubs, the project has placed a high priority on boosting the production of dairy cows owned by beneficiary farmers through various dairy management activities such as improved livestock breeds and herd reduction, record keeping, increased use of AI, greater access to livestock veterinary care, and increased use of improved livestock feeding practices. (Sutter et al., 2013, p. 22)

Traditional farming, in contrast, is associated with a lack of technology, extensive rather than intensive farming, and unsuccessful agribusinesses and lower farm incomes. Thus, "traditional dairy farming, for example, may consist of milking cows and bottling the milk for sale. Injecting a little technology into the business allows the farmer to churn the milk to produce butter" (Capital Guardians Consultants [CGC], 2015, p. 88). In this perspective, the injection of modern technology – to be delivered by the programme (see below) – becomes a necessity for the further commercialization and development of dairy farming. Central in this development is also intensification: "Farmers started to invest resources and time into intensified dairy operations, including a shift away from traditional agricultural activities" (Social Impact Consulting & Imani Development, 2012, p. 22). Dairy farming is to intensify to create surplus production for sale to consumers. Indeed, surplus production coupled with formal markets arrangements – such as with milk processors instead of milk traders – are key ways "to ensure sustained progress in commercialization of an enterprise," according to the NALEP II evaluation (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency [Sida], 2011, p. 31). The aim is, as the EADD evaluation puts it, for "smaller herds of more productive cows" (Sutter et al., 2013, p. 17).

In accordance with the chain from modern dairy farming technologies and practices to increased milk productivity to increased farm income, in the programmes

heavy emphasis is placed on the transfer of modern technologies and practices to farmers (so progressiveness and instrumental rationality are intimately coupled). Indeed, the most dominant label in the analysed documents centres around transfer and farmers' adoption of technologies and practices. Practices – and related technologies – were therefore framed as in need of modernization. Examples include "modern milking techniques" (CGC, 2015, p. 96) and "modern breeding techniques" (Easterling & M'mboyi, 2013, pp. 13, 128). In fact, only the ILSD programme did not express an explicit concern for adoption, transfer, and up-scaling of technologies and practices, but rather focused on increasing the voice of milk traders in matters of dairy governance. Those programmes with a particularly strong emphasis on transfer and adoption had an express focus on (possibilities for) *up-scaling* technologies and practices. The EAAPP and NALEP II programme evaluations make explicit the paradigm behind technology and practices transfer, adoption and up-scaling. Central is, again, a chain, leading from research to new technologies and practices to its application on farm: "The agricultural innovation system envisaged under EAAPP is a chain – from international and local research, extension and advisory services to production, distribution of inputs and on-farm application" (Wellard, Chancellor, Okecho, Ndagire, & Mugarura, 2015, p. 51).[55] Extension and other services function in this regard as distribution channel from research to actual farming: "This model . . . starts with research and ends with farmers and variously includes other stakeholders in the innovation system – extension, input providers, buyers, processors" (Wellard et al., 2015, p. 52). Thus, extension is *instrumental* to persuade farmers to adopt particular pre-configured technologies and practices (see also Leeuwis & Van den Ban, 2004).

4.4.1.1 Extension

Basically, all programmes used a mixture of extension methods, chief among which non-residential training courses, demonstrations/field days, and farm visits. Only programmes in which implementing agencies were NGOs – KDSCP, CSFDP, and FFP – involved Farmer Field Schools (FFS) as extension method.[56] In this extension method, a facilitator guides groups of farmers in experimenting themselves with alternative technologies and/or practices on their farms, meeting at a certain time interval to discuss progress (FAO, 2016). FFSs potentially deviate from an instrumental extension approach because it does not assume that agricultural innovation originates only among scientists, but rather puts farmers forward as experimenters themselves.

In contrast with this, the SDCP, NALEP II and EAAPP – all of which had national government agencies implementing the programme – had a much stronger instrumental-

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55 This knowledge chain feeds into the earlier discussed productivity chain by delivering modern technologies and practices to farmers (see also Sida, 2011, p. 15).
56 The two other programmes in which NGOs were (co-)implementing, ILSD and EADD, did not involve FFSs. ILSD did not work with farmers but rather with dairy traders. EADD had no explicit focus on extension at all and the extension methods were only mentioned in passing in the evaluation.

rationally character. With this we mean that the rational programme design was expected to yield particular outcomes known beforehand. Thus, while the SDCP evaluation speaks about field days, demonstrations, and study or exchange tours as "farmer to farmer training models" (CGC, 2015, p. 26), this is not taken to challenge the presupposition that agricultural innovation originates primarily with agricultural research, as it is said that these farmer-to-farmer training models are "useful tools for transferring knowledge, skills and viable technologies to farmers" (CGC, 2015, p. 84). In this regard, the following quote neatly summarizes the central problem for planned development (here with a focus on energy-saving devices such as biogas plants): "As part of facilitating diffusion of appropriate and viable technologies and interactive sharing of experiences and promoting environmental conservation the programme should continue its extension efforts to support to field days, demonstrations and exchange tours" (CGC, 2015, p. 84). Thus, on the one hand the interactive sharing of experiences is put central, in line with farmer-to-farmer learning methods. On the other hand, the programme has certain goals, such as environmental conservation, that need to be met. The latter comes with a focus on adoption and up-scaling. Li (2005) has succinctly summarized this problem by saying that

> there are contexts in which [issues like] biodiversity can be protected simply by recognizing and valuing farmer practices and knowledge. In other contexts, to promote ecological [or other] values over short-run cash incomes is to claim an expert knowledge about how farmers should live and to seek to direct their conduct. (p. 391)

We can call this the *dilemma of planned development*.

In contrast to other programmes, the ILSD and FFP programmes put the agency of farmers central: the emphasis is, respectively, on increased voice for dairy traders and strengthening of farmed-led enterprises. This is not to say that in practice the programmes did not work in an instrumental-rationally way. For instance, the FFP evaluation notes that "especially for members of . . . newly established groups, predetermined project objectives are leading. Their interest to organize in groups are related to these project objectives which is putting ownership and sustainability at stake" (Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen [KIT], 2015, p. 45). The dilemma of planned development returns once again.

4.4.1.2 Alternative Ways of Farming?
The way of farming promoted in the programmes is *intensive* or *industrial (livestock) farming*. It is characterized by the use of animals that are highly productive when provided with the appropriate environment. To provide this environment, this type of farming relies heavily on the use of high-quality feed and advanced animal health care including the use of antibiotics. Technology plays an essential role to improve the production

capacities of animals (e.g., through artificial insemination and embryo transfer), as well as to provide the appropriate environment (e.g., automatic milking systems).

At present, the disadvantages of industrial farming are recognized broadly in the scientific community and the focus has shifted to *sustainable* intensification (McDermott, Staal, Freeman, Herrero, & Van de Steeg, 2010; Tarawali, Herrero, Descheemaeker, Grings, & Blümmel, 2011; Tilman, Balzer, Hill, & Befort, 2011). However, whether this amounts to a really changed ethos and worldview is debatable (Jochemsen, 2012).

Indeed, while most programme evaluations did include environmental concerns, on the level of practice environmental sustainability generally lost out. Only the FFP programme facilitated a NGO that worked on an alternative way of farming, namely organic farming. In fact, the FFP overall evaluation reprimanded the FFP programme for this: "The current vision seems much liaised with the ideology of the 'parenting' NGOs and not always aligned with the priorities of the members, for example with regard to food sovereignty, seed technology, GMO and organic farming" (KIT, 2015, p. 51). This shows, on the one hand, a sensitivity for the capability of farmers' organizations to set their own agenda, acknowledging that they might develop their organization in a different direction than desired by the programme. On the other hand, it creates a dilemma for a programme, because it usually has a clear sense of the desired direction for the further development of such farmers' organizations: the dilemma of planned development.

4.4.2   Individualists in the Farm Household

The dilemma of planned development also appears at the level of farm household gender relations. As the FFP overall evaluation writes: "There is . . . a dilemma whether Agriterra should influence the PO [producer organization, CJR] agenda or not in terms of putting gender issues on the agenda" (KIT, 2015, p. 60).

In 6 out of 10 programme evaluations gender equality is explicitly understood to consist in *increased individual women's control over household resources*. Thus, for instance, the NALEP II evaluation speaks about "an improvement in the level of participation in household decision-making and control of resources across gender divide" (Sida, 2011, p. 11). The strongest individualist understanding of gender was found in the SDCP evaluation by Bonilla et al. (2017), who speak about increasing "intra-household bargaining power" (Bonilla et al., 2017, p. iv). The focus on individual women was coupled with a strong instrumental-rationally outlook, involving a detailed design and gender strategy, in the case of the Kenyan division of the EAAPP that participated in a "gender mainstreaming programme, aiming to change mindsets and increase women's control over resources including labour, land and incomes" (Wellard et al., 2015, p. 76).

This puts us squarely back to the dilemma of planned development. For if the autonomy of individual women within the farm household is acknowledged and promoted, respecting that autonomy may well mean that the farming practice is developed in a direction undesired by the programme. For instance, in East Africa

women have greater control over evening milk than morning milk and generate more income from milk sold locally than from milk supplied to formal collection and bulking centres (Easterling & M'mboyi, 2013; Kristjanson et al., 2014; Sutter et al., 2013). Promoting the autonomy of women may, in this case, mean that less milk will be sourced via formal markets, which, however, is an objective integral to many dairy programmes.

Yet, the dilemma of planned development cuts at a deeper level as well. To the extent that gender strategies are employed to liberate women from the "patriarchal status quo" (Quisumbing et al., 2015, p. 722), a fundamental dialectic is at play between, on the one hand, the control exercised by the programme to realize this goal, and, on the other hand, the autonomy and freedom of the women at which the gender strategy is directed. This can be a very concrete dialectic, in the sense that the very mindsets of the women-which-should-be-autonomous are tried to be changed, for instance through gender trainings.

We saw that programmes exhibited a rather strong individualist focus in relation to farm household gender relations. However, it is interesting to note that also a remnant of a normative rather than an individualist interpretation of gender relations in the farm household was found in the EADD programme evaluation. At some point it is noted in the evaluation that to improve future EADD performance on gender, more research is needed into "the finding that female-headed households in Uganda and Rwanda are more likely (p≤0.1) to be among the non-engaged group of farmers than the engaged group . . . . Therefore they are not benefiting to the same extent as married women" (Sutter et al., 2013, p. 26). Clearly, this can only be true if married women in male-headed households benefit substantially from the intervention. It presupposes that benefits are substantially *shared* within households. Yet, as Harrison (2015) points out, in many contexts but especially sub-Saharan Africa, this is often *not* the case: especially male household heads do not always act in the interests of all family members and male household heads benefit proportionally to a greater extent. We could say therefore that in the EADD evaluation a remnant of understanding the household (or family) as being thoroughly communal and inherently normative – one *ought* to share – is operative, lest the household *becomes* a place of "conflict" and "separation" (Harrison, 2015, p. 153). That is, in the EADD evaluation there is implicitly a normative expectation that members of a household act for one another's interest and share (particular) resources. This means that there is a tension between, on the one hand, the emphasis in programmes on the control of farm household resources by individual women, and, on the other hand, an implicit normative expectation with respect to how one ought to behave in household settings.

This communal expectation may originate from different moral sources. African-animist, African-communitarian, and Muslim and Christian worldviews both from the West and Africa, typically conceive of the family as a community. Whatever the precise sources, in any case it does show that development programmes are not monolithic; it is not necessarily the case that one worldview – like the Cartesian worldview – *fully*

dominates the conception, implementation and evaluation of a programme. The dominance of a particular worldview is always a matter of *degree*.

4.4.3   Religious Farmers?

What is remarkable at the aggregate levels of the farming practice and farm household – but this actually applies to almost all levels – is that no results were found for the element of secularization. In a sense, this confirms the influence of a Cartesian – or at least secular – worldview in development programmes and evaluations. On the other hand, the absence of any reference to religious matters is remarkable given the omnipresent influence of religion and religious practices – including animism – in SSA societies, as reported in the literature (Ellis & Ter Haar, 2007; Haverkort et al., 2003; Kimmerle, 2006; Mbiti, 1969; Ter Haar & Ellis, 2006, 2009). Such religious practices can have a direct implication for livestock farming (Boogaard, 2019), for instance because ancestral land is considered not merely an economically tradable entity, but imbued with religious significance. This will have implications for the prospects for the room for intensification.

Yet, there are examples of development programmes that do consider the worldview background of human activities like agriculture. Current examples include conservation agriculture approaches from an Islamic background (see also Ahmad, 2014) and from a Christian background across SSA in the form of Farming God's Way (for an extensive discussion, see Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019). The Endogenous Livestock Development Network is an example of a livestock development initiative that started from indigenous – including African-animist – worldviews (Mathias, 2008; Van 't Hooft, Millar, Geerlings, & Django, 2008).

However, this should not be interpreted as that only these religiously-open development initiatives have a particular worldview background. The force of the concept of worldview is precisely that it introduces a level-playing field for religious *and* secular development thinkers and practitioners (Buijs, 2008). Contrary to the Cartesian worldview, explicitly religious ideas cannot so easily be side-lined as subjective and without relevance for (livestock) development. Rather they may provide for moral sources that can inspire people to work on livestock development that deviates from the industrial model, and which has led to problems like eutrophication, acidification, over-production, decreasing soil fertility, the emergence of animal production diseases, massive culling of animals in case of (zoonotic) animal disease outbreaks, development of bacterial resistance to antibiotics threatening public health, and loss of animal welfare (Rademaker & Van den Hee, 2018; Rollin & Thompson, 2012; Van 't Hooft et al., 2012). Such an approach goes beyond modernizing livestock sectors in developing countries in the sense of just making these more productive (and labour and input intensive). It also goes beyond "the mere documentation and validation of local knowledge and practices related to livestock keeping" (Van 't Hooft et al., 2008, p. 23), something to which approaches are liable that put indigenous technical knowledge central.

Rather, what is needed in development programmes is a "respectful, but articulated debate" in which "a process of reorientation can commence, that intends at amending the various worldviews from within while at the same time explicating those elements that are wholesome" (Buijs, 2008, p. 235) to tackle the problem of poverty and provide for a good dairy development (see also Jochemsen, 2018a; Jochemsen & Rademaker, 2019b).

4.5   Conclusion

The purpose of the present article was to examine whether characteristics of the Cartesian worldview can be discerned in the way dairy development interventions in Kenya have been conceived and evaluated, despite the good intentions people involved with development may have. The programmes most Cartesian in character involved both programmes in which government organizations and in which NGOs were implementing. On the other hand, with respect to extension methods the government-implemented programmes had a much stronger instrumental-rationally inclination than NGO-implemented programmes.

Even though we could not – due to time and space constraints – relate the presence of a Cartesian worldview to the success of the analysed dairy development programmes, we did establish that a Cartesian worldview was operative in these programmes, as appeared from the strong emphasis on technology transfer and adoption (especially in bilateral and multilateral programmes), on individual women's control of household resources, and on the neglect of religious understandings in relation to livestock. Follow-up research is needed to examine whether the degree of dominance of a Cartesian worldview is related to the actual success of the analysed dairy development programmes.

We used the *dilemma of planned development*, reported on by Li (2005), to interpret the data. On the one hand, programmes want to give space to the autonomy of farmers, such as via farmer-to-farmer learning methods and farmer organizations' ownership of the further development of their organization. On the other hand, programmes do have a specific idea on what ought to be achieved in the situation (increasing milk production, more gender equality) and having a clear idea about how that should be achieved (more modern technology, changing mindsets of women). It is remarkable that this phenomenon is still with us given the critique of technocratic development and the suggested need for more democratic development already in the 1980s. To us it seems this testifies to a deeper problem in (livestock) development cooperation, a problem at the level of worldview. More in particular the problem is that the norms for a good development of farmer practices and households are located in human subjects, thus maximizing human freedom and autonomy. Either the planners

provide for these norms – the norms usually being to increase productivity and farmer income – and farmers are considered as objects that will obey the laws of the market. Or the specification of norms is left to the farmers themselves – they are regarded as subjects in their own right – which renders a programme and the development professionals involved as mere instruments to the goals of farmers. In the latter case, however, this instrumentality is in fundamental tension with the freedom and autonomy of programmes and involved development professionals.

What is needed, to our mind, is an acknowledgement of the worldviews at play in the conceptualization and evaluation of development programmes, and more in particular an openness to a given normativity as articulated in various worldviews. This will not only create a level-playing field for planners and farmers, but also acknowledge intended beneficiaries really as *human beings*, with their own understanding of their world and life and endowed with freedom and responsibility (Geertsema, 1993). A responsibility that will need to be exercised in a respectful, yet articulate debate, for instance prior to the design phase of a development programme, in which different worldviews are "tested" for their potential to contribute to solutions to the problem of poverty and the problems associated with a one-sided dairy development.

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5

Sustainable Livestock Farming as Normative Practice

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5.1   Introduction

Sustainable livestock farming is a hot issue in the Netherlands and across the planet. For one, livestock farming worldwide contributes substantially to greenhouse gas emissions and related global warming (Steinfeld et al., 2006). Research and development initiatives therefore focus on how to reduce such emissions, and a Climate-Smart Agriculture approach has been developed that seeks to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and incomes while simultaneously adapting and building resilience to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions where possible (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], 2013). Another major sustainability issue is the worldwide trade of soy from the Amazon region for use in animal feed which is associated with deforestation in the Amazon and, in some regions (such as the Netherlands), with a mineral surplus leading to eutrophication of water bodies.

There are also other, non-environmental concerns often associated with sustainability, such as concerns about antibiotic resistance – with its risk for public health – and farm profitability. For example, the Uitvoeringsagenda Duurzame Veehouderij (UDV), a Dutch cooperative initiative in which farmer and product organizations, the Dutch government, a bank, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and a knowledge institute participate, has formulated fifteen ambitions – including such themes as antibiotic resistance and farm profitability – starting from the idea that the Dutch livestock farming sector is integrally sustainable when animal products and various other economic or societally desired values are not produced at the expense of humans and animals, but in such a way that it can be sustained economically and socially for a long time, without exceeding the carrying capacity of the earth (UDV, 2017).

In addition, sustainability is often connected to animal welfare concerns, as is also implied in UDV's condition that livestock farming should not be practiced at the expense of animals. The Dutch (radical) NGO Wakker Dier articulates the same point in stronger terms, saying that it is a contradiction in terms to call the most abused and produced animal, the broiler chicken (*plofkip*), sustainable. According to Wakker Dier, *sustainable* means living and producing in a way that is good for humans, animals, and the environment, now and in the future (Wakker Dier, 2017). Interestingly, Wakker Dier defends this position vis-à-vis people arguing that intensively kept chickens are more sustainable because they are more efficient feed converters and, consequently, put less pressure on natural resources and produce less greenhouse gasses per unit of animal product.

There is, then, considerable confusion about what exactly is meant by *sustainability* and *sustainable livestock farming*. More specifically, there is confusion about whether different desired goals – for instance, farm profitability, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and public health – can be achieved by using sustainability as a (master-)criterion (Hansen, 1996; Korthals, 2001).

In this paper we want to provide some clarifications in this debate through focusing on livestock farming as a *normative practice*. We will do this, first, by connecting the question of sustainability with the question of identity. Second, using the Normative Practice Approach (NPA) we will work out what the structural identity of the livestock farming practice consists in. We will argue that the livestock farming practice is economically qualified and formatively founded, and that other types of norms are conditioning. The time dimension will turn out to be crucial for understanding the relationship between the acting of livestock farmers and the impact of unsustainable livestock farming practice, especially in relation to conditioning norms. This time dimension also draws attention to the ultimate convictions of the livestock farmer and his/her responsibility towards the normativity inherent to the practice. Finally, we will broaden the scope by paying attention to the context of the livestock farming practice and the associated differentiated responsibilities. In the latter, the concept of *food system* will appear to be useful.

5.2   Understanding Sustainability

The first question which confronts us when thinking about sustainable livestock farming and sustainability in general is what we understand by these terms. The concept of sustainability is notorious for its many definitions. Rather than going into all of them at this point, we prefer to focus on an understanding of sustainability as developed by Paul B. Thompson, a leading contemporary writer on agricultural ethics and sustainability. We will start at the most practical level, namely, Thompson's discussion of what *sustainable livestock farming* means. Subsequently, we will work towards a more abstract discussion of what *sustainability* means by following what Thompson says on this point.

In a 1999 paper on sustainable livestock farming, Thompson and Nardone describe a North American extensive livestock farming practice to clarify what sustainability means in that context. They note that on an extensive livestock farm – or ranch – there are many kinds of complex ecological relationships between cattle, forage, non-forage brush, and wildlife. Together they form a "range (eco)system" where the different parts (i.e., cattle, forage, etc.) can remain in equilibrium for extended periods of time. A disequilibrium, however, can appear when a change in the reproductive capacity of one of the parts occurs. So, for instance, an increase in the stocking rate of cattle, induced by the rancher, can lead to the exhaustion of forage and to overgrazing. If no measures are taken, the range (eco)system will head for a collapse where ultimately the cattle herd will be decimated because of forage exhaustion. Thus, the continued existence of the cattle herd depends to a considerable extent on the broader range (eco)system of which it is part.

Thompson and Nardone argue that this is not only true on an ecological level,

but also on a societal level. On the ranch, in order to sustain the business over time, it is necessary not only to reproduce forage resources, but also to regenerate capital and effective husbandry practices. In an economy dominated by subsistence farming, regeneration of capital might mean the regeneration of land and herd fertility, while the regeneration of husbandry practices may be equivalent to transferring husbandry skills and competencies to farmers' sons and daughters (which also implies human fertility within the farm family). In an industrial economy, the regeneration of capital depends on stable financial and commodity markets, while the regeneration of effective husbandry practices depends largely on formal agricultural institutions for research, education, and extension. In both cases, however, the continued existence of the ranch depends on the broader societal system of which it is part.

At the ecological and the societal level, the "wholeness or integrity" of the encompassing system is considered crucial for the continued existence of the subsystems (Thompson, 1997, p. 78). Thus, cattle stocking rates are only sustainable when the herd can be sustained by the range (eco)system; similarly, the ranch is only[57] sustainable when skills and competencies are transferred to the younger generation, either within the farm family household or (partly) mediated by formal institutions. This leads Thompson and Nardone to conclude that *functional integrity* is key when we talk about sustainable livestock farming and about sustainability in general. Functional integrity denotes the wholeness or integrity of the system in question, where the whole orders the various subsystems through "feedback mechanisms" (Thompson & Nardone, 1999) that allow whole systems "to regenerate themselves over time" (Thompson, 2010, p. 248).

Of course, the question rises as to which level the whole system is defined at. Or, perhaps, there are multiple whole systems – if so, how do these relate to each other if not in part-whole relationships? Thompson points to "human societies and human-dominated ecosystems" as whole systems (Thompson, 2010, p. 248); yet, the question regarding how these relate to each other remains. Another relevant question concerns a cow's internal regulation of her digestive system and metabolic system (see also Van der Ploeg, 2003, pp. 162–166): Does this internal regulation not suggest that the cow has a certain autonomy – that is, is a whole system *herself* – besides being dependent on her environment – for example, a farm? And is this farm, in turn, also not a whole itself where the farmer actively shapes the character and productive potential of his or her cows?

It seems to us that these are rhetorical questions when we look at empirical reality.[58] We conclude that an environment is always relative to the system under consideration, while what the system under consideration is in one case can belong to the environment of another system in another case. Furthermore, systems can be *layered*. For instance, we understand dairy cows first of all as parts of a dairy farm. The identity

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57 This is meant as a necessary and not necessarily sufficient condition.
58 For a similar conclusion see Van der Ploeg (2003).

of dairy cows is bound up with that of the dairy farm.[59] The activities of the livestock farmer shape the identity of the dairy cows, most notably through breeding and selection efforts.[60] This comes into expression, for instance, in cows with a dairy type (in Dutch: *melktype*) (see also Theunissen, 2012). At the same time, they remain *cows*: they have characters and display behaviour (see also Rademaker, Glas, & Jochemsen, 2014) – they do not become milk-producing machines. In fact, the livestock farmer aims precisely to shape the characters and behaviours of the cows according to the farmer's wishes (Van der Ploeg, 2003, p. 195). Thus, whereas at one level the dairy cows regulate their own bodies and behaviours, at another level they are being regulated to some extent.

At this point we can make two important observations. First, we – and Thompson – have implicitly assumed that, at its core, sustainability means *continuity in time*. In this vein we repeatedly used the phrase *continued existence*, as in "the continued existence of the ranch depends on the broader societal system of which it is part." Thompson's idea of functional integrity articulates this continuity in time by noting that the *regeneration over time* of a whole system depends on the regulation of its subsystems.

Second, in the discussion of systems we have arrived at an intimate connection between sustainability and identity. The identity of a dairy cattle herd cannot be thought without the identity of the dairy farm, and vice versa. As such, the sustainability – its continuity in time – of the dairy cattle herd as *dairy* cattle herd cannot be thought without the dairy farm. The dairy farm provides the environment where the milk production function of cattle is further developed. A dairy cattle herd left on its own for some generations – for instance, in a nature reserve – will cease to be a *dairy* cattle herd.[61] At the same time, the sustainability of the dairy farm as *dairy* farm depends on the farmer being able to maintain a stock of *dairy cattle*.[62]

Together, these points lead us to the conclusion that sustainable entities are entities that maintain their identity, their continuity in time (see also Hansen, 1996). This conclusion links the discussion on sustainability in the empirical sciences with various old philosophical questions – for instance, what is it that enables this continuity in the flux of time? What is the identity of specific entities? In the next section we will concentrate on one question, to wit, the question as to what the identity of livestock farming consists in and how it relates to sustainability.

59 In a broader historical perspective, this process started with the domestication of wild cattle (of the genus *Bos*) and has resulted in various cattle types and races which are different from wild cattle.
60 In the case of, for instance, pig and poultry farming, breeding and selection activities have largely been transferred to breeding companies. See also footnote 75.
61 The addition "for some generations" is important here. Even though the actual milk potential will not be realized in a "natural" setting (because there is no farmer to milk the cattle), in their physical and genetic make-up the cattle will initially still be of a dairy type. This will only change after several generations.
62 Again, this is meant as a necessary and not necessarily sufficient condition.

5.3 Livestock Farming as Normative Practice

To our mind, the NPA as developed in the Dooyeweerdian tradition (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000; Jochemsen, 2006b; Jochemsen & Glas, 1997) is very helpful in the attempt to answer the question of what the identity of livestock farming consists in.[63] Within the NPA, a normative practice is understood as a social structure that embodies a coherent form of socially established cooperative human activity aiming at the realization of a certain good – the end, or telos, of that practice (see also Jochemsen, 2012). This good can also be described as the qualifying function of the practice. In addition, in practices goods are pursued in accordance with *standards of excellence*, or norms, which define good or competent performance for the practitioners and enable the realization of the central good (telos) of the practice.

Within the NPA, the identity of the practice is the starting point for normative reflection. In this regard, a distinction is made between types of norms that qualify a practice, types of norms that are foundational, and types of norms that are conditioning (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000). In a structural analysis of the livestock farming practice, these three types of norms refer to the practice's *structural side*. Based on this is the distinction between what is *internal* and what is *external* to a practice (Chaplin, 2007, pp. 130–133), where *external* refers to its environment or context and, thus, concerns the practice's *contextual side*. Finally, the development of the livestock farming practice is affected by what practitioners think and choose, and what motivates them in their thoughts and choices. This refers to the *regulative side* of the livestock farming practice.

5.3.1 Structural Side
5.3.1.1 Foundational Aspect
When we speak of a practice and its context, we implicitly introduce a distinction between what is internal and what is external to the practice. To determine what is internal and what is external, we need to consider the *identity* of the practice. We can approach this identity with the notions of the practice's foundational and qualifying functions – namely, in terms of what founds and characterizes the practice, respectively (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000). In what follows, we will apply these notions specifically to the livestock farming practice.

It should be noted that livestock farmers use different types of resources, such as animal feed and water, and that they shape both the animals (e.g., through breeding) and their environment (e.g., through climate control systems) to produce food and fibre for human consumption. The (increased) human control over the environment of the livestock is important, for this is precisely what distinguishes livestock farming

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63 Coming from a pragmatist tradition, Thompson also has an extensive understanding of farming (and eating) as a practice. For a comparison between his pragmatist approach and the Reformational-philosophical approach to practices, see Massink (2013).

from herding. The formation of both the animals and their environment refers to the "technical activities" of the practice (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000). Therefore, we conclude that the *formative* aspect is foundational for livestock farming. The normative principle associated with the formative aspect is meaning-oriented shaping (Verkerk et al., 2015).[64]

Livestock farmers – that is, the practitioners – will have to give shape to the normative principle of meaning-oriented formation if there is to be a livestock farming practice at all. As Dower puts it, "methods of cultivation and harvesting [e.g., feeding and milking techniques, respectively] and types of resources like animal feed, seeds or fertilizer/chemical inputs used" are "crucial to the *sustaining* (or non-sustaining if they are in fact not appropriate) of that practice"[65] (Dower, 2008, p. 158; emphasis added). If any of those resources come in short supply, this will affect the livestock farming practice to some extent. Only when other suppliers of those resources can be found and/or by changing current production practices will the farmer be able to continue the livestock farming practice as a whole. That is, to sustain the livestock production practice, the formative function needs to be secured through finding alternative resources or changing current production practices. Thus, the delicate balance between resources used and methods employed must be considered under the norm of meaning-oriented shaping.

5.3.1.2 Qualifying Aspect

Livestock farming is typically undertaken for the purpose of producing food and fibre for human consumption.[66] This consumption of the produced food can take place inside the farm household, such as in present-day subsistence farming in sub-Saharan

64 This is an amendment to Dooyeweerd's (1969c) "formation according to a free project" (p. 195). Dooyeweerd described this formation as follows: "Mastery or control . . . elevates itself above what is given and actualized after a fixed pattern apart from human planning. It pre-supposes a given material whose possibilities are disclosed in a way exceeding the patterns given and realized by nature, and actualized after a free project of form-giving with endless possibilities of variation" (Dooyeweerd, 1969c, pp. 197–198). Yet, Dooyeweerd seemed to ignore that the given material often is not free from human planning, but, rather, has a particular embodied history. For instance, different cattle breeds have resulted from an age-long process of domestication and selection. Importantly, the type of breed the farmer has access to structurally restricts his possibilities for innovation (Van der Ploeg, 2003). One cannot breed meat-type cattle overnight from milk-type cattle. The normative principle of *meaning-oriented shaping* has the connotation of building further on and disclosing the given material, rather than the connotation of free control. The identity of the given material is of importance here as it restricts *and* enables possibilities in the livestock farming practice. In addition, it should be pointed out here that Dooyeweerd did not use the terms *formative aspect* and *normative principle*; instead, he used *cultural aspect* and *meaning-kernel*, respectively. We follow Geertsema (1970) in the usage of *formative aspect*, and Hoogland and Jochemsen (2000) in the usage of *normative principle*.

65 Actually, Thompson also distinguishes – next to sustainability as "functional integrity" – sustainability as "resource sufficiency." Central here is that "a practice is sustainable when the resources needed to carry on the practice are foreseeably available" (Thompson & Nardone, 1999, p. 112; see also Thompson, 2010, p. 219). In our terminology, this resource sufficiency concerns the foundational, formative aspect of the livestock farming practice.

66 *Consumption* must be taken in a broad sense here – also including the use of fibres such as wool, for instance. In the following we will concentrate on food rather than fibre, since fibre production in livestock farming is economically a minor activity compared to food production.

African (SSA) societies where animal (and crop) products are typically only sold on the local market when the farm household's need for food is fulfilled.[67] Consumption can also take place outside the farm household where it is produced, such as in highly differentiated Western societies where farmers, just like other people, go to the (super) market to obtain most of their food. In either case, the farmer–consumer relationship is central. Either the consumers can be located in the farm household, or the farmer is (primarily) producing for the market – also called *commercial farming*. In the latter case, the consumer becomes customer, which often entails a further differentiation of the farmer–consumer relationship into an array of farmer–middlemen relationships – for example, relationships with egg traders, slaughterhouses, and milk cooperatives.[68] Such middlemen take care of the distribution of animal products or process them into different products.

Thus, both production and exchange are important facets of livestock farming.[69] Livestock farming is not just about breeding and keeping animals – it is also about making animal products for (human) consumption.[70] Therefore, we conclude that the *economic* aspect is qualifying for the livestock farming practice.[71]

Dooyeweerd characterized the normative principle of the economic aspect as the "frugal mode of administering scarce goods" (Dooyeweerd, 1969c, p. 66), and others have associated this with *efficiency* (e.g., Massink, 2013, pp. 174–179). However, Goudzwaard and Kee have pointed at the limitations of conceiving of the normative principle of the economic aspect as frugality or efficiency (Goudzwaard, 1979, 2008; Kee, 1996).[72] Most importantly, efficiency as normative principle has no substantial content and leaves open the question of what the specifically economic destination of

67 Of course, conflict situations may exist where, for instance, food is sold in order to pay urgent hospital bills, even though the household is in short supply of food. Deciding which course to take is a matter of practical wisdom.

68 On the input side, think of the relationship between farmers and input suppliers, such as credit suppliers (e.g., banks) and feed suppliers.

69 Regarding the situation of subsistence farmers, one could say that there is exchange, but in a very restricted form – namely, within their own household. In addition, it is questionable whether *pure* subsistence farmers (or, rather, farm households), operating completely independently of markets, have ever existed.

70 A parallel can be seen in the example of fishery given by MacIntyre, on whose work on practices the NPA builds. As Moore (2002) writes: "It is clear from what MacIntyre says, that it is not just the catching of fish with which he is concerned . . . , but it is the whole range of activities that make up the practice of fishing including the purchase and maintenance of boats and equipment, the preparation of the fish for sale, and the actual sale itself" (p. 23).

71 It must be noted that within the livestock farming practice as a whole a further differentiation can take place. For instance, the Dutch milking company Duurzaam Agrarisch has adopted the concept of *sharemilking* where the company owns several dairy farms run by farmers who receive a salary and a share of the profits. Here, a subpractice focusing on the business side (the company) materializes next to a subpractice focusing on the production side (the farmers).

72 Kee (1996) noted that both production and exchange are crucial to understand economic phenomena, but that thus far (in 1996) economic theory had not provided a single explanatory theory that meaningfully combined both. He also criticized Goudzwaard for reducing economic phenomena to the production pole. Kee himself sought the solution in the idea of capital, yet did not elaborate on that. As economically interested but non-specialist writers, we are not sure whether progress has been achieved on this point, but it seems to us that at least in Reformational-philosophical circles, the discussion still lingers on.

economic acts consists in (see also Schipper, 1998).[73] Following Goudzwaard, we take the normative principle of the economic aspect to be *fruitful disposition* (Goudzwaard, 1979, p. 212, 2008, pp. 27–29). Even though this normative principle as characterization of the economic aspect comes with its own theoretical challenges (Kee, 1996),[74] it does justice to the reality of livestock farmers who anticipate changes in their economic environment not only by increasing the efficiency of resource use (Dooyeweerd's "frugal administration"), but also through the accelerated redemption of loans, diversification of products (e.g., moving from mainly milk to milk and meat production), or enlargement of the livestock farm (Van der Ploeg, 2003, p. 221). In the end, it is about the positive balance of benefits – that is, a valuable farm product or service for society – over costs. No livestock farming practice is sustainable without living up to this economic norm.

Recently, Jongeneel (2016) elaborated on economic normativity, arguing that the financial budget constraint (FBC) is one of its key sources. The FBC stipulates that income and expenses have at least to balance if the entity (for instance, a laying hen farm) is to survive. This being an abstract economic norm, the *right* balance depends on the context. For instance, a deficit on the current account, due to investment in a new barn for 50.000 laying hens, would be allowable if the egg market is such that the farmer can earn this investment back within several years. Thus, *time* is an important determinant of the sustainability of a concrete livestock farming practice. The consequences of not adhering to economic – and, for that matter, also formative – normativity may only be felt in the long term. This means that in the pursuance of a concrete sustainable livestock farming practice, the *trust* that adhering to formative and economic normativity will ultimately yield a flourishing livestock farming practice plays an important role (Schuurman, 1987). This element of the farmer's ultimate conviction becomes even more important when *conditioning* norms are involved, such as aesthetic and ethical norms.

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73 To see this point, try to make sense of "being efficient" as the purpose of businesses.
74 Maybe we should even stop looking for one normative principle and, rather, consider a cluster of normative principles that share a family resemblance.
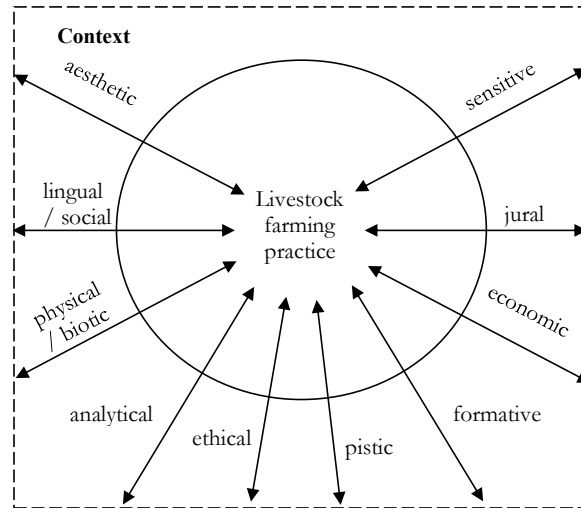
Figure 5.1 Different modal aspects can be discerned within the livestock farming practice (its structure), and in the relationships with its context.

5.3.1.3 Conditioning Aspects

We will now consider the question of what conditioning aspects can be identified in livestock farming – that is, which broader factors or norms enable livestock farming (Figure 5.1). Regarding *analytical norms* we can think of the formulation of a breeding plan[75] and a business plan, and the role of production data in contemporary livestock farming. *Social norms* are visible in the need to mitigate odor emissions because of the farmer's neighbours.

    Aesthetic norms in livestock farming relate to animals and meadows that are aesthetically pleasing. As Theunissen (2012) notes with respect to dairy farming, this aspect is increasingly suffering from the practice's "Holsteinization," where productive potential has become the sole norm in the breeding of dairy cattle.[76] Also, the monocultures of grasses in meadows, typically lacking a diversity of herbs, have not contributed to the aesthetic quality of meadows, although changes in a positive direction are taking place here.

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75 In fact, this only applies to ruminant farming. Pig and poultry (or: intensive) farmers no longer breed their own stock but either buy stock from, or keep stock owned by, big companies holding the parent lines. Those lines consist of two or three separate, pure (genetically homozygous) lines that are crossed to create the crossbreds. This is beneficial because of hybrid vigor—the phenomenon that the offspring's performance (in terms of growth rate, feed conversion ratio, health, etc.) is better than the separate parent lines. From a breeding perspective, crossbreds are of little use: when crossbreds are mated, the greatest proportion of the offspring will be inferior to the crossbred parents as well as to the grandparental lines. Thus, breeding has become a separate practice from the farmers' practice. In the case of ruminants, this development did not take place because they reproduce too slowly and are too costly to maintain merely for breeding purposes (Theunissen, 2012).

76 Present-day Holsteins (or, Holstein-Friesians) are a dairy cow breed known for their high milk potential.

Jural norms within the livestock farming practice can be understood in relation to the just treatment of employees and fair trade with customers as well as with suppliers of feed, equipment, etc.[77] This just and fair dealing is characterized by giving each party its due based on the economic transaction. For instance, employees deserve a fair wage for their labour.[78] An interesting question is whether the rise of the animal rights movement points to a failing responsibility of livestock farmers to treat their *animals* justly: it could be argued that animals are economic "co-workers" and that they deserve "fair working conditions." This discussion has only just started.[79]

Regarding *ethical norms* we can think of the conditions under which animals are kept – that is, to what extent those conditions are conducive to animal welfare. They relate to appropriate housing (physical structures), feeding and watering regime (enabling the animal's biotic functioning), and the farmer's way of dealing with the animals (implying a sensitive relationship; see also Jochemsen, 2013). With respect to the latter, empirical research shows that positive farmer attitudes towards animals – for instance, farmers who do not hit their animals and talk to them – are correlated with positive animal welfare scores and productivity (Andreasen, Sandøe, Waiblinger, & Forkman, 2014; Boivin, Lensink, Tallet, & Veissier, 2003; Hemsworth, 2003; Waiblinger, Menke, & Coleman, 2002).[80] This indicates that the sensitive relationship between farmer and animals cannot be ignored: animals are no automata (see also Rademaker et al., 2014). The disclosure of this sensitive relationship requires that the farmer has a careful attitude towards the animal, and does not reduce the animal to a mere production factor. This careful attitude should take concrete shape by allowing animals to perform positive species-specific behaviours – for instance, dust bathing for chickens (see also Špinka, 2006; Špinka & Wemelsfelder, 2011). It is very important to emphasize this, given the present-day tendency, especially in intensive livestock farming, to focus almost exclusively on efficiency of production (Rollin & Thompson, 2012). As a matter of fact, crops and soil as biotic communities also require this careful attitude, in the case of pasture-bound livestock farming. Here we can think of making use of symbioses between organisms, mixed cultivation, and biological control of plagues (Jochemsen, 2012).

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77 Of course, many norms (regarding manure management, animal welfare, etc.) that we typically consider as jural are legislative measures taken by the government. But our point is precisely that jural norms are not restricted to the government as a specifically jural practice – rather, they condition the livestock farming practice *from within*. The difference is that in the case of livestock farming practice the jural aspect is *conditioning*, while in the case of government practice this aspect is *qualifying*. Thus, the two practices have different normative structures.

78 This presupposes that livestock farmers earn enough money to be able to pay their employees a fair wage. The fair trade movement (especially in global value chains) has therefore focused on guaranteeing farmers a *fair price* for their products and a *living wage* for producers and/or employees (Le Mare, 2008).

79 From a Christian perspective, Graafland (2015) has called attention to the biblical notion of just working conditions for animals, which could perhaps also be related to contemporary livestock farming, especially for livestock not primarily kept for their meat, such as laying hens and dairy animals.

80 However, the presence of a correlation is no proof of a causal relationship.

Other aspects of ethical norms are the concern for working conditions of the farmer and possible employees on the farm, and food safety for consumers. As Yee, Yeung, and Morris (2005) note, consumers are in a dependent and vulnerable position vis-à-vis producers when buying food, since they cannot judge the conditions under which the food has been produced, nor judge whether its consumption is safe. They argue that this calls for benevolence on the producers' side: they should care for and act in the interest of consumer welfare.

As we have seen with the formative and economic aspect, the farmer's *ultimate* convictions regarding what norms will *ultimately* yield a flourishing livestock farming practice are crucial from a sustainability perspective, precisely because sustainability concerns continuity *in time*. This is even more the case with the conditioning norms. Thus, we saw that aesthetic norms have been undervalued for decades in Dutch dairy farming. Yet, this practice has been able to sustain itself, in the sense that it still exists. Thompson gives another example when he discusses the mistreatment of laying hens on egg farms – for instance, a small living space, no opportunity for dust bathing, and trimmed beaks – where the egg farms manage to sustain their practice, because the laying hen stock is continually resupplied from hatcheries (Thompson, 2010, pp. 269–270). While Thompson reckons the mistreatment of the laying hens as an ethical problem, he concludes that there is no problem of sustainability: the wholes (the egg farms) can restock the parts (the laying hens) as long as the egg farms meet their costs and have the connections needed to obtain the necessary resources. As such, the egg farms are able to sustain themselves. This leads Thompson to conclude that animal welfare concerns – and ethical concerns in general – do not necessarily represent sustainability problems.

Thompson does, however, notice that we often say to someone whose conduct we find deplorable: "You may get away with it this time, but eventually you'll be sorry!" (Thompson, 2010, p. 240). Here, again, *ultimacy* appears: it is only *in time* that the other person will come to regret his/her behaviour. While Thompson notes that "this might point to a deeper sense in which the practice or conduct will lead to its own undoing," he further ignores this possibility by saying that "more frequently it is just a general form of moral or prudential rebuke" (Thompson, 2010, p. 240).[81] In section 5.3.3, however, we will argue that this "deeper sense" points to a deeper unity which always plays a role in human acting, including livestock farming, and that this is typical for *worldviews*.

5.3.2 Contextual Side

Sustainability also involves, as we saw earlier, the broader systems of which a particular entity is part. With respect to the Western livestock farming practice, we can point to the

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81 Admittedly, later on Thompson (2010) does attempt to elaborate on this "deeper sense" via a modified Hegelian argument, saying that "deep social conflicts are not sustainable because the sense of hope implicit in any conceptualization of sustainability as a moral ideal implies a realization of community consciousness" (p. 275).

livestock farmer buying animal feed, which refers to the feed manufacturing practice, which in turn refers to the (feed)crop production practice. While all these practices have to some extent an internal autonomy, they are also intimately connected: together they contribute to food production. The term *food system* is commonly used to denote this interconnected amalgam of practices. Thus, Goodman describes food systems as "represent[ing] all processes involved in feeding a population, and includ[ing] the input required and output generated at each step" (cited in Capone, Bilali, Debs, Cardone, & Driouech, 2014, p. 14). Activities within the food system include production, processing and packaging, distribution and retailing, and consumption of food, but also "the diverse set of institutions, technologies and practices that govern the way food is marketed, processed, transported, accessed and consumed" (Capone et al., 2014, p. 14). So, the livestock farming practice appears here as a *subsystem* at the first level: the production of edible animal products.

Yet it must be noticed that practices such as crop farming, feed manufacturing, and livestock farming have not always been housed in separate institutions in Western countries, and also that they are not housed separately in particular niches (e.g., organic farming) and in other parts of the world (e.g., the majority of farmers in SSA).[82] After World War II, many farms in the Netherlands were still mixed farming systems where crop production was combined with livestock farming, both subpractices including various breeds. In this sense, in SSA, the current situation is similar to the situation of the majority of farmers in the Netherlands after World War II, except that the agricultural production primarily serves the own household, whereas in the Netherlands a shift was made longer ago from (primarily) subsistence farming to commercial farming.

Looking at this shift from a sustainability perspective, we notice that the relevant systems change. In the case of subsistence farming, the crop and livestock farming practices form an integrated whole with the household (Figure 5.2). Animals like oxen deliver traction power to work the fields, while chickens produce eggs for the household. Manure from the livestock yields fertilizer for the fields, while the crops from the fields deliver food for the household and – in the form of by-products – feed for the livestock. In turn, crop and livestock farming depend on labour from household members. Obviously, while this subsistence food system, too, is dependent on its context – for example, sunlight for photosynthesis, tools to work the land, and marriage partners to sustain the household – it is much less so than commercial livestock farming. The commercial livestock farm is part of a complex system – the (industrial) food system (Figure 5.2) – which in its totality should be sustainable – that is, functionally integer – for the livestock farming practice to be sustainable. As Thompson (1997) writes:

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82 Dairy farming in the Netherlands deviates from this trend since it is still pasture-bound for various reasons. Thus, the Dutch livestock farmer also grows the grass and maize to feed the dairy cows.
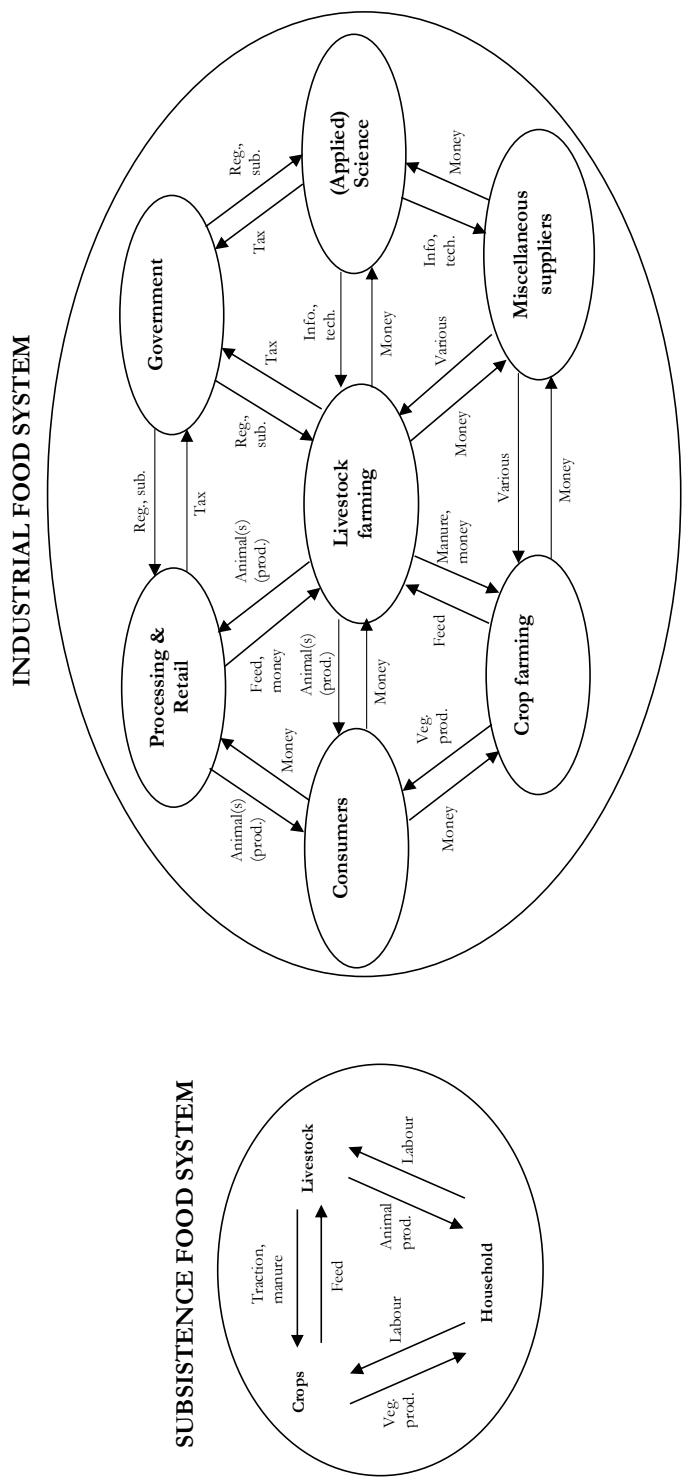
Figure 5.2 The sustainability of livestock farming depends on the food system of which it is part.

Reg. = Regulations; Sub. = Subsidies; Veg. = Vegetable; Prod. = Products; Tech. = Technologies; Info. = Information.

> If feed is produced off the farm, the system must, at a minimum, include both the crop farm and the livestock production facility, as well as the transport and financial institutions that link them. If fuels and technology are needed to move grain to animals, they too must be included in the system of relevance. Then we must ask, What is happening to animal waste? If nutrients in waste are not being recycled eventually, then the entire nature of the system changes from a renewable resource or ecological system to a non-renewable resource system that can only be made sustainable by continuous improvement in waste reduction and storage. If so, then the scientific research needed to make these improvements must also be included in the system design, and it becomes necessary to ask whether the capacity to produce such improvements is itself sustainable. (pp. 84–85)

Thus, while the subsistence farmer (and his/her household) needs to take care of crop and livestock farming, in the industrial food system the respective tasks become differentiated: the crop farmer focuses on (feed)crop production, the agricultural contractor on working the fields, the feed manufacturer on feed formulation, the livestock farmer on animal production, the transporter on transportation of the various goods, etc. This differentiation has brought enormous benefits in terms of productivity and economic efficiency, and has "freed" human labour from the agricultural sector, thus enabling the development of other productive and non-productive activities and the further differentiation of society.

But there are also tremendous negative effects of agricultural differentiation. For instance, a large share of soybean meal – formerly considered a by-product of the soy oil industry, its monetary value now surpasses that of the soy oil – used in Dutch farm animal diets originates from South America. The massive exportation of these soybeans – and, thus, of mineral nutrients – leads in South America to a *lack* of nutrients, which leads to an import of artificial fertilizers (produced from, among other things, mined, non-renewable potassium and phosphate rock structures) so as to maintain soil fertility. On the other hand, in the Netherlands we have an *oversupply* of manure – that is, an oversupply of mineral nutrients – which causes acidification and eutrophication problems.

Due to the differentiation of food production, several effects of the acting of the individual livestock farmer no longer directly impinge on his or her own practice. Whereas the subsistence farmer will suffer from poor crop performance if he or she fails to fertilize the land with the manure from the animals and, as a consequence, will probably fail to subsequently feed both the household and the livestock, this is not the case with the Dutch egg farmer who buys animal feed – including soybean meal originating from South America – from a regional feed manufacturer and sells manure to a local crop farmer. Local problems in South America with maintaining soil fertility are not (directly) felt by the Dutch egg farmer. Hence, maintaining functional integrity

of the system requires certification and regulation at higher organization levels and at other places in the supply chain than the livestock farming practice. Thus, for instance, the European Feed Manufacturers' Federation (FEFAC) has established the FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines in order to prevent illegal deforestation and ensure good working conditions and good agricultural practices.

In the context of the livestock farming practice we can distinguish between different *kinds* and different *levels* (Glas, 2016). As stated above, the livestock farming practice is part of a bigger food system that has the provision of food as its function. This concerns not only the economic context of the livestock farming practice, but also the jural context insofar as it concerns laws and regulations set by governments (Figure 5.1). In addition, we encountered the physical and biotic context when we discussed the unsustainability of mining of nutrients and lack of maintenance of soil fertility, respectively.

Yet, there are also different *levels* in the context of the livestock farming practice. The FEFAC's Soy Sourcing Guidelines are an example of a certification scheme that aims to self-regulate the global flow of soy for animal feed. Certification schemes in the food system are increasingly located at this level because of globalization. That is, the sustainability of the world at large is increasingly felt. Issues such as the significant contribution of livestock farming to deforestation – due to feedcrop expansion – and climate change (Steinfeld et al., 2006) are most logically addressed at this level. In contrast, acidification and eutrophication are typically issues with a more local character.

We cannot understand the sustainability of the livestock farming practice without also looking at this context with its different kinds and levels. Next to the farmers' responsibility vis-à-vis the normativity we spelled out in section 5.3.1, partnership and dialogue are also needed between different kinds of actors in the food system, both at similar and at different levels, to enable a development of the food system that does not compromise its sustainability.[83]

5.3.3 Regulative Side

The regulative side refers to the interpretation of the norms of the practice against a broader horizon concerning the meaning of the practice for human life and society. This also gives the practice a dynamic character: it can be developed in different directions, due to differences in the worldviews and ethoi of practitioners. Our earlier mentioning

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83 Some argue for a complete relocalization of different types of agricultural production (and distribution and consumption of food) so as to reconnect soil (physical), plant (biotic), and animal (psychic) interactions (e.g., Altieri, 2012; Altieri & Toledo, 2011). Another reason for the relocalization of food production and consumption is to restore the decreased social interaction between livestock farmers and consumers, that is, to restore relations of trust (pointing to pistic norms). The issue of *risk* could also be added here: should we count on a global food system that is intimately tied to global *volatile* financial markets, potentially leading to food crises (see also McMichael, 2009b, 2009a)? Prima facie, relocalization seems to do more justice to the broader normativity of reality than a full-fledged globally organized food system, but a thorough discussion of this point is beyond the scope of this paper.

of ultimate convictions referred to this regulative side of practices.

Griffioen (2012) notes that an important feature of worldviews is their "integrality of vision" (p. 38).[84] They are horizons or metaviews against which a given plurality is ordered. This also comes with a time dimension: "Integrative visions always reach beyond the horizon of the here-and-now in anticipation of things to come" (Griffioen, 2012, p. 38). Thus, they come with the promise of a future end. This is the second feature of worldviews – the cause or *Sache* pursued (Griffioen, 2012). What is more, this *Sache* asks for personal commitment in the midst of alternatives. It is a matter of *ultimate* concern.

The ultimate convictions come to the fore in the core values and ethos of a practice. In the interplay of different ethoi, practices develop in a certain direction in time, disclosing or closing the different modal aspects. What ethoi can we distinguish in present-day Dutch livestock farming practice?[85]

De Rooij, De Lauwere, and Van der Ploeg (2010) have investigated the ethical position of Dutch dairy farmers and pig breeders, with particular reference to animal welfare. They distinguish between three ethoi: an entrepreneurial ethos, a farmers' ethos, and an idealists' ethos.[86] The first is characterized by seeing animals as means of production, privileging commercial values, seeing animal welfare as relevant only from a commercial perspective, understanding animal welfare primarily as healthy biological functioning (although unnecessary suffering, pain, and distress is to be reduced), and placing responsibility for animal welfare with consumers ("If consumers want more animal welfare-friendly production, they need to pay more"). The farmers' ethos is characterized by conceiving of animals in relation to the farmer, seeking for a balance between commercial values and animal welfare on the farm, and more emphasis on freedom from pain and stress for the animals. Finally, the idealists' ethos sees animals as carriers of intrinsic values and needs, privileges animal welfare considerations over commercial values, places the responsibility for animal welfare problems with other (conventional) farmers, and emphasizes respect for the integrity of the animal and the opportunity for animals to display natural behaviour.

Seen from the perspective of the structural side of livestock farming[87],

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84 Thompson (2010) also discusses a conception of sustainability which he describes as a social movement understanding of sustainability. According to him, the only criterion on this view for something to be considered a sustainability issue is whether the social movement considers it to be so. One of the reasons why Thompson thinks this conception of sustainability is problematic is that s*ustainable* livestock farming becomes equivocal to *good* livestock farming. It seems that there is a rough resemblance between this social movement understanding of sustainability and what we call the regulative side of practices. Central to both – among other things – are its prescientific character and integrality of vision. Clearly, we hold a more positive view of this prescientific and integral understanding of sustainability than Thompson.

85 Interestingly, there is as yet no professional code for Dutch livestock farmers. This has been attributed to the fact that convictions and values differ significantly among livestock farmers (De Lauwere & De Rooij, 2010).

86 Actually, the authors speak about discourses, not ethoi. However, we consider the latter term to be more appropriate because articulations of lived attitudes and visions are concerned – not merely text.

87 And, it should be noted, a Christian articulation of this structure.

the farmers' ethos seems to do more justice to the structure of the practice than the entrepreneurial ethos and idealist's ethos. In the entrepreneurial ethos, economic normativity completely overrides other concerns. Especially notable in this regard is that the responsibility for animal welfare is placed almost entirely with consumers. Of course, farmers will need to get a fair price for their products, but that does not diminish their own ethical responsibility in their relation to their animals. Also, as Frans Stafleu and De Greef (2004) have argued, leaving it up to the consumer to define responsible farming will result in a loss of identity of the livestock farmer *as livestock farmer* – that is, as a way of life.

The emphasis in the idealists' ethos on natural or species-specific behaviour of animals can provide for a deepened understanding of the sensitive functioning of animals (Rademaker et al., 2014). As such, the idealists' ethos gives due regard to the ethical aspect in relation to the animals. However, it is also true that livestock farming is not the same as keeping pets. In the end, livestock farming is about bringing forth animal products for consumers, while doing justice to the conditioning aspects, including the ethical aspect.

In the farmers' ethos, the tension in actual practice between doing justice to commercial values and to animal welfare is felt the most. This can be positively evaluated, because it shows that farmers feel the integral normativity involved in the practice – a normativity that should be realized simultaneously under the lead of the qualifying, economic aspect (see also Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000; Jochemsen, 2006b; Jochemsen & Glas, 1997). However, as we observed earlier, aspects such as the aesthetic aspect do not seem to be on the radar of those who exhibit a farmers' ethos, given the Holsteinization and increasing grass monocultures in dairy farming.[88]

5.4   Conclusion

In contrast to many approaches to sustainability, we have tried to show the value of understanding sustainable livestock farming first from the perspective of livestock farming *as a normative practice*. That is, instead of formulating – as policy makers, scientists, citizens, or farmers – the desirable goals livestock farming should contribute to, we suggested an analysis of the structural identity of livestock farming. The identity of the livestock farming practice, as argued above, is determined by the formative (foundational) and economic (qualifying) aspects. Sustainable livestock farming – understood as livestock farming that is able to continue in time – is farming that takes into account the normativity holding for the livestock farming practice.

By making use of Dooyeweerd's non-reductionistic theory of modal aspects, we

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88 For the livestock farming practice as a whole, a particular ethos may be dominant at a certain time, leaving other ethoi to occupy the "niches."

have spelled out the different types of normativity that hold for the livestock farming practice. As such, we have provided an integral assessment framework for this practice (see also Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000). Failing to do justice to this normativity might only *in time* lead to acute sustainability problems for the livestock farming practice, especially when the conditioning norms are involved. Therefore, adhering to this normativity is fundamentally based upon an ultimate conviction that the flourishing of the livestock farming practice in the long run requires that justice is done to its integral normativity. Note, however, that this integral normativity is *internal* to the livestock farming practice, and not merely *external*. The livestock farmer encounters it, in one way or another, in everyday practice. At the same time, when certain aspects of normativity are systematically neglected in livestock farming, it may ultimately lead to governments and social movements addressing these problems with the means available to them.

Finally, the sustainability of present-day livestock farming practice cannot be thought without taking into account the context of the practice. In commercial livestock farming, the practice's context has become far more important than in subsistence farming. Thus, the sustainability of the livestock farming practice cannot be understood apart from what is currently called the (global) food system. But the big question for the future is at which level – local, regional, national, or global – this food system is best organized to guarantee its future, including livestock farming, and the future of the human population at large.

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A Christian-Philosophical Account of Good Development Cooperation in the Agro-Food Domain

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6.1   Introduction

In 2010, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy published an influential report titled *Less pretention, more ambition* (Van Lieshout et al., 2010). One of the conclusions of the report was that an "intervention ethics" or development cooperation ethics is by and large missing in the professional field of development work.[89] As they note, such development cooperation ethics usually does not extend beyond indicating the presence of accountability mechanisms, which furthermore in practice commonly work upwards to the donors of development programmes rather than towards intended beneficiaries (see also Ebrahim, 2003; Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Kilby, 2006).[90]

On itself the observation by the council that a development cooperation ethics is missing in professional development cooperation is fascinating, because there *is* a considerable body of scholarly work on what is called *development ethics*.[91] Apparently then, there is a disconnect between the scholarly work on development ethics and its impact within and "use value" for the development cooperation practice. This is not restricted to the Dutch situation, but is a broader phenomenon (Crocker, 2008; Malavisi, 2014). Crocker notes that in the 1970s and 1980s the philosophical discussion centred around the justification of providing aid to distant people, while scant attention was paid to institutional and practical issues. The ethical effects, so to say, of development aid were left out of sight.

Intriguingly, that was forty to fifty years ago. But apparently this problem has still not been solved. Philosophers are still occupied with the question what is owed to the poor[92] and meanwhile development professionals continue to do their work. Granted, specifically those who affiliate themselves with the body of work called development ethics now analyse institutional and practical issues, but that has not or only marginally materialized within the development practice (Malavisi, 2014).

Precisely out of this gap – but then in the world of medicine and health care – between "everyday ethical decisions and the philosophical and theological ethical reflection on the basis for ethical norms and reasons for ethical behaviour" (Jochemsen, 2006b, p. 96), the Normative Practice Approach (NPA) was born. In fact, in the early phase of the approach, it was even called the Normative Reflective Practitioner (NRP)

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89 We prefer *development cooperation ethics* to the council's *intervention ethics*, because the former better reflects the intrinsic nature of the endeavour development professionals and organizations are involved in.
90 Where policies respond to broad and often interrelated problems in a particular field and provide a vision for development in that field, programmes are directed at specific situations within that field (Fischer, 2006, p. 28). Projects can be seen as parts of programmes. Here we are specifically interested in programmes and projects. For brevity, in the following we will use the term 'programme' to refer to both of them.
91 We think here about the work that is oriented on the work of Denis Goulet, and which includes names like David Crocker and Des Gasper. It even has its own association, called the International Development Ethics Association (IDEA), which also organizes conferences, one of which we contributed to (Van Dijke & Rademaker, 2018).
92 Important figures in this debate are Peter Singer and Thomas Pogge. See Thompson (2009) for the historical links of the present debate to that of the 1970s and 1980s.

model, which conveyed the intention to get professional practitioners *themselves* to critically reflect on their acting. It seems this is precisely what we need in the development cooperation practice as well.

The aim of this paper is therefore to deepen our earlier conceptualization of development cooperation as normative practice (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018), and to discuss the implications of this conceptualization. In this, as in earlier work, we will concentrate on development cooperation in the agro-food domain. Following this, the type of ethics pursued is *quasi-professional* (Gasper, 1999), because development professionals cannot be as clearly circumscribed as, for instance, lawyers, farmers, or artists.[93] Important in our approach is the idea that normativity is intrinsic to practices – hence the term normative practice. Practicing does not mean to dispose value-neutral means to specific (non-neutral) ends; rather, both the means and the acting themselves have a certain character and quality, and using means and disposing them can therefore never be neutral. We will elaborate this for the agricultural development cooperation practice and illustrate our thesis with examples.

In the first section we will discuss the ethical problems associated with development cooperation in the agro-food domain, after which we will briefly look into two types of solutions offered for those problems. Next comes a critical discussion and appropriation of elements of those solutions. The final part of the article will elaborate the normative principles that, in our view, hold for the development cooperation practice, as well as the importance of the attitude of practitioners, and the role of context. Our hope is that the article sensitizes development professionals for the multiple normativity that applies to their acting, and as such contributes to really meaningful development in the agro-food domain and outside.

6.2   What Is the Problem?

Development cooperation in the agro-food domain is initiated by the basic perception that situations of poverty and hunger are undesired (Strijbos, 2008). If we look to some recent figures, the number of people living below the poverty line of US$1.90 per day is on the decline worldwide from almost 2 billion people in 1990 to 700 to 800 million people in 2015, while the number of undernourished people has declined from just over 1 billion in 1990-92 to 797 million people in 2014-16. Still, poverty and undernourishment are persistent in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) where the number of extremely poor people *increased* from 290 to 350 million from 1990 to 2015, while the number of undernourished people increased from 173 million people in 1990-92 to 213 million people in 2014/16 (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

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93 More in general, we understand ethics as the science of good or responsible human action, "the science of norms and values which have a bearing on human action" (Schuurman, 2003, p. 187; see also M. D. Stafleu, 2007).

Nations [FAO], 2017). Development efforts by governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and, increasingly, business organizations as well, try to tackle such issues through some form of societal development. In the agro-food domain we can think about the introduction of alternative production techniques in dairy farming, the linking of smallholder cocoa farmers to cocoa value chains, the organizing of groups of farmers into cooperatives to increase bargaining power within the value chain, etc. (see also Chang, 2012).

At the same time, development programmes in general have received critiques on their *results*, *methods*, *motives,* and *worldviews* (Buijs, 2001; Quarles van Ufford et al., 2003). First, regarding *results* development cooperation has been successful in terms of alleviating poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. However, the price that had to be paid for this is a topic of concern. For instance, the promotion of high-yielding wheat and rice varieties, combined with inorganic fertilizers and pesticides in many Asian countries in the 1960s – the so-called Green Revolution –, enormously increased the productivity of wheat and rice, and with that increased food security and decreased poverty (Hazell, 2010; Pingali, 2012). At the same time, the Green Revolution had unintended consequences in high water use, soil degradation, and chemical runoff, as well as a decrease in dietary diversity for many poor people and a persistence in micronutrient malnutrition (Pingali, 2012).

Second, development cooperation can be criticized with respect to the *methods* used. For instance, subsidies on artificial fertilizers are considered as *carrots* or incentives that will cause farmers to adopt the use of artificial fertilizers and increase their production. Such subsidies then are *instruments* or *levers* to regulate the behaviour of farmers. The difficulty with such instruments is, however, that they tend to be unsustainable because merely evoking strategic action by farmers (Ellerman, 2007; N. Long & Van der Ploeg, 1989; Ostrom, Gibson, Shivakumar, & Andersson, 2001). Once the subsidy is gone, the likelihood of a lasting effect of the subsidy is limited (referring back to criticism of results). Furthermore, in this way the agency of farmers themselves is not respected (Crocker, 2008; Ellerman, 2007).

Inversely, in cases where development professionals and organizations do profess to work in a participatory way, this may function merely to hide external interests and agendas, and still be concealing the agency of development organizations or local elites (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Mosse, 2004)

Third, development cooperation can be criticized in relation to *motives*. Governments often have dual motives for development cooperation, that is, charity when it concerns humanitarian assistance and enlightened self-interest with respect to development cooperation (Thompson, 1992; Van Lieshout et al., 2010). The World Trade Organization (WTO) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) promote the latter under the heading "Aid for Trade". The youngest Dutch policy note of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development

Cooperation is even announced as follows: "This note clarifies how the government will deal with international challenges and opportunities in the interest of The Netherlands" (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 2018). Yet, such enlightened self-interest motives can be criticized from the perspective of public justice (Gasper, 1999; Glanville, 2016; Hayes, 2007; Pogge, 2008).

Fourth, development cooperation can be criticized with regard to operative *worldviews* (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018; Rademaker, Oosting, & Jochemsen, 2020). An example is the myopic modernist focus in livestock development programmes on the milk productive function of cows in SSA (Rademaker et al., 2020). Yet, cows have different economic functions in that context, such as providing traction and manure, and storing capital (Ferguson, 1990; Oosting, Udo, & Viets, 2014). For livestock development to be meaningful in that context then, such economic facts should be taken into account. This could give rise to alternative livestock modernization paths.

To conclude, we establish that in relation to development cooperation in the agro-food domain, problems arise related to results, methods, motives, and implied worldviews. In the next section we will consider two main solutions that are proposed to tackle these problems.

6.3   Two Proposed Solutions

Within development cooperation, two main approaches to deal with the sketched ethical problems can be distinguished. On the one hand, there is the work of impact evaluators and development economists, and in their slipstream many development practitioners, who emphasize the *effectiveness* of development cooperation (see also Gasper, 2004, Chapter 3). On the other hand, there are those who are mainly found in the social sciences and humanities who emphasize *human agency*, and related notions of (respect for) autonomy, social justice, democracy, and human rights. We will briefly and selectively discuss those two positions.

6.3.1   Effective Development Cooperation
In what we can call *effective development cooperation* the idea of causality is important. In development programmes this finds its expression in *programme theory*.

> Programme theory [consists in] logic models (flow diagrams which present the intervention causal chain from inputs through to final outcomes) or theories of change (which articulate the assumptions underlying the causal chain and the contexts and stakeholders for whom the intervention is relevant), and sometimes through economic, social or psychological theory to help articulate programme mechanisms. (Waddington, Masset, & Jimenez, 2018, p. 2)

As the reference mentions, a causal chain is usually implied in *logic models* or logical frameworks, and *theories of change*. This so-called (social) impact value chain (Clark, Rosenzweig, Long, & Olsen, 2004) consists of

> the resources used for an intervention (*input*), the intervention itself (also referred to as *project* or *activity*), the immediate quantitative synthesis of the intervention (*output*), the direct changes in people, organizations, natural and physical environments, and social systems and institutions (*outcome*) and highest order effects of the intervention (*impact*). (Liket, 2014, pp. 48–49)

For instance, a development organization uses inputs such as money or knowledge in activities like running a fertilizer subsidy programme or the handing out of milk coolers, which in turn yield outputs such as the tonnages of subsidized fertilizer distributed or the number of milk coolers installed. Outcomes are, respectively, the net change in fertilizer use by farmers or the net change in chilled milk delivered to milk factories. Finally, impact can be, respectively, the net change in farm productivity, or incidence of milk-borne diseases, or even further down the line the escape out of poverty by farmers or increased health status of consumers.

There is much discussion about the interpretation of impact effects. Liket's (2014) overview includes long-term effects, sustained changes, improvement of lives, improvements in society, addressed root causes of social problems, transformational changes, and systematic changes (p. 49). Yet another interpretation is that of impact as attribution. Impact here means "the difference in the [value of the] indicator of interest (Y) with the intervention (Y_1) and without the intervention (Y_0)" (White, 2010, p. 154). In the examples above this could mean that fertilizer subsidies or milk cooler hand-outs were randomly allocated to different groups of farmers, with one group receiving them and one group not receiving them. In this way, it can be established whether a fertilizer subsidy or handing out of milk coolers is causally responsible for any change in fertilizer use or chilled milk delivered to milk factories. Understandably, this interpretation of impact can be found especially among impact evaluators (e.g., Cameron, Mishra, & Brown, 2016; Waddington et al., 2018; White, 2010) and experimental development economists (e.g., Banerjee & Duflo, 2009).[94]

While both the logical framework approach and the theory of change approach centre around the notion of causality, the theory of change approach is usually taken to be more sensitive to assumptions underlying the theory of change, and the idea that change processes often contain unpredictable elements. Nevertheless, in both cases, the focus is on the results or *effects* of so-called interventions. The implicit, yet central normative

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94 As Baele (2013) notes, the principle in experimental development economics "is to actively experiment, in real-life situations, theoretical hypotheses in order to test their validity and produce more useful knowledge (than that provided by non-experimental research) for policy-makers of all sorts (governments, NGOs, philanthropists, international organisations, etc.)" (p. 3).

principle is that activities should be effective. From this perspective, the problems we referred to above under the heading of "results" – so-called unintended and negative consequences – usually are taken into account after a while. Thus, for instance, the negative environmental consequences of the promotion of Green Revolution technologies were recognized after some time; the focus now is on sustainable intensification (McDermott et al., 2010; Tarawali et al., 2011; Tilman et al., 2011). However, even though it is often recognized that effects of activities can be plural (Liket, 2014), an explicit recognition that activities are subjected to a *plurality of normative principles*, next to the normative principle of effectiveness, is generally lacking. Yet, in our view, if we want to tackle the problems associated with "methods" and "worldviews" above, we will need to take a closer look at what it means to practice development cooperation (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019), which is to look at the multiple normativity that holds for the development practice.

6.3.2 Development Cooperation That Respects Human Agency

We saw that in *effective development cooperation* the idea of causality and the associated implicit normative principle of effectiveness is very important. Yet, in *development cooperation that respects human agency*, the focus is on human freedom or agency (see also Sen, 1999). This importance of agency in thinking about development cooperation has historical and normative roots, the latter two being intimately intertwined. Elsewhere we have already briefly discussed the rise of participatory and empowerment approaches in agricultural development cooperation and agricultural research during the 1980s (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018, 2019). Especially social scientists like Robert Chambers were instrumental in this development. Systematic-philosophical reflections followed suit. Important in this regard are the works of David A. Crocker, Paul B. Thompson, and David Ellerman. Because of the clear relevance of their work for development cooperation ethics, we will first briefly describe elements of their work relevant for our purposes, and only afterwards relate critically to their approach in section 6.4.

According to Crocker, agency means "a person deciding for herself (or a group deciding for itself) [rather than] being the 'recipient' of someone else's decision (even if that decision coincides with what the person herself would decide)" (Crocker, 2008, p. 161). Agency in this sense fits uneasily, to say the least, with the idea of causality as it is related to the natural and life sciences.[95] Thus, Crocker (2008) writes:

> Although always more or less constrained by conditioning factors, individuals and groups are self-determining when their behavior is not merely the result of internal and external causes, when they do not enact a script set by someone or something else, but, rather, are the authors of their own individual and collective life. (p. 270)

95 There is a link here to Kant, who argued that the "causality of freedom" (Hartogh, Jacobs, & Willigenburg, 2013, pp. 164–166), which consists in me choosing to act in line with the categorical imperative, is distinct from physical causality.

Crocker therefore pleads for more deliberative participation in small-scale socio-economic development programmes such as initiated in tandem by international (or donor) NGOs and local (or implementing) NGOs, where those on the receiving end should get more control over decisions with respect to the architecture of the development programme and whether the international NGO will continue to fund the programme (Crocker, 2007, reproduced and extended in 2008, pp. 338–374; see also Alkire, 2002). Indeed, Crocker holds that deliberative democratic ideals and principles are appropriate "for every governmental and nongovernmental group at levels from the local to the global" (Crocker, 2008, p. 314).

While Crocker focuses specifically on political agency, Thompson focuses more on economic agency. He links up – just like Crocker – with the capabilities approach, with its distinction between functionings and capabilities. While capabilities are "practically realizable actions or doings that people might take to improve their lives" (Thompson, 2015b, p. 342), functionings are simply what people are and do. Agency or *freedom to choose*[96] is the hinge between capabilities and functionings. A well-known example given by Amartya Sen is that of a wealthy person fasting and a poor person starving. In both cases the functioning of eating is not achieved, but the difference is that the wealthy person *could* have achieved it, that is, he or she does have a capability for eating in contrast to the poor person. Economic agency, then, Thompson understands as "the ability to undertake, direct and influence the activities that secure the means for daily living" (Thompson, 2015b, p. 343). An example Thompson gives, is the agency of farmers and fishermen "in the planning and decision-making of the production process" (Thompson, 2015b, p. 345).[97]

In line with the capabilities approach, Thompson thinks development cooperation should be directed at "encourag[ing] economic growth and the creation of both physical and institutional capabilities that will eventually allow people to attain the ability to participate as full partners in the modern global economy" (Thompson, 2009, p. 219). Needed for being "full partners" in this sense, is to be "self-sufficient" (Thompson, 2009, p. 220), or, simply, being economic agents.

Specific to agricultural development, Thompson (2015a) is concerned about views of economists such as Sachs (2005), who view a rapid outflow of smallholder farmers from agriculture as societally desirable because of efficiency gains.[98] According to Thompson, farmers have *as* farmers a capability that they lack if they would join

96 See also Crocker (2008) on Sen's conception of agency: "Persons as agents should decide on their own values, prioritize their freedoms, and perform their own actions" (p. 161). And, "to exercise agency is to deliberate, decide, act (rather than being acted upon by others), and make a difference in the world" (Crocker, 2008, p. 270).
97 According to Thompson, this concern for economic agency is also behind the food sovereignty movement: rather than focusing on whether people have sufficient means to obtain food in a market, it claims that "development trajectories which preserve farm households and which keep people in farming are better than those which resolve hunger by hastening peasants' exit from farming into a wage labor workforce" (Thompson, 2015b, p. 346).
98 For a similar efficiency argument, see Collier and Dercon (2014).

the wage-earning class: the capability to be their own boss. They can determine by themselves "when it is time to go to work" and "what to do", rather than one's activity being "specified by a boss or supervisor" (Thompson, 2015b, p. 343).[99] Thompson does not conclude from this that farmers in developing countries should continue farming; he is well aware that substituting a steady income through wage labour for farming in grinding poverty is a choice many poor farmers want to make. Yet, he is concerned to point out what is at loss when an *industrial philosophy* is pursued relentlessly.

Both Crocker and Thompson, then, emphasize that in their methods development cooperation should respect and even foster human agency. For Crocker this translates into political voice for intended beneficiaries, while Thompson is mainly concerned to safeguard farmers' capability for economic agency.

Ellerman's (2004, 2007) work concerns methods as well, but he adds a focus on motives. He is especially critical of *social engineering* and *benevolent aid* approaches.[100] As he sees it, in the first case the – what he calls – "helper" tries to impose his will on the "doer" through professionally guided programmes. Social engineering suggests that the helper, in contrast to the doer, can oversee what the problem is and accordingly provide "instructions (knowledge) along with carrots and sticks (incentives) to override the doers' own motivation and push the doers in the right direction" (Ellerman, 2007, p. 564).

In the case of benevolent aid, the helper rather replaces the will of the doer with her will through providing charitable relief. Benevolent aid is defended by "'doing good' in the sense of 'delivering resources to the poor' without any real recognition as to how this undercuts the incentives for developing self-reliance" (Ellerman, 2007, p. 565).

Thus, Ellerman is mainly concerned that development cooperation "helps people help themselves" and connects to people's intrinsic motivation. Needed are "autonomy-respecting indirect methods on the part of the helpers and autonomous self-activity on the part of the doers" (Ellerman, 2007, p. 576). Practically this can be done by asking for co-funding by doers.

Although Ellerman does not say it very explicitly, his work suggests that social engineering and benevolent aid are unethical, because it imposes the will of the active helpers on the presumably passive intended beneficiaries. Ellerman casts his argument, however, simultaneously in terms of effectiveness[101]:

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99 This shows that (economic) agency itself becomes a kind of master capability (Claassen, 2017). Meanwhile, however, this raises questions such as how it is that agency as hinge between capabilities and functionings, can itself function (!) as a capability.

100 In these works Ellerman does not consider what the motive for social engineering actually is. That can be benevolence, but also enlightened self-interest.

101 This raises the interesting question how defensible our distinction between "effective development cooperation" and "development cooperation that respects human agency" actually is. Is not Ellerman's point precisely that development cooperation that does not respect human agency will be ineffective in the long run? While this is true and to the point, the primary intention in "development cooperation that respects human agency" is indeed that: to respect human agency, and not first of all to be effective in a predetermined sense. This is why we think it is sensible to distinguish the two approaches.

Autonomous action is based on some inside-out, internal, or intrinsic motivation. Any action based on the externally supplied motivation of carrots and sticks is "heteronomous" (as philosophers would say). Any attempt to engineer autonomous action with external carrots or sticks would be self-defeating; the means are inconsistent with the motive and thus defeat the end. (Ellerman, 2007, p. 566)

Thus, for instance, people may join a livestock transfer programme run by an NGO because that will yield them a cow or goat, but that is not to say that they will be intrinsically motivated to engage (further) with livestock farming. Any initial success – at least as defined in the programme's terms – is therefore likely to be unsustainable. More importantly, the intervention actually *evokes* such unsustainability, because people act strategically in response to the carrots and sticks (see also Ostrom et al., 2001).

In sum, Ellerman thinks that the actions and policies of helpers should not undercut the agency or autonomy, tied up with their intrinsic motivation, of the doers. Together, Crocker, Thompson, and Ellerman address mainly the problems we earlier discussed under *methods*.[102] Ellerman even connected this to the problems related to *results* – through elaborating the self-defeating nature of development cooperation that ignores the agency of people themselves. Thompson, with his focus on the value of farming itself, came close to addressing problems related to *worldviews*, yet in the end he also evaded the problem of the experience of loss and meaninglessness by conceptualizing these in terms of economic agency.

6.4 Four Crucial Points to Consider in a Development Cooperation Ethics

In the previous two sections we have analysed two approaches that propose solutions to the problems we described in section 6.2. This analysis leads us to the following four points that we need to address in a normative approach to development cooperation. This section will be a preparation for an elaboration of the significance of the NPA for development cooperation, to be discussed in section 6.5.

6.4.1 Distinction Emergency Relief and Development Cooperation
First, as emphasized especially by Thompson and Ellerman, we can and should distinguish between emergency relief or aid, and development cooperation. In the context of the agro-food domain, while the former is short-term food aid or cash transfers offered in

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102 In a much earlier work not discussed here, Thompson (1992) does explicitly deal with the problem of motives though.

response to "temporary shortfalls arising from natural disasters (such as flood or famine) or human catastrophes (such as warfare or severe economic dislocations)" (Thompson, 2009, p. 219), development cooperation is long-term and directed, according to Thompson, at "encourag[ing] economic growth and the creation of both physical and institutional capabilities that will eventually allow people to attain the ability to participate as full partners in the modern global economy" (Thompson, 2009, p. 219).[103] This will make them fit as trade partners in the global economy. A food aid programme in a non-emergency context precisely lacks this "developmental rationale that is required for a programme to qualify *as* development assistance" (Thompson, 2009, p. 224; emphasis added). Doing the latter would amount to an illegitimate exercise of power by the benefactor and is leading to structural dependency to food aid or money transfers, as also Ellerman emphasizes. "Morality would [rather] seem to require redistribution of productive capacity" rather than food or money only (Thompson, 1992, p. 177; see also Goudzwaard, 1979). A viable development cooperation ethics should therefore be distinguished from *emergency aid ethics*.

6.4.2 Meaning of Farming

Thompson rightly resists an industrial philosophy that sees the value of farming to lie only in the food and fibre products it delivers as well as the money and jobs it generates. Yet, his defence of this in terms of the economic agency of farmers in contrast to wage labourers, is less fortunate because it misses the point. To see this, we have to expand the notion of agency beyond the (Kantian) way it is used by Crocker, Thompson, and Ellerman. We will invoke here Geertsema's analysis of freedom as being concerned not only with creativity, but with receptivity too.

Geertsema (2011) clarifies that in its manifestation, *creative freedom* is especially modern and "connected with making the world as we want it to be" (Geertsema, 2011, p. 37). This is the kind of freedom referred to as "freedom to choose" . Yet, there is an older, but, Geertsema believes, equally valid and universal experience of *receptive freedom*. Central here is the "freedom to perform" which "is based on a long training the result of which the body has 'interiorised' and which gives the performer the freedom to be fully him-/herself when he/she in a way loses him-/herself in [practising]" (Geertsema, 2011, p. 49). More in general, then, Geertsema (2011) suggests that "freedom [as such] relates to the possibility to be ourselves" (p. 37), whether in creativity or receptivity.

> **Intermezzo 1. Creative and receptive freedom in livestock farming**
> If we look to a concrete practice like dairy farming we can recognize the two elements of creativity and receptivity. In *Sustainable livestock farming as normative*

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103 Thompson is very brief on this point, but it seems that he refers with "physical capabilities" to production-related capabilities – such as, for instance, having access to appropriate technology for production of crops and animals – and with "institutional capabilities" to having power and voice in the societal structures that regulate access to physical goods – such as markets, governmental bodies, etc.

practice (Rademaker et al., 2017) we have analysed the practice of livestock farming in a similar spirit but then in a more abstract way by using the theory of modal aspects as it has been developed in Reformational philosophy. Two conclusions from that analysis were that creative freedom in the livestock farming practice is bound in a very concrete sense by the structure one's livestock farming practice has acquired over time – for instance, one cannot shift from beef farming to dairy farming overnight because of the different type of animals involved, the required craftsmanship, etc. –, and by the nature of the livestock farming practice as an economic endeavour.[104] Being your own boss does grant a certain creative freedom that wage labour often does not allow. But at the end of the day the cows need to be fed, watered, and milked, and more in general the farm needs to be run.

Receptive freedom refers precisely to the competencies and craftsmanship one has acquired over time, and learned from others. No one becomes a dairy farmer overnight. First of all, specific skills are needed such as handling dairy cows (it sounds very simple, but for the first time trying to direct an almost ten times as heavy organism is quite a challenge, sometimes even frightening, I [CJR] can tell you), recognizing symptoms of illness as well as of heat, and milking cows. Furthermore, some basic knowledge of livestock feeding and watering is required given the specific nature of dairy cows as ruminants. However, basic knowledge of the demand for milk, and possibly meat, is also required. With declining milk consumption and/or declining milk prices, one should be able to change farm operations in such a way that the dairy business can continue. In all these activities tacit norms must be satisfied, such as the continuation of the business, proper care for the dairy cows, etc. The dairy farmer has to be competent in order to *be* a farmer.

Being a farmer, then, already presupposes a freedom to perform in the sense that one has acquired the necessary skills and competencies as a *habitus*. One does not make conscious decisions all the time when milking the cows, cleaning up the barn, bargaining with suppliers, etc. This is not to say that one stops to be a human agent; it is still *me* who is milking, cleaning up, bargaining. That remains an essential part of our experience of freedom, despite structuralist analyses that evaporate human selfhood (Geertsema, 2011).

Now, the problem with thinking that the outflow of farmers from agriculture is only a good thing because it contributes to economic efficiency, is precisely that it does not do justice to many farmers' experience of receptive freedom within the farming practice. Creative freedom may be regained in wage labour as well, when one gets hold

104 In fact, the structure one's livestock farming practice has acquired over time provides limitations for change, and is an instantiation of what Dooyeweerd (1979) called the "norm of historical continuity" (pp. 70–72).

of a management position, or if one joins an organization that leaves much room for own initiative, but the experience of being a farmer and being at home in this farming practice, is an expression of receptive freedom that cannot be had elsewhere except *in* the practice of farming (see also MacIntyre, 1985, 1994). There is not only meaning in the products delivered and money and jobs generated, but also in farming as practice itself.

In this regard, Cusveller (2004) helpfully distinguishes between two types of values internal to (communities of) practice(s) (pp. 165–169). First, there is the internal value that make a practice what it is; for instance, the production of carpentry in the carpentry practice. We may call this a *structural value*, because it belongs to the structure of the practice as such. Second, there is the internal value of being a certain type of practitioner, in this case, a carpenter. We may call this a *unique value* or *existential value*, because it can only be had by actually participating in the practice. The first type of value is, however, more broadly accessible as also transpires from, for instance, consumer concerns with respect to the quality of products like carpentry (Miller, 1984) or discussions by football commentators and fans with respect to the quality of football games (Higgins, 2011). Rational discussion with non-practitioners is possible about the first type of value, whereas this is not or hardly the case with respect to the second type of value. Indeed, with Doeser (1983) we can say that instead of discursive communication, in the second case receptive communication is needed: a type of communication that is open to the otherness of the other and his or her life form (such as being a farmer).

Agricultural development cooperation will need to attend to both types of values, if it is to be meaningful. Elsewhere we have elaborated on the structural side of, specifically, the livestock farming practice (Rademaker et al., 2017). However, this should be accompanied by attention to the existential value attached to farming. In principle (but not in fact), participatory approaches are stronger on that score.

Coming back to the freedom to perform, contra Thompson it can be maintained that being wage-employed is often not experienced as a lack of freedom at all. Rather, it can provide for a safe institutional setting in which one's living is guaranteed, and one can focus on doing one's work in an excellent way – a freedom to perform. Thinking about being wage-employed *as* a lack of freedom does become an issue when the ability to participate meaningfully in a practice is distorted, such as when "[u]nskilled workers in a minimum-wage economy are entirely dependent on someone else to create an employment opportunity" (Thompson, 2015b, p. 345).[105] The problem here is precisely in lacking the skills to participate meaningfully in the economic sphere. Indeed, staying content with relieving this situation through "the gifts and grants of government

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105 The ability to participate meaningfully can become distorted, when one cannot (any longer) participate meaningfully in a practice internal to the organization. However, it can also be distorted when the ability of the worker to participate meaningfully in a practice external to the organization is frustrated, such as when wages are too low to sustain a household with children. This distinction seems to correlate roughly, respectively, with the distinction between receptive freedom and creative freedom, although it should not be forgotten that there is (or should be) creative freedom in the labour process, and receptive freedom in family life.

or charities to achieve [the] most basic functions [of people]" counts as an injustice (Thompson, 2015b, p. 345). Granted, certain economic activities do not allow for this experience of freedom to perform, such as some mind-numbing assembly line work. A development cooperation ethics should therefore be able to accommodate this concern.

6.4.3 Effectiveness as Normative Principle

Ferguson (1990) has reminded us that in talking about the effectiveness of development interventions, it is always crucial to ask: effective to do what and for whom? As we argued with Thompson, it is *constitutive* for agricultural development cooperation as a practice that it facilitates the agency of farmers and other people involved with food production, such as input suppliers, food processors, etc. According to us, this means *to build the capability of these actors to produce and trade on fair terms*. This agency is of an economic nature – economic agency – because food production in a comprehensive sense is an economic endeavour (Jochemsen, 2012; Jongeneel, 2019; Rademaker & Van den Hee, 2018). From this perspective, building the productive and trade capacity of actors in the agro-food domain does not necessarily have to translate in them joining the "global economy," as Thompson wants. Zaal et al. (2015) give excellent examples how local agricultural and broader economical development can be stimulated through supporting smallholder farmers to connect with regional food commodity chains rather than intercontinental cash crop value chains. It is a situational matter whether joining a local or regional value chain or rather an international value chain makes economically as well as socio-economically sense for a farmer or any other actor.

Effectiveness as normative principle is closely related to creative freedom – the power to create or form – and the "will to improve" (Li, 2007). Ellerman's concerns to the extent that social engineering imposes the will of the helpers on the doers, and Crocker's worries that providing a script violates the freedom of others, are to the point in case the creative freedom of development professionals is absolutized. Then, the freedom of the one becomes easily opposed to that of the other, and vice versa. It is important to recognize that human acting, including that of development professionals, is in its nature subject to normative boundaries – such as justice – *and* that this seems to hold *mutatis mutandis* for actors like governmental-, non-governmental- and business organizations as well.[106] Power is but one, in its nature constructive, aspect of our experience of reality. Power can be constructive and establish a freedom to perform that people lacked before.[107] Scientific research can give us knowledge of the causal connections at play here, such as that integration into an international cash crop value chain increases farmers' incomes under certain circumstances. At the same time, such causal explanations bear an economic rather than a strictly physical character (see also Geertsema, 2002), and presuppose human economic acting and hence the (first person) perspective of freedom. A deterministic social

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106 The latter claim would require more support, which we cannot provide now due to reasons of space.
107 Furthermore, power should not be played off against the call to do justice; another aspect of our experience that we will deal with below.

engineering approach therefore excludes itself as a fruitful perspective (although human freedom allows for employing such an approach!).

6.4.4 Objectivity and Subjectivity Not Opposed

The shift towards practice also brings the discussion beyond the dichotomy – outspoken in Ellerman – of the cognitive and volitional. Ellerman (2004) thinks that "[a]ction = behavior (observable) + motivation (largely unobservable)" (pp. 152, 153n6), where the former is associated with objectivity and the latter with subjectivity. The problem with this dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity in development cooperation is, however, that it leads to a "fundamental conundrum" (Ellerman, 2004, 2007) or "dilemma" (Rademaker et al., 2020). The problem is that the norms for a good development of, say, the farming practice are located in human subjects – the volitional side –, thus maximizing human freedom and autonomy. Either the planners provide for these norms – the norms usually being to increase productivity and farmers' income – and farmers are considered as objects that will obey the laws of the market. Or the specification of norms is left to the farmers themselves – they are regarded as subjects in their own right – which renders a programme and the development professionals involved as mere instruments to the goals of farmers. In the latter case, however, this instrumentality contradicts the freedom and autonomy of programmes and involved development professionals themselves.

In contrast to this subject-object model that we elsewhere have called the Cartesian subject-object scheme (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019), practice approaches after the later Wittgenstein emphasize the intersubjective character of human acting (e.g., Hoogland, 2019; MacIntyre, 1985). Simply said, in contrast to (animal) behaviour, human acting admits of internal criticism. The paradigm examples are games. For instance, playing football cannot be understood merely from observable behaviour (moving legs, running people, furious onlookers, etc.) or motives (wanting to win, wanting to excel, etc.). One needs a conception of the rules that hold within the football practice to understand it, namely, to describe running people as playing football. Making a (deep) pass and passing your opponent while dribbling are *recognized* moves in the game of football. In contrast, taking up the ball with your hands and throwing it to the defender right behind you is not. The rules define what it is to play football. More generally, practicing is to follow rules that transcend the individual subject. Due to this, the acting of one practitioner can be criticized by another; if, that is, they share the same rules.

> **Intermezzo 2. Overcoming the subject-object split**
> Shifting the focus from the epistemological subject-object relation to intersubjectivity is actually no warrant to really take leave of the Cartesian subject-object scheme. Geertsema (1992) illustrates this with the work of Jürgen Habermas. Habermas also wants to deviate from the Cartesian subject-object

scheme. He therefore – like Wittgenstein – takes his starting-point in human language rather than the thinking human subject. Language precedes the human subject. The language we use in our scientific endeavour connect us to former and present peers, in the sense that we do not create it ex nihilo.

Despite this, Geertsema clarifies that Habermas does not really overcome the Cartesian subject-object scheme. His thinking remains oriented to an opposition of subjectivity, interpreted now as embedded in intersubjectivity, over against objectivity. Language stands over against the world of facts. The objective world of facts remains without intrinsic value and without normative limits as to how it can be dealt with. For ethics, this comes about most pregnantly in Habermas' treatment of the economic and political spheres as anormative. According to Habermas the economic and political spheres are anormative, because they follow their own steering-media of, respectively, money and power rather than the force of the best argument.

Geertsema (1992) points out that it is remarkable how easily (the early) Habermas passes over the fact that in the economic and political spheres human beings are acting (pp. 79, 96–99). Labour, for instance, Habermas regards as a means to safeguard material reproduction, and should not as such be meaningful in itself (see also section 6.4.2 above). Labour is merely a means of production and wages a recompense for that labour. And yet, in everyday economic and political practice people are at times torn, respectively, between the need for profit and legitimacy, and the meaning and quality of the economic and political processes and its outcomes. People do also often experience their economic and political practices as meaningful. Yet, those experiences cannot be accounted for on Habermas' conception. Here it becomes clear that for Habermas normativity rests in intellectual discourse and not in a pre-given meaningful structure that holds for factual human activities and practices. The human subjects remain the measure of all things.

Likewise, farming can be considered a normative practice (Gremmen, 1993; Jochemsen, 2012). Rules pertain as to what counts as (good) farming.[108] Those rules can differ across locales, just as the specific rules for playing football can differ dependent on location. For instance, norms that can be found in SSA such as that leaving organic residues on fields is inappropriate because not aesthetic and a sign of laziness (Scheba, 2017), that weeding is to be done by women (Farnworth et al., 2016), and that surplus production ought to be shared with village and family members (Boone- van der Poel, 2016; Ramisch, 2016) can hardly or not at all be found in this form in Western contexts.[109] Yet,

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108 Jaeggi (2014) shows that performing a practice and performing a practice *in a good way* cannot be separated from each other. She therefore speaks about *ethisch-funktionale Normen* (pp. 175–177).
109 We owe these examples to Jonathan van Dijke who was supervised in his MSc thesis by CJR and HJ (see Van Dijke, 2018).

this does not show that the underlying principles cannot be found in Western contexts. For instance, despite analyses of Western people as individualistic egoists, sharing of crops is a common practice among gardeners in Western countries.

What this implies is that we can distinguish between *normative principles* and concrete, positivized *norms* (Griffioen, 2003; Hoogland, Jochemsen, Polder, & Strijbos, 1995; Klapwijk, 1994).[110] The crucial point is that we can understand concrete norms themselves as a response to a normative appeal.[111]

More concretely, this means for development cooperation that, for instance, the present shape of livestock farming in Western countries, which is often taken as model for low-income countries, is to be understood as at once *variable* and *normed* (see also Griffioen, 2003; Klapwijk, 1994; Onvlee, 1973; Strijbos, 2011). Variable, because it concerns a particular form and organization of livestock farming, namely a modern and Western one. Normed, because behind all variation across time and place there seem to be normative principles holding for livestock farming. We have elaborated this elsewhere (Rademaker et al., 2017).

Yet, we can also focus on development cooperation as a normative practice itself (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). More specifically, we can say that the "activities" in the impact value chain (see above under 6.3.1) are not neutral, and that we can speak normatively not only about ends (the intended impact), but also about the means. It is not just that impact evaluators and development economists objectively describe and analyse the results of development programmes, and that ethicists focus on the goals set subjectively in programmes. Rather, for ethicists to be meaningful they will have to focus on the *quality* of the development activities itself, or what we above called the structural values and normative principles related to a practice. This is what we will elaborate below in section 6.6. But first we will introduce the NPA.

6.5   Normative Practice Approach

Above we have argued for a practice approach to bring to the fore the meaningfulness and normativity associated with development cooperation, and to tackle the ethical problems associated with development cooperation. The NPA specifically has been developed by Reformational philosophers and is a conceptual and normative framework

110 The term "positivization" stems from the juridical sphere and denotes concretely formed laws and regulations, on the basis of certain juridical principles. We use it here, in line with for instance Griffioen (2003), in a more cosmological or ontological sense to refer to normative principles to which human beings have to take recourse, either in an affirmative or neglecting sense.

111 Indeed, "eine christlich motivierte Philosophie [würde] von einem Appell sprechen, der die Menschen in ein Ringen involviert, um das, was sich zutiefst angeht, und welches sich mit Worten wie Wahrheit, Gerechtigkeit, Friede, Liebe, umschreiben laßt" (Schultz, 1992, p. 198). ["A Christian-motivated philosophy would speak of an appeal that involves human beings in a struggle about what concerns them at depth, and which can be circumscribed by words like truth, justice, peace, love."] We could add "stewardship" as well.

that enables professionals to deal with tensions within their practices. The NPA is normative in the sense that it articulates both the normative principles that hold for professional practices, and the way they cohere and interact (Glas, 2019c).
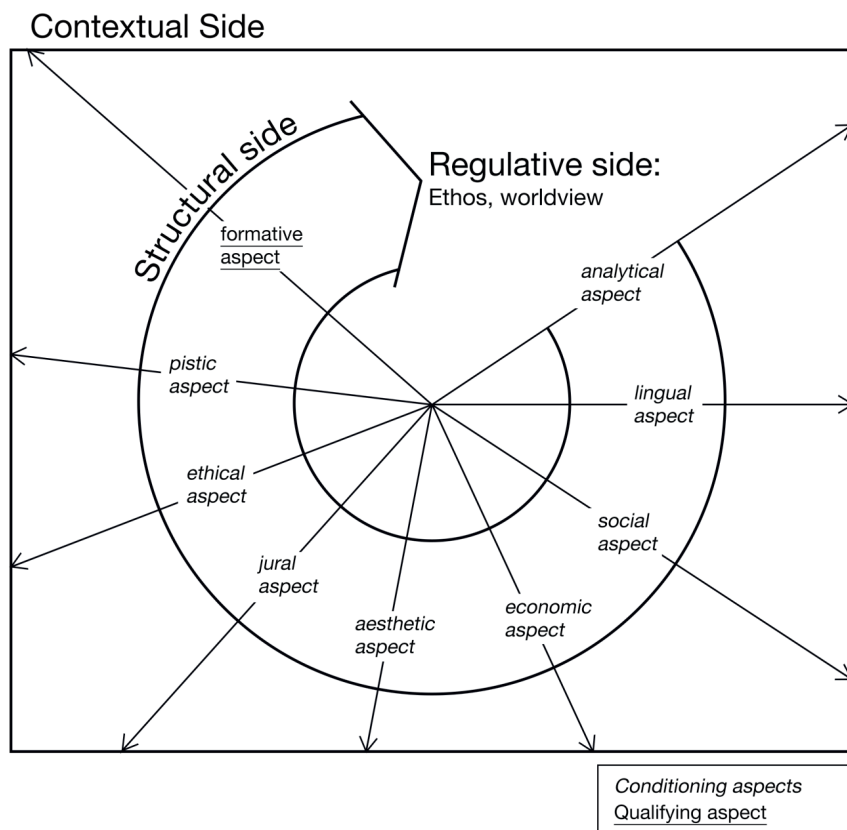

Figure 6.1 Normative practices have a structural (circle), regulative (circular arrow), and contextual (outer square) side. This example is specified for the development cooperation practice.

6.5.1 Elements of the Normative Practice Approach

Within the NPA, a distinction is made, amongst others, between an aspect with a related normative principle that is qualifying a practice and other aspects with related normative principles that are conditioning (Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000). In a structural analysis of practices all these types of aspects with their respective normative principles refer to the practice's *structural side*. In Figure 6.1 this is depicted by the circle and specified for the development cooperation practice (more on that below). The structural side of practices "refer[s] to the foundation or basis of a certain practice. Without compliance to norms that constitute a practice, practices cannot be qualified as the practices they

are" (Hoogland, 2019, p. 45).[112] Based on this it is also possible to speak about what is internal and what is external to a practice (Chaplin, 2007, pp. 130–133), where the external refers to the relationships with the environment or context of a practice. These relationships refer to the *contextual side* of a practice and can be analysed through the modal aspects as well. For instance, the internal economic relationships within the livestock farming practice concerns the relationship to employees and livestock; the external economic relationships concern relationships with input suppliers and buyers (Rademaker et al., 2017). They are visualized by the outer square in Figure 6.1.

Finally, for the development of practices the "fundamental motivation, commitment, or ethos" (Glas, 2019c, p. 9) which has "an existential and moral/spiritual core" (Glas, 2019b, p. 26) is important. This includes "the willingness to participate in a specific practice [and] taking responsibility for the internal good of that practice in particular and of the rules which are used to be applied in that practice" (Hoogland, 2019, p. 48). These notions refer to the *regulative side* of practices. When in good order, this ethos and worldview of practitioners leads to a disclosure of all the aspects with their normative principles, under the lead of the qualifying aspect. This is visualized by the circular arrow in Figure 6.1.

6.5.2 Ethos

At this point we want to elaborate on the regulative side of practices, because it is harder to grasp than the structural and contextual sides of practices. As already suggested, Glas (2006) – building on the work of Troost – has observed that the directional side can be elaborated further with the notions of ethos and dispositions or virtues. Troost (1981) referred to ethos as a "religious-ethical ground attitude" (p. 143). Hoogland et al. (1995) speak about "the ground attitude, a human being assumes in relation to his own responsibility" (para. 4.8). They add that it is that which forces me (or us) to give account of my (or our) acting, and which can be summed up in the notion of integrity (see also MacIntyre, 1999).[113] It means "maintaining a self in the face of … the vicissitudes of

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112 Karl-Otto Apel, for example, emphasizes the transcendental-pragmatic importance of a linguistic normative principle like truthfulness. Such a normative principle is often violated in practice, but communication cannot meaningfully be performed and enacted without presupposing the validity of such a normative principle (hence the term "transcendental-pragmatic"). However, this does not only apply to linguistic normative principles, but to all the different types of normative principles, be they formative, analytical, or otherwise (Klapwijk, 1994). This is to say that normative principles have universal significance and validity. Do note that having universal significance and validity is not the same as having an actual consensus on these matters (Griffioen, 2003).

Furthermore, those normative principles are at once constitutive and regulative (Geertsema, 1992, pp. 95–96; Klapwijk, 1994, pp. 171–172; Troost, 1993, p. 229). Klapwijk (1994) succinctly summarizes this by saying that "regulative principles are at the same time always *constitutive principles,* or *criteria of meaning*" (p. 171). For instance, "if I make an error of thinking, then my train of thought is illogical, to be sure; but illogical is something other than not logical (what is emotional is not logical, for example). An illogical reaction remains logically qualified, yes, is even identifiable as 'illogical' because it is marked as such by the norm of (logical) truth. The normative principle determines the logical meaning of both logical and illogical acts of thought" (Klapwijk, 1994, p. 172).

113 Hoogland et al. (1995) nicely illustrate how a particular ethos is presupposed in Habermas' "unforced force of the better argument" (para. 4.6).

the heart" (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 53). This ethos is never strictly individual, but shared with others, if only because it belongs to the human condition to be historically conditioned (Pinkard, 1999). It therefore makes sense to speak, for instance, about a Christian ethos, utilitarian ethos, modernist ethos, etc. (Hoogland et al., 1995; Troost, 1983).

The ethos manifests itself in durable normative attitudes that in ethical theory are called virtues. Virtues, as dispositions to act in certain characteristic ways, refer to the practitioner implied in the practice. Within the NPA, it is recognized that the performance of a practice crucially depends on the practitioner with his or her habits, convictions, attitude, etc.

It is important to recognize that virtues, and dispositions more generally, cannot be understood in a strictly functionalistic way, which can be switched on and off so to say, because we use them to characterize persons *as a whole* (see also Troost, 1986). Dispositions – such as courage or greediness – can therefore be understood as "instantiations of a more stable type of self-relatedness" (Glas, 2006, p. 47), or more simply put, the expression of a ground attitude in characteristic actions. People with a particular acquired ethos are disposed to act in certain ways. Courageous people are disposed to perform courageous acts. Greedy people are disposed to perform greedy acts.[114] Precisely because of their integral character, which points to the religious-ethical ground attitude of persons, in this case, practitioners, we discuss virtues on the regulative side of practices.

6.6   The Normative Practice of Development Cooperation

In the previous section we have sketched the contours of the NPA. Before that we discussed four points to consider for a development cooperation ethics. In the coming section we will draw on the latter by analysing development cooperation as normative practice, and indicate how this helps to find a way to overcome the problems in development cooperation that we sketched above. The discussion is structured along the three "sides" distinguished in the NPA, to wit the structural side, regulative side, and contextual side of the development cooperation practice.

6.6.1   Structural Side
6.6.1.1 Qualifying aspect
In earlier work we have argued that development cooperation can be conceived of as a normative practice. Focusing on the agricultural domain, we said there that "the internal good of the agricultural development cooperation practice consists in *the facilitation of practitioners in the agricultural domain in pursuing the goods of their practices*" (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018, p. 131). Importantly, this facilitation can get shape via agricultural

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114 This is, however, not to be understood in a deterministic way, as every situation is unique and open to the future (Ricoeur, 1991). Change is always possible.

extension, as it traditionally has, but this is not necessarily the case. The focus can also be on linking farmers to processors or credit providers, or on organizing farmers into cooperatives, etc. (see also Chang, 2012). *As a meso-level practice, therefore, development cooperation can imbed diverse other, more specific, practices.*

Whereas emergency aid focuses on the direct alleviation of human needs, and therefore is qualified by the ethical aspect with the normative principle of care, the development cooperation practice has a facilitative nature. Therefore we have argued that the development cooperation practice is qualified by the formative aspect (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). With this we meant to say that this aspect should lead and disclose the conditional aspects – such as the economic – that can also be distinguished to the development practice (more on that below) (Figure 6.1).[115]

We can now add to this that effectiveness as a formative normative principle rightfully has a central place in development cooperation because development cooperation is qualified by the formative aspect. Furthermore, within the agricultural development cooperation practice the meaning of effectiveness is to facilitate the economic agency of farmers and other people involved with food production, such as input suppliers, food processors, etc. Development cooperation is therefore distinct from emergency relief because it should build the capabilities of farmers and other actors in the agro-food domain themselves, as well as the capabilities of organizations operative in that domain.

6.6.1.2 Conditioning aspects[116]

The qualifying, formative aspect provides for the point and purpose of the development cooperation practice. However, more aspects can be distinguished to the practice. We will discuss them in this section. Importantly, those conditioning aspects provide boundary conditions for the performance of the development cooperation practice.

The *analytical aspect* is about analysis, logic and knowledge, both scientifically and non-scientifically. This implies, among others, that analysis and using logic, for example, of the "development situation," can be carried out in a right and a wrong way, where the normative principle is to *distinguish clearly* (Woudenberg, 2004, pp. 87–88). For example, Ferguson (1990) shows that the Lesothian Thaba-Tseka Development Project initiated by the World Bank, totally misconceived the condition of what were called cattle farmers. In fact, Ferguson argues, they were not farmers proper, because the cattle herds served to store capital rather than to make a profit from. Consequently, the aim of the World Bank to commercialize cattle farming totally missed the point.

Therefore, to distinguish clearly and have real insight into the condition of farmers or other actors in the agro-food domain, the necessary analytical competencies

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115 It would actually be more correct to say that facilitative acting should disclose, for instance, economic acting.
116 This section draws partly on work done by Woord en Daad Foundation's intern Pieter Haveman (who was supervised by CJR), as well as earlier own work (Jochemsen & Rademaker, 2019a).

should be present, both in the development organization itself, as well as in the organizations it collaborates with.

Jansen et al. (2017) have argued that the central normative principle of the *linguistic aspect* can best be understood as *conveying meaning*. It is about the use of signs and symbols to communicate meaning. This implies that one should be aware of differences in language and meaning, which may complicate communication and successful facilitation (see also Dahler-Larsen et al., 2017). This will often prove a challenge for development cooperation because it is situated in a translingual as well as transcultural situation. Hermeneutical philosophy has shown in how far our use of ideas and concepts are intermediated through background understandings implicit in particular languages. This is of particular importance to the involvement of intended beneficiaries who often have a minimal or no command of English. Just making sure that one has a translator on board of a programme may in that regard not be sufficient, for a rather thorough knowledge of the lifeworld associated with the language is needed.

Further normative principles are *respect* and *decency* (M. D. Stafleu, 2005, p. 153), related to the *social aspect* of interaction and social intercourse. Importantly, while respect and decency are found universally, the way they are expressed in particular norms and customs differs greatly. A common example is the different ways of greeting in different cultures. In this vein, the direct way of interacting and communicating of Dutch people is sometimes interpreted as rude in other cultures. This may deter people to say what they think and want. Respect for and decent interaction with people from other cultures, then, also implies respect for their different ways of expressing respect and decency.

Elsewhere we have argued for *efficient* (Dutch: *doelmatige*) *provision* as the normative principle of the *economic aspect* (Jochemsen & Rademaker, 2019a; see also Jongeneel, 2019; Van der Kooy, 1975).[117] For the development practice this means that programmes and organizations are pushed to work in an efficient way. Concretely, this means that the programme planning should be efficient and cost-effective, and that the one who implements a programme is bound by the budget that he/she may spend.

The *aesthetic aspect* with the normative principles of *playfulness* and *imaginativity* (Seerveld, 2001; M. D. Stafleu, 2003) is relevant in the design of agricultural development programmes together with stakeholders, especially in relation to the popular motto that policy should be "evidence-based". The latter can easily work ideologically to confirm the status quo, because of the focus on what has proved "to work." Imagining and playing with different agricultural development scenario's in a particular local context opens up diversity rather than uniformity, and as such can contribute to an intervention

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117 The addition of *provision* to *efficient* is quite crucial, as we have argued elsewhere that merely efficiency as normative principle associated with the economic aspect, can hardly suffice (Rademaker et al., 2017). There, we argued for "fruitful disposition" as normative principle of the economic aspect. Interestingly, Dengerink (1986) uses fruitfulness and efficiency (Dutch: *doelmatigheid*) interchangeably as normative principles associated with the economic aspect (p. 231). What is most important in the present context, however, is to delineate the economic as aspect from the other aspects. Our formulation of normative principles will always remain tentative and provisional.

that really contributes to a meaningful improvement of farmers' and workers' livelihoods (pointing towards the ethical aspect, see below).

The *jural aspect* is about *retribution* and *what is due* (Woudenberg, 2004, p. 106). Within the agricultural development cooperation practice this especially relates to the inclusion of justified interests and the equal consideration of those interests in a development programme. To start with the latter, the normative principle of "what is due" requires that local elites such as rich and influential farmers should have no privileged access above poorer smallholders to programme resources and decision-making. This does not exclude that vulnerable and marginalized groups may need special care and attention (see the ethical aspect below).

Also problematic from the perspective of the equal consideration of justified interests is the systematic privileging of interests of Dutch enterprises, as promoted by Dutch development policy (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 2013, 2018). Dutch enterprises may be legitimately involved in development programmes – see Rademaker and Jochemsen (2018) for the example of Heineken – but the crucial point is that this is conditional on whether they are the enterprise that adds most value to the development programme (pointing back to the economic aspect).

The issue of "justified interests" requires more discussion. The notion is Verkerk's (e.g., 2019). Although he uses it with respect to the contextual side of practices (see below), it seems to us it remains a jural principle which can be discussed as such. Verkerk mainly relies on examples to illustrate what counts as a justified interest, and does not formulate, as we think we should, that it is *the quality of the (potential) relationship between actors that determines what counts as a justified interest*. Thus, local farmers have a justified interest in the shaping of the agricultural advisory services because their (potential) relationship with the development programme is qualified by the formative aspect (facilitation). They have, however, no justified interest in the economic allocation of means within the programme. In contrast, (impact) investors do have a justified interest in the economic allocations of means within the programme, because their (potential) relationship with the development programme is qualified by the economic aspect (return on investment). Investors have, in turn, no justified interest in actually co-shaping the agricultural advisory services as such. Both farmers and investors – to mention just two of the most important stakeholders – therefore have a justified interest in co-shaping *part of* the activities of the development programme. The overall coordination remains with the initiators of the development programme, in this case, development professionals.

The notion of justified interests provides in this way an elegant solution to the debate between participatory and non-participatory approaches in development cooperation. On the one hand, intended beneficiaries such as farmers and farm or factory workers should be able to co-design and -plan those parts of the programme that

affect them directly, such as agricultural advisory services. This presupposes that they really have a voice in these matters. Concretely, it may mean that intended beneficiaries have a say in whether changing agricultural advisory services in their area is really an appropriate focus of the programme, or whether instead changing certain governmental trade regulations would be better. Securing such a voice will often be a challenge in three ways: institutional, professional, and personal (Chambers, 1995). It may require changing procedures and hierarchies, it may require changing the concepts, values and methods currently in vogue in development cooperation, and it may require changing attitudes and behaviour of development professionals (see also below under 6.6.2).

On the other hand, intended beneficiaries are not owed to participate in the overall design and planning of the development programme (contra e.g., Crocker, 2008), such as with respect to what programme staff to hire, what budgetary decisions to take, etc. They have no justified interest in these matters. This maintains a certain power for those who have the overall coordination of the development programme. Important is, however, that power remains subjected to the call to give everyone his or her due, or more generally to do justice.

The normative principles of *care* and *solidarity* (Kuiper, 2004; see also Dooyeweerd, 1969d, p. 576)*,* related to the *ethical aspect,* imply for the development practice that care and solidarity are shown to vulnerable people and groups of people. Distinguishing such an ethical aspect can address the concern discussed earlier that adjustment of the labour process in (agro-food processing) factories is sometimes needed so it becomes human and meaningful.[118] NGOs involved in development cooperation are especially known for this solidaristic concern, as they are often seen – and see themselves – to speak and stand up with or for marginalized and poor people (Slim, 2002). Focusing on agricultural development cooperation again, this may require – depending upon context – to explicitly address in development programmes the well-being of workers on farms and in processing factories, for instance with respect to safe working conditions and a living wage, and also to work on improving those. This does not take away that claims by NGOs to speak and stand up for marginalized and poor people should always be treated with great caution as "some voiceless-ness may be the result of NGO oppression as well as government or other violent oppression. The problem of northern NGOs "capturing" the agenda and taking over the voice of southern NGOs is well known" (Slim, 2002, para. Voice Accountability).

Finally, the *pistic aspect* with the normative principles of *ultimate trust* and *commitment* (Geertsema, 2000) implies for the development practice that an ultimate reference point is needed to be able to meaningfully work on development cooperation.

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118 This does not at all imply a romantic rejection of modern technology. As Goudzwaard (1979) puts it, "in labor situations where the production technique is such that work has become a mere mechanical activity, without any challenge or creativity, automation should take over altogether. In situations, however, where the scale of technology still permits a measure of creativity and variety, these positive elements must be preserved and fostered by the development of a technology especially designed for that end" (p. 203).

This aspect is easily recognized when it concerns faith-based organizations which explicitly identify themselves with a religious tradition and interpret their development work accordingly (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019; Spaling & Vander Kooy, 2019; Van Dijke & Rademaker, 2018). However, also in secular contexts it can be discerned (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019; Rist, 2014; Salemink, 2015). For a long time the ultimate reference point in development has been provided by a secular, high modernist utopia which could be reached if we only but increased and applied our knowledge and technology (Scott, 1998).[119] While the specific state-dominated, high modernist form of development is hardly to be found any longer, the underlying belief in progress and human control can still be found in development cooperation (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018; Rademaker et al., 2020; Rist, 2014).[120] According to Gray, the deepest reason for the human preoccupation with progress is that "believers in progress are seeking from technology . . . salvation from themselves" (Gray, 2004, p. 23), that is, from the conditions that make us human. Salemink (2015) therefore even speaks about "development soteriologies."

The relevance of this religious language is that it shows that as human beings we in fact cannot operate without ultimate trust and commitment. One way or the other it shows itself, even in self-professed secular contexts. Ultimate trust and commitment is just as constitutive for the development practice as the other aspects and normative principles are (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2019).

6.6.2 Regulative Side

We argued in the previous sections that a certain structure can be distinguished to the development cooperation practice, which we analysed as qualifying and conditioning modal aspects. The claim of the NPA is that practicing development cooperation will always embody a response to those normative principles, either positively or negatively, as the various examples illustrated. In development cooperation as a shared, intersubjective practice this means that the regulative side refers to a religious-ethical ground attitude that on the receptive mode includes an embodiment of actual values and norms into dispositions, and on the active mode includes a willingness on the part of practitioners to take responsibility for their acting and be virtuous – which even may call to go beyond the presently accepted norms and values of the practice. What does this mean concretely for development cooperation?

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119 Scott (1998) notes that high modernism "as a faith, . . . was shared by many across a wide spectrum of political ideologies." It consists in "a sweeping, rational engineering of all aspects of social life in order to improve the human condition" (p. 88).

120 This belief in progress has deep roots in the Enlightenment period, but it acquired new impetus after the end of the Second World War, when knowledge of the Holocaust created moral outrage and colonial empires were collapsing (Quarles van Ufford et al., 2003). A whole new world seemed to be within reach. The success of the Marshall plan enforced this idea of the makeability of human society, and subsequent development efforts were initially modelled after the Marshall plan (Ellerman, 2004).

6.6.2.1 *Virtuous practitioners*

In October 2007, the Dutch Knowledge Centre Religion & Development convened a conference entitled *Transforming Development: Exploring Approaches of Development from Religious Perspectives*. Participants from twenty-six countries joined, representing development organizations (both donor and partners) with ties to Muslim, Hindu and Christian traditions, as well as academia. Although dated, this conference is of interest, because it brought to the fore the importance of (development) virtues in development work. Development virtues were described as "the backbone of professional ethics in the development field – of what it means to be 'a good development professional'. They are basic attitudes that shape the professional judgment" (Knowledge Centre Religion and Development, 2008, p. 19). Several virtues and related attitudes were identified as being important for (integral) development (Knowledge Centre Religion and Development, 2008, pp. 19–20):

- *Understanding* of relationships within "local communities",[121] between donors and partners, and within professional teams; as a virtue, it requires attitudes of genuine interest, perceptiveness, and suspension of judgment;
- An attitude of *openness* towards religion and spirituality in general as being important to many people, as well as towards specific expressions of this in local communities;
- *Honesty* in assessing the negative and positive impacts of religion and spirituality in development processes, including the willingness to discuss these with others;
- *Trust, humility and equanimity* to live with complexity, ambiguity, and diversity in development processes;
- *Wisdom* in the face of uncertainties which cannot be managed through risk reduction; this also requires *cautiousness* and an attitude of really listening to feedback; sometimes it also asks for *courage*;
- *Patience* with long-term development processes, and their sometimes chaotic aspects;
- *Realism* in determining what can be done with limited means;
- *Creativity* or *resourcefulness* in making the most of limited means.

These development virtues are "preconditions for [integral development] being well performed" (Knowledge Centre Religion and Development, 2008, p. 21). One needs to be a certain kind of person to engage meaningfully with development cooperation. Chambers (1995) once remarked that "it is . . . obvious to the point of embarrassment, that individual personality, perceptions, values, commitment and behaviour are crucial for institutional and professional change" (p. 198). In our terminology, a virtuous practitioner does not restrict him- or herself to the formative aspect, so to say, but

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121 The conference report uses the term "local communities." In our view, one must be various cautious with the term because it is highly unqualified. What is apparently meant here are villages, neighbourhoods, etc.

realizes integrally and habitually all normative principles that can be discerned to the development cooperation practice – what Van der Kooy (1975) and Goudzwaard (1979) call a "simultaneous realization of norms". In our view, this can only be done from out of an attitude of (public) love rather than, for instance, dominance and control (Buijs, 2012).[122] An attitude of dominance rather absolutizes the formative aspect and forecloses meaning, with all the concomitant problems.

6.6.2.2 Virtuous organizations

On the *Transforming Development* conference, it was also noted that certain "organizational structures and cultures" are more conducive than others to nurture the required development virtues and integral development (Knowledge Centre Religion and Development, 2008, p. 20). It seems we can even go further and say that development organizations themselves need to be virtuous.[123] The added value of virtuous organizational representatives seems to be limited when the development organization as a whole is by and large vicious – for instance, by being structured such that the own organizational survival is systematically favoured. As such, integrity is also an issue at organizational level (Moore & Beadle, 2006; Moore & Grandy, 2017). As Griffioen (2003) says specifically for business organizations, a "business company can certainly show integrity, by standing for something, by consistently adopting a loyal and generous attitude, both vis-à-vis employees, and vis-à-vis input suppliers and customers" (p. 84). There is no reason, however, why this would not apply to other types of organizations and their specific stakeholders as well.

In this regard, fieldwork by Pouw et al. among local populations in which development organizations have worked, show that those people perceive good agencies "to have a long-term commitment, take their time, dare to experiment, and dare to fail, and they are characterised as honest and dependable" (Pouw et al., 2016, p. 8). In contrast, bad agencies are perceived to be "disrespectful, . . . top-down without consultation, and creat[ing] trouble without taking responsibility for solving conflicts. [They] . . . look . . . for fast and visible success" (Pouw et al., 2016, p. 8). In general then, "*bad aid does not live up to its promises and expectations*" (Pouw et al., 2016, p. 8).

The ethical challenge for development organizations, then, is to live up to the "promises and expectations" that are implicitly present in their work. Development always brings along an expectation of improvement of life conditions of people (P. De Vries, 2007; Li, 2007). This is also why we have characterized the development cooperation practice with "facilitation." The virtue of courage is very important here to dare to explicitly commit oneself as an organization to specific and concretized promises, such as are typically

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122 Such an ethic of love goes beyond enlightened self-interest because the other is put before the self, rather than the self before the other. This does not imply that love of the self is excluded, on the contrary (Buijs, 2012). Yet, the orientation is different.
123 A difficult point which we cannot go into now is whether organizations can be seen as actors themselves. For defences from a Dooyeweerdian perspective, see Stafleu (2004) and Chaplin (2011).

formulated in programme proposals, and, in that sense, really *be* as an organization and uphold a name (see also Groen, 1998; Tillich, 1973). Rick James (2010) notes that what is urgently needed in this regard is a restraining by organizations of their "pride, greed and self-interest," and a nurturing of the combination of "sound professional knowledge with the virtues of humility, patience and a genuine commitment to others" (p. 13).

Such a focus on the virtues of practitioners and organizations alike can be motivated from different perspectives; Nussbaum's (2011) capabilities approach is a case in point. Yet, ultimately, on the question whether it is in our human power to restrain our vices and nurture the virtues, the ways will likely part. In contrast to secular-humanist approaches, (Reformed-) Christians are less optimistic in this regard and accept a degree of "brokenness," as well as the need for God's grace and guidance by the Holy Spirit.

6.6.3 Contextual Side

An important question that we have not explicitly addressed so far is to whom we refer specifically when we speak of development professionals. Using the example of agriculture, we have argued earlier that development cooperation is always a domain-relative practice (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). Development cooperation always involves organization, coordination, and facilitation within a specific domain, such as agriculture, infrastructure, health care, or education. Granting that, we have to notice that there are three or four types of organizations that are professionally involved in the domain-relative practice of development cooperation.[124] These are *governmental organizations* such as the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), *multilateral organizations* such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *NGOs* such as SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, and *business organizations* such as FrieslandCampina. Arguably, development professionals are employed in all of these (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018).

This organizational embedding of professional development practitioners refers to the context of the development cooperation practice. Such contexts of practices matter for the roles and responsibilities of specific professionals (Glas, 2017). The reason for this is that these organizations and associated organizational practices have, at a meso- or macro-level, their own qualifying aspect. Also for development cooperation this is highly relevant because it is characterized by multi-actor networks (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). We will work out the contextual side for the meso-level of governmental, non-governmental, and business organizations.[125]

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124 The addition "professionally" is quite essential, as we should not assume that those development professionals are the only ones who really bring about development. For instance, lay people, in a lot of different contexts, initiate development activities themselves, all or not supported through for instance remittances from relatives living abroad. What the term "professional" conveys, amongst others, is that it is a practice with a purpose of its own, as well as the important role of the utilization of scientific knowledge within that practice.
125 We leave aside multilateral organizations, because they show an important overlap with governmental organizations.

6.6.3.1 Governmental development organizations

To start with, organizations, be they governmental, business, or non-governmental organizations, are, as organizations, founded in the formative aspect. It involves "formative (organisational) power to establish and maintain social relationships in an ordered way" (Verkerk & Zijlstra, 2003, p. 116). That is, organizations are coordinated entities that exist to settle particular matters that transcend individual interest. The content and character of those matters distinguish the different types of organizations from each other, and this is reflected in the qualifying aspect of the organization.

So, to start with, it has been argued that the state government and governmental organizations are qualified by the jural aspect, meaning that their structural task is to administer public justice (Chaplin, 2007; Dooyeweerd, 1969d). More recently, Chaplin (2015) has argued that in an international context this structural task "remains the promotion of an order of public justice, yet now beyond their own borders and within the global . . . public realm. Inter-state action and inter-state relations are thus . . . normatively oriented to the realization of inter- and trans-national public justice" (p. 47).[126]

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126 There is a difficult point here with respect to the question what the role of the public interest is in relation to public justice. Is it similar to national interest (so Thompson, 1992, Chapter 4)? To the aggregate of private interests, all or not within a particular nation-state? Or something else altogether? In other words, if the structural task of governments is to administer public justice, is this task limited to the own, domestic public-legal community situated on a particular territory, combined with inter-state justice, or does it extend *into* the territories of other, foreign, governments? This is a highly relevant question in the light of the legitimacy of "development interventions" by governmental development organizations on the territory of other states, all or not via NGOs, as well as with respect to the justifiability of development cooperation as such. Although these questions cannot be fully answered here, it seems to us that answering this question from within the Reformational-philosophical tradition will require more attention to autonomy as principle next to the principle of sphere sovereignty. Because sphere sovereignty, as conceived of by Dooyeweerd, refers to the "intrinsic nature" of societal structures (Dooyeweerd, 1979, Chapter 2), it cannot be used to qualify the relationship between multiple states, since they are all qualified by the jural aspect. Indeed, for relationships between societal entities which are qualified by a similar aspect, Dooyeweerd used the notion of autonomy. For instance, Dooyeweerd (1979) – contra Abraham Kuyper – conceived of municipalities and provinces as parts of a state, that is, they do not have *creational* or normative sphere sovereignty because they are fully determined by doing public justice, just as the state is, even though municipalities and provinces often do have a *historically* achieved autonomy (p. 55). For Dooyeweerd autonomy therefore referred to the relative because delegated independence of parts within a whole (Dooyeweerd, 1979, Chapter 2); autonomy always depends on recognition by authorities (at least in Dooyeweerd, 1936, p. 154). That is, Dooyeweerd restricted autonomy to decentralization within a communal whole, which is a rather descending view that ignores the opposite process of centralization in which juxtaposed and so far autonomous communities that operate in the public domain give up their autonomy and come together to form a new whole. Indeed, Stafleu (2004) has problematized Dooyeweerd's approach, since a certain autonomy for agents, including organized communities, that are operative in the *same* sphere seems to be warranted at a deeper (ethical) level, or at least that is how we interpret his attempt at an alternative construal of sphere sovereignty. For instance, a particular state cannot just interfere in the internal affairs of another state, even though both are operative in the jural sphere. That would fundamentally violate both their autonomy as well as the correlated free character of the public domain on which they operate. It is only when such states establish a pact with their mutual consent that *structural* interference with one another's internal affairs legitimately becomes a possibility. This does, however, not necessarily preclude a humanitarian intervention in emergency situations, analogous to the distinction between emergency aid and development cooperation.

If we consider, for instance, NORAD, we can notice that it is a directorate under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As such it is a governmental organization with a jural qualification and primarily subject to the normative principle of public justice. Importantly, the latter is not oriented to the domestic "public legal community" (Dooyeweerd, 1969d, p. 438), but rather to foreign public legal communities and their development.

The core of NORAD's work is – as the name of the agency implies as well – directed at development cooperation. Indeed, some of NORAD's main tasks consist in providing "expert advice about development and aid to foreign services and work[ing] together with a range of other players in development assistance," as well as granting "funding to organisations within civil society, research, higher education and industry that work with partners in poor countries" (NORAD, 2015). It is useful to contrast such development activities with similarly governmental practices like military practice and tax raising. Development practice is similar to military practice in that it is not primarily internally directed at its own citizens and civil society – as tax raising is – but rather is externally directed, at foreign governments, civil societies, and citizens. Therefore, governmental organizations like NORAD have no authority to act *as* governmental organizations on the territories of other states. So they should not coerce recipient governments to change domestic policy on, for instance, food and agriculture. This limits the mandate of governmental development organizations like NORAD considerably.

It should be observed that development cooperation is but one activity that can be performed by governmental organizations.[127] Governments can and should get involved with development cooperation if the public interest requires so. Yet, this may never come at the cost of other possible activities of governments, such as justly regulating agricultural production and trade.[128] To really contribute to public justice, a certain coherence among activities is therefore presupposed. This means that critiques of governmental development cooperation which point out that development cooperation is mere window-dressing if not accompanied by reforms in the agricultural trade policies and regulations of the richer countries, contain an element of truth (see also Pogge, 2008).

6.6.3.2 Non-governmental development organizations

Many authors have noticed that the term *NGO* (or, alternatively, *not-for-profit organization*) is quite empty; it merely refers to what it is not, namely not a governmental

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127 See also Dengerink (1986): "Within the state apparatus . . . many part-structures with their own qualification and task can be found in the form of ministries, services, state-owned companies, etc." (p. 350).

128 The activities we now mention all concern external relationships of the state to other societal actors, and concomitant functions of the state. Although we do not go into it, this should not come at the cost of activities directed to the internal sphere of the state, that is, to its citizens, such as those related to *distributive justice* (see also Chaplin, 2007). A direct application in relation to the agro-food domain is, for instance, guaranteeing the right to food of citizens (see also De Schutter, 2014).

(or business) organization. Furthermore, as an analytical term its value is restricted, because it usually is taken to refer to a wide variety of organizations, ranging from (non-state) hospitals to product boards and from charity organizations to cooperative supermarkets.

It seems to us that NGOs as such can be qualified by any normative modal aspect except the jural aspect, because the latter qualifies governmental organizations.[129] Thus, schools are qualified by the formative aspect, museums by the aesthetic aspect, health care institutions by the ethical aspect, etc. NGOs *as such* are therefore unqualified. It is thus no wonder that NGOs active in development cooperation are often referred to as non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs). Sometimes they are also referred to as *charities*, but in the context of development cooperation that term has become associated with paternalistic development aid that stifles people's own initiatives. Yet, what the term charities nevertheless does convey, is the solidaristic nature of NGOs working in development cooperation. Given this, we argue that the development NGO as organization can be viewed as qualified by the ethical aspect. This means that the activities of the NGO should be facilitative in character, with a special eye for the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized. Insofar other practices supportive to the primary practice of development cooperation are embedded within the NGO, such as fundraising, communication, and finance and control, they will have their own qualifying aspects and related quality standards, but in general should function as supportive practices for the primary practice of development cooperation. As such, this contains a critique of NGOs prioritizing fundraising and organizational survival, as well as organizational reputation (R. James, 2010; Mosse, 2013), as, respectively, absolutizations of the economic and social aspects. The problem, then, is that the qualifying formative aspect of the development practice is left out of sight. Furthermore, even if these practices internal to the organization are directed towards facilitation of intended beneficiaries, in the performance of the development cooperation practice, attention will always need to be given to the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized, because of the ethical qualification of the development NGO as a whole.[130] This contains a critique of, for instance, a narrow focus on already relatively successful farmers over marginalized smallholders and associated disputable claims to positive trickle down effects of facilitating the already relatively successful farmers. At the least, those smallholder farmers themselves will need to be consulted with respect to whether they would rather continue farming or step out of farming altogether and become a labourer on another farm or in a (agro-processing) factory.

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129 So we take, for instance, cooperative supermarkets to be economically qualified. The difference with corporate supermarkets seems to lie primarily in the foundational aspect (respectively social versus formative).
130 We cannot at this point go further into the precise relationship between those two qualifying aspects (i.e., "formative" for the development cooperation practice and "ethical" for the NGO).

6.6.3.3 *Business organizations*

As Verkerk and Zijlstra (2003) argue, "the meaning of every business organisation is to produce in an efficient way goods or services for customers in such a way that it gets enough financial returns to continue its existence (including the making of a living by its employees)" (p. 116). They, therefore, also say that all modal aspects and related normative principles other than the economic "get their specific colour or shape under the guidance of [the] leading economical dimension" (Verkerk & Zijlstra, 2003, p. 116).

If we look, for example, at FrieslandCampina, we can notice that it is a business organization involved with processing and selling dairy products all over the world. As such, it is a typical business organization with an economic qualification. At the same time, FrieslandCampina has a Global Dairy Development Department (GDDD) responsible for its Dairy Development Programme (DDP). The objective of the DDP is to support farmers in specific countries to achieve a better standard of living, through organizing practical dairy trainings, organizing expert missions to targeted countries in Asia and Africa, setting up knowledge partnerships, supporting the optimization of the dairy value chain from farm to factory, and organizing dairy study tours to the Netherlands (FrieslandCampina, n.d.). Those activities are of a facilitative character, focusing on improving the dairy farming practice of small farmers as well as the dairy value chain through organization and coordination. As such, we could call employees of FrieslandCampina, working within the GDDD, development professionals, although their organizational embedding make them serviceable to the economic qualification of the business organization as a whole.

6.6.3.4 *The role of the context of the development cooperation practice*

In 1996, Edwards and Hulme posed the question whether NGOs were too close for comfort to bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. They feared that greater reliance on official funding might compromise NGO performance, distort accountability, and weaken legitimacy. A key mechanism in this is *cooptation*: "the abandonment of a mission for social transformation to become the implementer of the policy agendas of northern governments" (Edwards & Hulme, 1996, p. 970). In a 2015 paper, they posed the question anew and affirmed that NGO accountability and legitimacy is indeed under threat because of the "gradual erosion of their civil society roots and their inability to secure 'development alternatives' at any scale" (Banks et al., 2015, p. 715). NGO efforts are palliative rather than transformative and do not challenge "large-scale redistribution and the re-ordering of wealth and privilege" (Banks et al., 2015, p. 715).

While Edwards and Hulme focus on state-NGO interactions, it must not be forgotten that present-day development cooperation also, and increasingly, involves business organizations (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). The promise of involving business organizations and employing business methods is that they are "more stable financially than private charity or public assistance, and less likely to create dependency

among low-income beneficiaries" (Goldsmith, 2011, p. 15). Goldsmith, however, qualifies this claim and shows, based on 15 case studies, that "poverty-fighting commercial enterprises are usually helped by charitable or public organizations" through, for instance, subsidies. The important point to note is that also here we may pose the question whether NGOs are too close – to business organizations – for comfort. Business organizations tap the development expertise and grassroots relationships of NGOs because of the high transaction costs involved in working in and with deprived communities and poor people (Goldsmith, 2011; Mosse, 2013).[131] Cooptation here might mean that NGOs (and states) merely support business goals and fail to contribute to transformative change because of "outsourc[ing] development to the 'under-utilized poor'" (Dolan, 2012, p. 7).

What is important, therefore, is that the different types of organizations – governmental, non-governmental, and business – keep in view and guard their structural identities, as we set out above. Only then they can really have a complementary role in the common work of development cooperation.

The specific organizational embedding of the development cooperation practice is also relevant for the roles and responsibilities of development professionals. Where development professionals embedded in governmental and business organizations are accountable to the overall functioning of the organization in terms of justice and efficient provision, respectively, the development professionals within NGOs are bound to the ethical principle of solidarity. Thus, if facilitating – in the first instance via the partner government – the agricultural sector within a low-income country does not serve the public interest, which can consist in improving global food security, there is no justification for a donor governmental development agency – such as NORAD – to do so. Likewise, from the perspective of efficient provision, business organizations have no rationale to facilitate farmers in a particular region when there is no business case, that is, when there is no profit to be made.[132] However, for development NGOs, facilitation out of solidarity belongs to the core of their structural identity as organizations, and they may therefore operate in environments in which business organizations and government organizations do not reach.

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131 It can be contested that development NGOs are still "at the grassroots." In line with Banks et al. (2015), we have therefore in earlier work distinguished between community-based (or: membership-based) organizations (CBOs) and NGOs (Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018). In any case, NGOs can function as "bridges" between the grassroots (micro-) level and macro-level actors such as states and multinational business organizations (Banks et al., 2015).
132 Of course, business organizations also perform philanthropic activities (see Rademaker & Jochemsen, 2018 for examples). Yet, those philanthropic activities are usually not part of the business organization, but have a philanthropic, foundational (Dutch: *stichtings*-) structure.

6.7   Conclusion

We started this article noticing that development cooperation is plagued by problems related to results, methods, motives, and worldviews. Two mainstream approaches to deal with these problems are "effective development cooperation" and "development cooperation that respects human agency." The first approach heavily emphasizes the effectiveness of development cooperation. Yet, in this way it ignores that a whole range of normativity holds for the acting of development professionals. We have elaborated this with the NPA and the qualifying and conditioning aspects of the practice of development cooperation. The qualifying aspect, that is, that which provides for the point and purpose, of agricultural development cooperation is the formative aspect. Development cooperation oriented to the agro-food domain is about facilitating on the side of intended beneficiaries the capability to produce and trade on fair terms. Implied in this is power on the side of development professionals to co-establish what we call with Geertsema a *freedom to perform* that people lacked before.

However, a range of conditioning aspects with associated normative principles can be discerned as well, such as the economic aspect with the normative principle of efficient (Dutch: *doelmatige*) provision, the aesthetic aspect with the normative principle of playfulness or imaginativity, etc. All those normative principles function as evaluative criteria for practical development cooperation, where there is much latitude which respect to their precise positivization, which points to their dynamic character.

The second approach – development cooperation that respects human agency – does more explicitly consider the acting of development professionals and stipulates that it should show respect for the agency of others, in this case, intended beneficiaries such as farmers. Yet, in our view, the notion of agency employed in this approach, namely, agency as the freedom to choose, does not do justice to the receptive side to agency, or the freedom to perform. It is precisely this latter dimension that is alluded to with notions like worldview and ethos. Within the NPA this is conceptualized by distinguishing a regulative side to normative practices. Worldviews and ethoi resonate in how practitioners enact their practice. Development professionals should be aware of this in their own practice. It will provide leeway for alternative agricultural development trajectories in different contexts, and the required openness to address the receptive side to agency with intended beneficiaries, such as farmers, as well. Furthermore, within the development cooperation practice, normative principles are of no avail without a supporting ethos and associated virtues. Crucially important here are courage and integrity, or the courage to uphold a name, which is to say, to take responsibility and be responsible for the promise of improvement inherent to development cooperation.

Finally, we should not forget that development cooperation is practised in governmental-, non-governmental-, and business organizational contexts. Each of these contexts makes different legitimate claims on the embedded development cooperation

practitioners. For a meaningful and complementary cooperation among stakeholders involved with development cooperation, the respective qualifying aspects associated with the different types of organizations should be kept in sight.

As a whole then, we suggest the NPA can address the problems in development cooperation with respect to *results* through explicitly conceptualizing effectiveness as an appropriate normative principle, while the constitutive character of development cooperation as facilitation especially addresses problems related to *methods*. Problems with respect to *worldviews* relate to the regulative side of the NPA, and it asks for acknowledgment on the side of development professionals that worldviews indeed play a role in everyday acting. Although we gave much less attention to problems related to *motives*, we briefly pointed to the importance of an attitude of love rather than dominance and control – also part of the regulative side in the NPA – to enable the simultaneous realization of all normative principles we distinguished to the development cooperation practice.

To conclude, it is our hope that our contribution sensitizes development professionals for the multiple normativity that applies to their acting, and as such contributes to really meaningful development in the agro-food domain and outside.

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7

General Conclusions and Discussion

7.1   Introduction

In the "General Introduction" the need for a development cooperation ethics was sketched and the main research question was formulated to be: how should an encompassing development cooperation ethics look like? I argued there that this development cooperation ethics should be responsive to religious perspectives, as well as take into account the economic context of present-day development cooperation. This led to the formulation of five sub-questions, which were – in the order of which they have been addressed in the Chapters 2 to 6:

> *Chapter 2*: Can development cooperation be conceptualized as a normative practice?
> *Chapter 3*: In how far is a Cartesian worldview operative in the conceptualization and evaluation of dairy development programmes in Kenya?
> *Chapter 4*: What role is there to play for faith commitments and worldviews in agricultural research and development cooperation?
> *Chapter 5*: What normativity holds for the practice of livestock farming?
> *Chapter 6*: What normativity holds for the practice of development cooperation in the agro-food domain?

In this final chapter, the sub-research questions as well as the main research question are answered. Furthermore, the contribution of this thesis to development cooperation ethics is shown and some recommendations for development professionals and organizations are presented. It ends with a critical reflection on some issues relevant to development cooperation ethics that, nevertheless, were not addressed in this thesis, as well as on the methodology followed.

7.2   Main Findings

We start by recapitulating what was found in answer to the sub-questions listed in the previous section.

In Chapter 2 it was shown from a careful reading of the Scientific Council for Government Policy's report *Less pretention, more ambition*, that the council's own overall commitment to a modernist worldview hinders the fruitful development of the – in my words – development cooperation ethics they call for. For this, one could better link up with another strand in the council's thinking, that of practical knowledge. This practical knowledge enables the recognition of the inherent normativity of professional development cooperation: practicing is to take recourse to norms. Employing the Normative Practice Approach (NPA), I showed that development cooperation, in the

midst of a diversity of actors, can be conceptualized as a normative practice, albeit a domain-relative practice. Professional development cooperation is always geared towards some domain in society, such as basic education, health care, or indeed agriculture. This means that the existence of agricultural development cooperation is conditional on the existence of agricultural practices in the first place.

Furthermore, one can distinguish a structural and a regulative side to the practice of development cooperation. The structural side refers to the kind of practice it is, namely, which normative principles hold for the practice. In this regard, it was shown that development cooperation is facilitative in nature; in other words, the formative aspect with the normative principle of meaning-oriented shaping is qualifying. The regulative side, in contrast, refers to fundamental beliefs and convictions, and comes about clearly in the justification of, and the desired normative direction for agricultural development cooperation.

Chapter 3 further inquired into the regulative side of development cooperation. I focused on the question whether a specifically modern or Cartesian worldview is operative in the conceptualization and evaluation of dairy development programmes in Kenya. Based on a document analysis, I concluded that a Cartesian worldview was operative in these evaluations and programmes, as appeared from the strong emphasis on technology transfer and adoption (especially in bilateral and multilateral programmes), on individual women's control of household resources, and on the neglect of religious understandings in relation to livestock. Moreover, this strong Cartesian orientation puts development organizations for the *dilemma of planned development*. On the one hand, development organizations want to give space to the autonomy of farmers, such as via farmer-to-farmer learning methods and farmer organizations' ownership of the further development of their organization. On the other hand, development organizations do have a specific idea on what ought to be achieved in the situation as well as on how that should be achieved. To overcome this dilemma of planned development, it is suggested that development professionals and evaluators should acknowledge that worldviews are at play in the conceptualization and evaluation of development programmes, and furthermore that an openness to a given normativity, as articulated in various worldviews, is needed.

As a mirror to Chapter 3, Chapter 4 took a more normative approach with respect to the role of faith and religion in development cooperation, and more in particular agricultural research (see also Table 1.1 in Chapter 1). In discussion with Andersson and Giller, colleagues at Wageningen University, I argued that a distinction should be made between religion as a (institutionalized) practice of believers, and faith functioning as a worldview in every practice. In addition, it was argued that it is helpful to distinguish between different kinds of practices involved in agricultural development in sub-Saharan Africa, namely farming practice, agronomic scientific practice, and faith practice. As a result of this philosophical analysis, Andersson and Giller's dichotomous model of science-based versus faith-based approaches to agricultural development is

challenged. Faith is never absent in agronomic scientific practice, and science is never absent in farming and the promotion of farming. It is argued that the phenomena of faith convictions and agronomic knowledge refer to two irreducible aspects of human experience: the pistic and analytical aspects, respectively. Each represents its own irreducible type of normativity that is always already functioning inside practices. Practices – such as farming practice, agronomic scientific practice, and faith practice – therefore have an intrinsic bond with normativity; they are thus not essentially value-neutral spaces that only afterwards become hedged around with ethical standards set by, for example, the governments or churches.

The Chapters 2 and 4 already brought to the fore the intrinsic normativity that holds for practices. In Chapter 5 this was elaborated specifically for the livestock farming practice. Livestock development is one sub-cluster in the agro-food domain on which I focused in this thesis. Livestock development can be helpful for poverty alleviation, because a large share of the rural poor keep livestock and the demand for animal products is growing rapidly in developing countries. Yet, the question addressed in this chapter was to what normativity livestock farming as practice should respond. Therefore, as set out in Chapter 1, I focussed on the intrinsic meaning of livestock farming as practice, which includes employment, income, etc, but is broader than that. In this discussion, attention is paid in particular to the notion of *sustainability* that is dominant in mainstream discourse around agricultural and livestock development.

Employing the NPA, it was argued that the economic aspect qualifies and the formative aspect founds the livestock farming practice. What this means is that livestock farming realizes its destination if it is guided primarily by economic normativity. Techniques such as milking dairy cows, bargaining with feed suppliers, etc. found the practice, because without these the practice would not exist. In a good performance of the livestock farming practice, the foundational techniques should, however, be disclosed towards the economic aspect. Observing the normativity related to those two aspects will be the first task for the livestock farmer.

Yet, conditioning normative principles can be distinguished to the livestock farming practice as well, which should be observed for a wholesome and meaningful performance of the practice. Examples include social normativity (reducing odour emissions) and jural normativity (fair trade with suppliers and buyers). Sustainable livestock farming – understood as livestock farming that can be maintained over time – is farming that takes into account this normativity that holds for this practice. Failing to do justice to normativity might affect the practice's sustainability only in the long term – this is especially the case with conditioning norms.[133] Motives to observe normativity have, therefore, the character of an ultimate conviction regarding the flourishing of the practice.

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133 Chapter 5 was written in an early phase of the thesis. Due to increasing insight, I would like to add now that not observing normativity does not necessarily have to manifest itself in the practice as such, but can also present itself in the practitioner in the form of alienation, shame, suffering (see also Geertsema, 1992, pp. 90–93).

Chapter 6, finally, provides a way to deal with ethical problems in development cooperation, such as that unintended and negative results are sometimes neglected, methods that are disrespectful of human agency are frequently encountered, motives are publicly professed to be predominantly self-interested, and operative worldviews are myopic in their focus on only specific development trajectories at the exclusion of others. In dialogue with two mainstream approaches which, respectively, stress effectiveness and respect for human agency, I argued for a third position. With respect to those emphasizing effectiveness, it is argued that development activities are subjected to a plurality of normative principles, next to the normative principle of effectiveness. Furthermore, building on the argument in Chapter 2 that development cooperation is facilitative in nature, in this chapter the analysis is deepened in discussion with David A. Crocker, Paul B. Thompson, and David Ellerman and their notion of human agency. In contrast to those scholars, however, I interpret agency in a broader sense to include both active and receptive dimensions. Agency is not only about having freedom to choose, but also about having freedom to perform. Constitutive for agricultural development cooperation as a practice is that it facilitates the agency of farmers and other people involved with food production, such as input suppliers, food processors, etc. Precisely because agency includes a freedom to perform, for development organizations and professionals this means to build the capability of these actors to produce and trade on fair terms.

Yet, just as with the livestock farming practice, a range of conditioning aspects with their associated normativity can be discerned to the development cooperation practice. Examples include analytical normativity (proper analysis of the development situation), aesthetic normativity (imagining and playing with different agricultural development scenario's), and jural normativity (the inclusion of justified interests and the equal consideration of those interests in a development programme). A flourishing and meaningful development cooperation requires development professionals to respect this normativity and bring it to simultaneous expression in their acting, under the general lead of the qualifying, formative aspect. In this regard, responsible, courageous and conscientious development professionals are needed who manifest those normative principles in their acting.

It should not be forgotten, however, that this acting of development professionals is conditioned by diverse contexts. The roles and responsibilities of development professionals in governmental organizational contexts differ from those in business or non-governmental organizational (NGO) contexts. Those organizational structures should not be played out against each other, though. On a organizational level, organizations as individual wholes should keep in view and guard their structural identities, and be responsible, courageous and conscientiousness as well, in order to really have a complementary role in the common work of development cooperation.

7.3   Main Conclusions

We are now in the position to answer the main research question: how should an encompassing development cooperation ethics look like? First, through an analysis of the structure of development cooperation as practice, we have yielded a normative framework consisting in qualifying, foundational, and conditioning normative principles that ought to be adhered to for a meaningful performance of the practice. Qualifying and foundational is the formative aspect with its normative principle of meaning-oriented shaping (Chapters 2 and 6). Yet, other aspects condition the performance of the practice and consequently justice should be done to normative principles like respect and decency (social aspect), playfulness and imaginativity (aesthetic aspect), retribution and what is due (jural aspect), and care (ethical aspect). All those normative principles function as evaluative criteria for practical development cooperation, where there is much latitude which respect to their precise positivization, which points to their dynamic character. In every situation anew, the import of normative principles need to be attuned to the requirements of the situation. However, second, without a supporting ethos and associated embodiment in virtues, normative principles are of no avail. A development cooperation ethics should therefore also incorporate a focus on ethos and related virtues. In this regard, we have especially drawn attention to virtues like understanding, openness, honesty, trust, humility, wisdom, patience, realism, and resourcefulness, next to the more general and fundamental virtues of courage and integrity. Behind these virtues we have – albeit very briefly – identified a required ethos of (public) love, rather than one of dominance and control.

Third, the contexts of practices matter for the roles and responsibilities of development professionals. The reason for this is that these organizations and associated organizational practices have, at a meso- or macro-level, their own qualifying aspect. In relation to development cooperation, governmental organizations are qualified by the jural aspect, business organizations by the economic aspect, and development NGOs by the ethical aspect. Where development professionals embedded in governmental and business organizations are accountable to the overall functioning of the organization in terms of justice and efficient provision, respectively, the development professionals within NGOs are bound to the ethical principle of solidarity. This means that NGOs should not just focus on economically successful programmes, but may operate precisely in marginal areas unattractive to business organizations.

7.4   Contribution to Development Cooperation Ethics[134]

This dissertation was initiated by the call of the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy for, in my words, a development cooperation ethics. The council conceived of this development cooperation ethics as a *professional ethics*, analogous to business ethics, health care ethics, etc. The NPA seemed perfectly well-suited to contribute to such a professional ethics, because it is being applied to professional practices as diverse as medicine and health care (Glas, 2012, 2019a; Hoogland & Jochemsen, 2000), nursing (Cusveller, 2004; Jochemsen, 2006a), education (De Muynck, 2006; Kuiper, 2019), communication (Jansen et al., 2017; Van der Stoep, 2019), agriculture (Jochemsen, 2012), management (Verkerk, 2019), engineering (Harandi, 2019; Verkerk et al., 2015), and military practice (Van Burken, 2019; Van Burken & De Vries, 2012).

In Chapter 6 I have sketched that scholarly work on development ethics mainly developed in the line of the work of the late Denis Goulet. Probably the most well-known contemporary scholar from this tradition is David A. Crocker. However, with the choice for the NPA, I approached development cooperation ethics from a different angle. To my knowledge, in the circle of those who work on development ethics, only Crocker and Sabina Alkire had so far engaged the concept of *practice* in some form. Crocker speaks about a "development theory-practice" (Crocker, 2008, p. 71ff.), or the

> more or less integrated totality composed of the following components: (A) ethical and other normative assumptions, (B) scientific and philosophical assumptions, (C) development goals, (D) scientific or empirical understanding, (E) policy options and recommendations, (F) critique, and (G) development activities and institutions. (Crocker, 2008, p. 71)

Next to the notion of a development theory-practice being rather complex, Crocker only reckons G to the level of practice; in his view, all other components belong to the level of theory. Furthermore, for him A and C are normative, in contrast to B and D. With the help of the NPA I was able to give a much more refined analysis of development cooperation and the role of science. As especially argued in Chapter 4, science *itself* can be conceived of as a practice (Crocker's component D), that in turn is itself subjected to normativity, first and foremost of an analytical character (contra Crocker's non-normativity of B and D).

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134 It is common to distinguish between theoretical and practical contributions. I think this distinction is misleading (see also Troost, 1990), precisely because science is a practice as well. In terms of the NPA, the meaning of science is of an analytical nature, but that does not imply that it cannot yield useful external benefits, such as for the development cooperation practice. Theories, as "logical artefacts" (M. D. Stafleu, 1981, 1982), can be transferred to and used within practices other than scientific practice. Therefore, in this section the contribution to development cooperation ethics as academic practice is discussed, and in the next section the relevance of this development cooperation ethics for development cooperation practice is discussed.

Furthermore, this normativity that holds for practices is of a rich and plural nature to which justice ought to be done for a meaningful performance of practices. Finally, even though science, for instance in the form of experimental development economics, can render useful services to development cooperation, development cooperation is distinct from science. In contrast to science, development cooperation is not primarily directed to acquiring insight and the formulation of precise theories, but rather to facilitating the agency of intended beneficiaries so as to improve their life-conditions (Chapter 6).

With reference to MacIntyre, Alkire (2002) in her work introduces the concept of practice to delineate the particularity of "dimension[s] of human development or ... general human functioning[s]" (p. 138). For instance, while she sees nutrition as one dimension of human development, she notes that this is an abstract notion. People will always have a particular understanding of it, such as "drink[ing] a mango milkshake" or "eat[ing] a plate of biscuits" (Alkire, 2002, p. 138). This is to say that *dimensions of human development* are culturally and historically embodied.

Alkire (2002) adds that such practices "build on each other to form a loosely interlocked cultural system" (p. 139). It is in cultural systems that people learn to pursue particular valuable functionings. Because practices interlock in this way, a change in one practice may change the whole cultural system and, so Alkire, the cultural identity of a people. It is precisely in development cooperation that this happens, because "development has as one of its primary objectives the introduction of novel practices" (Alkire, 2002, p. 140; de-emphasized).

In contrast to Alkire, the NPA clarifies that practices are not merely particular, but that they exist in response to a normativity that holds for them, universally. "The criteria for the identity of practices are in important respects transcultural" (MacIntyre, 2006, p. 47). People across cultures are in fact able to provide mutual recognition to each other's practices, such as when "painters in Renaissance Flanders and painters in Renaissance Italy accorded each other mutual recognition, learned from each other's innovations, and discovered in each other's achievements new standards to be surpassed" (MacIntyre, 2006, p. 47), and when "seventeenth-century ceramists in Delft were thrilled upon being introduced to the refined porcelain and decorative arts of Ming-dynasty China" (Klapwijk, 1994, p. 168). The NPA is able to make sense of such experiences, because – specific to this example – it conceptualizes an aesthetic normative principle to hold for human practices, and next to that a range of other normative principles.

With this, the conception of practices is wrest from the particularistic spell that surrounds it in Alkire's work. More generally, the NPA provides a way out of the impasse between universalistic and particularistic positions (Crocker, 2008, pp. 44–46). Like utilitarians and Kantians, it maintains the universal scope of normative principles, even though the NPA provides for a much richer because plural account of normative principles. Unlike utilitarians and Kantians, however, it agrees with communitarians

and postmodern scholars that such normative principles can only be formulated against the background of one's own lifeworld and worldview. A continuing debate concerning such normative principles is therefore called for.

7.5   Contribution to Development Cooperation Practice

Next to the contribution to development cooperation ethics as a scientific endeavour, this research yielded several implications for development cooperation practice. Below the main policy and practice recommendations will simply be listed, as I trust they speak for themselves in the context of this thesis:

- The role of faith convictions relates to the motivational side of practices like development cooperation and agricultural research, but extends beyond that (Chapter 4). What we perceive to be the nature of practices like development cooperation, agricultural research, etc. is contained in worldviews supported by faith convictions. Acknowledgement of this worldview background is called for to create and maintain an equal playing-field in terms of knowledge claims. This is especially relevant for scientists, but also for development practitioners who today operate in highly professionalized environments.

- Development professionals and organizations ought to be careful how they deal with the (jural) principle of autonomy (Chapter 6). The interpretation of this principle often results in a stalemate between, on the one hand, the intended beneficiaries and their ideas with respect to the further development of their practices and organizations, and, on the other hand, the development professionals who have their own ideas in this regard. This was called the dilemma of planned development (Chapter 3). Development professionals and organizations should rather pay attention to the normativity that holds for their own acting, and which in the case of development cooperation centres around facilitation (Chapters 2 and 6).

- The weakness of participatory discourse lies primarily in its liability to instrumental usage. In the effort to secure organizational survival and reputation, development professionals and organizations are prone to use participatory methods to legitimize their acting. In Chapter 6, it was emphasized that virtuous development professionals and organizations are needed which with courage and integrity bring development cooperation to its destination. Organizations will therefore need to attend to organizational structures and the degree to which these foster the development of virtuous development professionals. How to do this clearly requires more empirical research. But beyond this, organizations will need

to self-reflect and ponder on the question what they are here for on earth.

- What parties ought to participate in the design and planning of a development programme depends on their justified interest in the programme (Chapter 6). For instance, targeted farmers should at least have a voice in the content of that part of a development programme that focuses on improving agricultural advisory services in their area. They ought, however, not necessarily be involved with the financial planning of the development programme. This is the reverse for donors and impact investors.

- Beyond participation in the process of development cooperation, much more attention is needed for participation as an end. The meaning of development cooperation in the agro-food domain is to facilitate building the capability of actors in the agro-food domain to produce and trade on fair terms (Chapters 2 and 6). This implies that these actors are or become able to participate in specific economic structures – such as cooperatives – and networks – such as value chains. Important, however, is that the question in which of such concrete structures and networks those actors should be able to participate, will need to be posed again and again in every development situation. Becoming able to participate in international value chains, for instance, is not a good thing in every situation; it depends on power differences along the value chain. At stake, in such a situation is precisely the ability to produce and trade on *fair* terms. Governments face a special calling in this regard to promote and realize public justice. But also NGOs should not neglect this dimension because NGOs active in development cooperation are characterized by the aspect of solidarity. Finally, business organizations face obligations of fairness in their trade activities across value chains (Chapter 5).

- Evaluations of development programmes in the agro-food domain should cover a spectrum broader than merely technology adoption and use (formative aspect) and changes in farm productivity and income (economic aspect)(Chapter 3). For instance, evaluations of dairy development programmes should also address issues related to the social aspect (e.g., maintenance of local municipal community ties), aesthetic aspect (e.g., beauty of dairy cows, meadows, and farm buildings), jural aspect (e.g., just treatment of employees and fair trade with value chain partners), ethical aspect (e.g., care for consumer and animal welfare), and pistic aspect (e.g., meaningfulness of farming to farmers)(Chapter 5).

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7.6   Critical Reflection

Having presented the main findings and conclusions of this thesis, and having clarified my contribution to development cooperation ethics and development cooperation practice, in the remainder I would like to critically reflect on some issues related to development cooperation ethics that were not addressed in this thesis, as well as on the methodology I employed. In doing so, I will also point to some lines for further research.

7.6.1   Development as Practice

In this thesis the focus was on the concept of practice, specified for development cooperation practice. Only in Chapter 2 I have briefly reflected on the concept of (societal) development as such, in discussion with the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy. Focusing on the practical character of development cooperation enabled me to bring out the historical-constructive element in development, as well as the enduring normative principles that hold for development which should be done justice to. In Thomas' (2000) terms, I have focused on simultaneously understanding of and providing direction for "deliberate efforts aimed at improvement on the part of various agencies," in contrast to explicitly contributing to "a vision, description or measure of the state of being of a desirable society" or to understanding of the "historical process of social change in which societies are transformed over long periods" (p. 777; de-emphasized). Because of this, I have, for instance, also not engaged with the Sustainable Development Goals, which would have been unavoidable if the focus was explicitly on a vision of a desirable society. Some think that such a focus on practice overshadows or even ignores questions of legitimacy, justice, and power (Kapoor, 2002; Thomas, 2000). To some extent I have lessened this worry because I showed that the jural, with its normative principle of retribution or *what is due*, is also a modal aspect that can be distinguished to the development cooperation practice and which should be done justice to (Chapter 6). Within the practice of development cooperation this means that justified interests should be included and equally considered in a development programme. Yet, it must be admitted that if this is left to the goodwill of practitioners, in practice power and authority may be abused, such as when governmental officials retain a substantial share of development cooperation funds. "Without the checking mechanisms of good institutions in place, it is difficult to get resources for development to flow toward those who have the least power" (Wenar, 2006, p. 4). Therefore, next to virtuous practitioners, we also need, dependent on the specific situation, (government) rules that restrain vicious behaviour. But it must not be forgotten that establishing such rules – just as regulating of agricultural production and trade, discussed in Chapter 6 – is itself a work of practice that needs to be achieved, and that presupposes virtuous practitioners.

Of course, it must be admitted that explicit and deliberate reflection on a vision

of a desirable society is theoretically worthwhile, although less relevant for a development cooperation ethics because "the ethical is not a quality of a 'what', a thing or an event in the world; it is a feature of an act, more precisely of human acts" (Glas, 2006, p. 40). Several Reformational philosophers have contributed to such a vision, albeit under the provision that this will never be "a manageable and concrete program of action" (Goudzwaard, 1979, p. 187). Explicit in the vision of a desirable society as elaborated by Reformational philosophers are societal "meta-norm[s]" (DeMoor, 2013, p. 158) like differentiation, integration, and sphere sovereignty (Chaplin, 2011; DeMoor, 2013; Dooyeweerd, 1979; Goudzwaard, 1979; see also Strijbos, 2011). An intriguing question is how these meta-normative principles relate to the NPA. As it seems, they are mainly at work in the way practices are conceived, but this could be further elaborated (see also footnote 126 in Chapter 6).

7.6.2 Normativity Related to "Natural" Aspects

In Reformational philosophy, the theory of modal aspects stipulates some fifteen modal aspects, to wit the arithmetic, spatial, kinematic, physical, biotic, sensitive, analytical, formative, linguistic, social, economic, aesthetic, jural, ethical, and pistic aspects. As might be recognized, I have dealt with the logical up to the pistic aspects in Chapters 5 and 6. In Chapter 5, I have touched briefly on the physical and biotic context of livestock farming in relation to the unsustainability of mining of nutrients and lack of maintenance of soil fertility. In Chapter 6, however, I have said next to nothing about the pre-logical aspects in relation to development cooperation.

Traditionally, Reformational philosophy considered the pre-logical aspects as natural in contrast to the post-sensitive aspects which were considered normative aspects. After all, we cannot, for instance, choose to stop the metabolic processes inside our bodies; these are subject to physical and biotic laws. However, several philosophers have pointed out that "the physical, biotic and psychic aspects that in themselves may not have a normative dimension are integrated, though, in the event as a whole and as such can function in a proper or improper way" (Geertsema, 2011, p. 41; also Dengerink, 1986). So, for instance, counting and measuring (arithmetic) and eating and drinking (biotic) with colleagues and organizational partners can be done better or worse and thus imply norms. Food and drinks can be healthy or unhealthy, and calculations can be right or wrong. In the livestock farming practice, milking of dairy cows is a kinematically qualified action – the inducement of a flow of milk from the udder to a tank – that can be done smoothly or jerkily. Etc. Important to consider is that such activities get their meaning within the horizon of a broader practice – development cooperation and livestock farming, respectively – even though they possess their own structure (see also Dengerink, 1986).[135]

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135 Within Reformational philosophy, this ordering of practices would be analysed as an enkaptic structural whole (Dooyeweerd, 1969d).

It seems to me such a further analysis is normatively relevant. For instance, one implication of the example of counting and measuring would be that counting and measuring should not be goals in themselves within the development cooperation practice, but that they need to be at service to the broader horizon of facilitation of intended beneficiaries. Further philosophical investigation along this line seems therefore warranted.

7.6.3   Overcoming the Dilemma of Planned Development

In Chapter 3 it was noticed that actual development cooperation in the livestock farming domain is plagued by the *dilemma of planned development*. With this, reference was made to the phenomenon that development organizations, on the one hand, want to give space to the autonomy of farmers, but, on the other hand, do have a specific idea on what ought to be achieved in the situation and having a clear idea about how that should be achieved. In the context of this thesis, however, the question is: does my proposal for a normative understanding of development cooperation and livestock farming provide the resources to overcome this dilemma of planned development? In some sense, it does. It was argued in Chapter 6 that it is constitutive for agricultural development cooperation to facilitate the agency of farmers and other people involved with food production, where this agency is understood to include receptive freedom. This is to say that agency does not just refer to the freedom to choose, but also to a freedom to perform. Facilitating the agency of, for instance, poor farmers does not mean to give them the freedom to choose in all matters of the development programme, but rather that certain types of development are facilitated that are more conducive to integral human functioning (or flourishing) than others (and having a choice in some respect, can be one of those functionings). For instance, facilitating the linking up of poor farmers with regional value chains so that they can earn a decent income enables their economic functioning and flourishing. Implied here is therefore that doing justice to the plurality of modal aspects with their normative principles is conducive to human flourishing (see also Goudzwaard, 1979). Such a conception can, in principle, prevent the dilemma of planned development, because what human flourishing consists in, is not just left to what each person for her- or himself decides it is.[136]

At the same time, it should be acknowledged that in the factual performance of the development cooperation and livestock farming practices, intended beneficiaries, in this case, livestock farmers, may choose to go, for example, for short-term profit and regard the aesthetic quality of their farms and livestock to be of minor or no importance (see also Li, 2005). The practically urgent question then becomes: what to do as development organization and development professionals? I have said next to nothing explicitly so far on how to deal with such conflicts. This clearly is an issue for further research, but it seems the following considerations are at least relevant:

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136 Here my approach is close to Nussbaum's (e.g., 2011).

- Because development cooperation is characterized by facilitation, it can never be the case that intended beneficiaries are coerced to conform to the development organization's or development professionals' regulative views with respect to the desired development path, lest development cooperation becomes meaningless.
- Because each of the parties, development organizations and (organizations of) intended beneficiaries, operate in the public sphere, they should have the freedom to part ways if regulative ideas and ideals are too far apart for a constructive cooperation.
- As emphasized in virtue ethics, it is the person possessing *phronèsis* or the practically wise practitioner, in this case, development practitioner, that knows how to act in conflict situations (more on this below).

7.6.4   Normativity, the Ethical Aspect, and *Phronèsis*

In this thesis I worked with the background understanding that philosophical ethics is concerned with investigating the normativity holding for human acts (Schuurman, 2003; M. D. Stafleu, 2007). More specifically, I situated myself in the Christian-reformational philosophical tradition that distinguishes itself from eudaimonism, Kantian deontologism, and utilitarianism, because it orients itself to normative principles holding for reality as creation, rather than, respectively, to "the nature of man (as in Aristotle), . . . a rational categorical imperative (as in Kant), or . . . the optimalization of the interests of all people (as in utilitarianism)" (M. D. Stafleu, 2007, p. 25). Furthermore, Christian-reformational philosophical ethics sees the relationship between moral theory and everyday practice indirect rather that direct as in Kantian deontologism or utilitarianism. Philosophical ethics has an abstract and analytical character, and results of the philosophical endeavour will therefore need to be "translated back" into everyday practice (see also Jochemsen & Glas, 1997). No easy answers for everyday practice flow from philosophical ethics. I would like to make two comments in this regard.

First, the meaning of normativity within Christian-reformational philosophical ethics is much broader than is usual in ethical theorizing. Normativity diverges in a plurality of normative principles that holds for created reality, such as social normativity (respect and decency), economic normativity (efficient provision), etc.[137] Within this plurality of normative principles one type of normativity is called specifically *ethical*: the ethical aspect with its normative principle of care. Societal phenomena like family life and health care are characterized by this ethical aspect, in contrast to, for instance, student societies (socially qualified) or trade exchanges (economically qualified). This does not imply that participating in family life is in principle more lofty than participating in a student society or trade exchange. Those are just different, potentially worthwhile,

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137 This is also why I added the adjective "encompassing" in the main research question.

activities that respond to different constellations of normative principles (see especially Chapters 5 and 6 in this thesis).

Stafleu (2007) has made clear, however, that calling the ethical aspect "ethical" is a misnomer, if we grant that philosophical ethics is concerned with investigating the normativity that holds for human acting, because so-defined, philosophical *ethics* concerns itself with normativity in a broad sense, not limited to the ethical aspect but including normativity related to the social, economic, and other aspects. Although I have continued to use the established idiom in Christian-reformational philosophical ethics and spoken about the ethical aspect, I agree in content with Stafleu in this regard, and my work should be interpreted along this line.

Second, although the normative principles that hold for several human practices have been extensively analysed and elaborated, the way how to deal with ethical conflicts in less-than-ideal factual practice has not be commented on. Virtue ethics with its notion of *phronèsis* or practical wisdom could be helpful in this regard, because it is the practically wise person who has the capacity to relate general knowledge of theories and principles to the concrete situation, and to discern what is in that situation the right way to act, in awareness of the moral implications of it (Jochemsen & Glas, 1997, p. 198). Yet, it seems to me that from a Christian perspective the message of "the book of Proverbs . . . that wisdom is a matter of character formation, and that character is formed by practicing the 'fear of the Lord,' that is, by trusting God's word to be a reliable guide to the way of truth and life" (Vanhoozer, 2005, p. 332) cannot be ignored. Or in the terminology of Reformational philosophy, as an intellectual virtue *phronèsis* is really realized when disclosed in the faithful (relating to the pistic function) orientation to and trust in God's word.

With the latter remark the boundaries of scientific argument have been surpassed; yet, given that convictions with respect to the Origin of reality always express themselves in scientific practice because it is part of being human to have such convictions (Geertsema, 1996, 2000), there should be room within science to articulate these convictions and test them on their potential to contribute to creaturely flourishing.

7.7   Philosophy and Empirical Research

In this thesis I have relied on philosophical analysis and argumentation (especially Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 6) and document analysis (Chapter 3) as research methods. With respect to the sub-research question "What role is there to play for faith commitments and worldviews in agricultural research and development cooperation?" (Chapter 4) also a more empirical approach with interviews could have been taken. In fact, semi-structured interviews with representatives of both secular and Christian Dutch donor NGOs have been conducted (Van Dijke, 2018; Van Dijke & Rademaker, 2018), but

due to time restrictions I was not able to include that material in this thesis.[138]

The question into the precise relationship between philosophical ethics and empirical research is a common one. Molewijk et al. (2004) helpfully describe five models or approaches of doing ethics in relation to empirical research. The five approaches are called prescriptive applied ethicists, theorists, critical applied ethicists, particularists, and integrated empirical ethics. In the following, I focus on only three of the eight categories that Van Molewijk et al. use to distinguish the approaches from each other, namely moral authority, central goal(s), and types of normativity.

First, for prescriptive applied ethicists and theorists *moral authority* is located in moral theory. If the morality internal to a practice deviates from what moral theory prescribes, the latter prevails. Particularists are rather on the other side of the spectrum and let the factual internal morality prevail over what moral theory may prescribe. In between are critical applied ethicists and integrated empirical ethics, that respectively locate moral authority in both moral theory and practice, and in experience within practice (theory is seen as a practice).

The *central goal*, the second category, for prescriptive applied ethicists is to evaluate practice, whereas that of theorists is to improve moral theory. Critical applied ethicists switch to and fro from evaluation of practice to improvement of moral theory. Particularists rather focus on interpretation and explanation of practice, and are weary of external evaluation. Integrative empirical ethics takes a middle position as it wants to interpret practice, but also evaluate it, and contribute to (social scientific) methodology development.

Finally, the category of *types of normativity* relate to "possible objects of research" (Molewijk et al., 2004, p. 59). Both prescriptive applied ethicists and theorists focus on external normativity, that is, moral theory. Particularists, in contrast, focus on internal normativity, that is, the attitude and behaviour of "research objects within a specific practice" (Molewijk et al., 2004, p. 59). Again, critical applied ethicists are in between as they switch to and fro from external morality to internal morality. Integrated empirical ethics does not focus either on external or internal morality or some combination of

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138 The mentioned empirical research centred on the question how Dutch donor NGOs (i.e., the Self) interpret their interaction with intended beneficiaries (i.e., the Other) and how this informs donor NGOs' strategies for action. It was shown that organizations construct a diverse range of views of the Other, including: "the stubborn, risk averse farmer," "the rational, calculating farmer," "the constrained farmer," and "the fearful farmer." Similarly, different but not mutually exclusive views of Self were found, including "the superior Self," "the avoiding Self," "the responsible Self," and "the engaged Self." At the level of organizational policy discourse, three dominating and mutually exclusive interpretations of the Ultimate came forward: Prosperity, Autonomy, and God. NGOs' specific views of Other and Self interacted and, to some extent, were determined by their understanding of the Ultimate (see also Chapter 4 in this thesis). At the level of practice, however, those understandings of the Ultimate were often hard to discern in what organizations actually *do*, that is, at the level of practice differences between secular and Christian development NGOs were of a more gradual nature. This seems to lend explicit empirical support to our conception of development cooperation as a normative practice with a certain constitutive structure that gives the practice a "face." Differences between Christian and secular organizations, in this regard, primarily refer to differences in the regulative side of the development cooperation practice.

these, but rather on values implied in the research process and in facts, techniques, and institutions.

How does the approach of doing philosophical ethics taken in this thesis relate to the five models Molewijk et al. (2004) distinguish? I will discuss the three categories of moral authority, central goal(s), and types of normativity successively.

7.7.1 Moral Authority

Christian-reformational philosophical ethics takes its starting-point in "the biblical understanding of reality as God's creation" (Geertsema, 2008, p. 237). This has implications for the locus of moral authority. A Christian-philosophical conception of practices in this regard explicitly looks into the direction of the Law Giver (Geertsema, 1992, p. 88). Behind the normative structures and principles stands the sovereign, Love-suffused, Creator's will of God himself (Van der Hoeven, 1981, p. 102). Actual practices are the result of the complex interplay between subjective human formative activity and normative principles that as expressions of God's will-to-love hold for practices and make them possible. Accordingly, the own theoretical presentation as result of scientific theorizing must be subjective and tentative because of the acceptance of *law* as the will of God himself, that transcends any human conceptualization, determination, and exposition, insofar and because (next to all others) also those human activities are regulated by that will (Van der Hoeven, 1981, p. 102).

The own theoretical presentation is subjective in the original sense of *being subject to*, in this case to normative principles and ultimately to the Creator himself. Therefore, moral authority is not to be located in the practice under investigation nor in moral theories as "product" of philosophizing.

This alternative conceptualization of moral authority does not foreclose the discussion, as some may fear. First, it rather demands epistemic humility and an open attitude towards other moral theories, precisely because those normative structures and principles cannot be fixated in *any* theoretical grasp nor can they be *determined* or be possessed by anyone whatsoever (Van der Hoeven, 1981, p. 102). At the same time, subjectivism or relativism is excluded: the law-side remains irreducible to our subjective reaction, because of the simple reason that she *evokes* our reaction (Van der Hoeven, 1981, p. 108). Any scientific theorizing "presupposes a criterion of truth which scientists simply cannot ignore, lest they fall out of the argumentative discourse" (Klapwijk, 1994, p. 171).

Second, the reference to God as Creator, done from a religious standpoint, does not release one from the possibility nor duty to provide reasons for one's theories. "Any ultimate conviction by its very nature cannot be based on rational argument. . . . But having such a basic conviction does not exclude the possibility of a rational discussion" (Geertsema, 1993, p. 152). In fact, this whole thesis was an attempt to articulate in a reasoned way the irreducible normative principles that hold for various practices, most

notably development cooperation.

In conclusion, with respect to the category of moral authority, Christian-reformational philosophical ethics takes a position of its own, not reducible to any of the five models described by Molewijk et al.

7.7.2   Central Goal(s)

With respect to the category of central goal(s), Christian-reformational philosophical ethics emphasizes the own structure or nature of entities, including science and scientific practice. Science, including philosophy, is structurally directed at acquiring insight, to be achieved by proposing and clarifying concepts and by theory formation, and therefore said to be qualified by the analytical aspect (Glas, 2009b; M. D. Stafleu, 1981, 1982; see also Chapter 4 in this thesis). Theories, in this regard, are directed to (lawful) relationships and clarifying of concepts that show something of the structure of reality (Glas, 2009b, p. 187). This resonates with Molewijk et al.'s theorists (and critical applied ethicists) who focus on improving moral theory. Yet, because of the intrinsic normative character of philosophical ethics, moral theories can, as logical artefacts (M. D. Stafleu, 1981, 1982), also be used as a tool to evaluate practices, which is the focus of prescriptive applied ethicists. The latter function, therefore, in a different mode than theorists; prescriptive applied ethicists rely and are dependent on moral theories, but overall their approach is directed to "ethicize" a practice. This is somewhat analogous[139] to engineering that aims to "rationalize" practices – in the sense of making them more effective – and in this relies on certain construction and design theories. Or to economics that aims to "economize" practices, and in this relies on theories concerning the relationship between supply and demand, and the like. On the whole, however, the phases of building theory and applying it to practices remain a scientific endeavour.

So far, this shows that Christian-reformational philosophical ethics is especially close to critical applied ethicists. What, then, of the focus on interpretation in integrated empirical ethics and with particularists? In my view, interpretation is not the inherent end of science, including philosophical ethics, but rather a necessary step in the scientific processing of understanding or acquiring insight. In Christian-reformational philosophical terms, interpretation as a concrete act of the researcher relates to the conditioning lingual aspect of scientific practice, and is as such integrated in the analytically qualified scientific practice.

In fact, in this thesis "the empirical" in relation to development cooperation was engaged in three ways to establish what development cooperation is really about, that is, to interpret it. First, I engaged with the existing empirical literature with respect to development cooperation and development-oriented agronomy (especially Chapters 2 and 3). Second, every nine months on average, a committee of eminent scholars and

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139 I say "somewhat," because philosophical ethics is, in contrast to engineering or economics, not a special science, but has rather a holistic focus in the sense that it focuses on human acting in general.

practitioners including a development economist, social geographer, and anthropologist, and two employees of a development NGO, reflected from the perspective of their respective disciplines and from their everyday practice, on the ideas developed in the various chapters in this thesis. Third, as an external PhD candidate I was employed by a development NGO. In this capacity, I had a workplace in the NGO's office as well, which enabled me to interact with colleagues who were busy with the practical work of development cooperation on which I was reflecting. Based on this exposure to the empirical, as well as previous normative theorizing on development cooperation, development cooperation was interpreted to be structurally directed at facilitation. Yet, in this process of interpreting development cooperation, I also critically questioned (parts of) the NPA. For instance, in Chapter 5 Dooyeweerd's emphasis on frugality or efficiency as normative principle of the economic aspect was questioned, by referring to work of the sociologist Van der Ploeg. So, this reaffirms the dynamic relationship between theory formation and the evaluation of a practice.

To conclude, the approach taken in this thesis was close to critical applied ethicists, but with the big difference that the normative principles applied to the development cooperation practice had an intrinsic relationship to that very same practice, as established through an interpretation of the practice.[140]

7.7.3 Types of Normativity

With the conclusion of the previous section, also the relationship of Christian-reformational philosophical ethics to the third category, of types of normativity, is clarified. Normative principles are external to practices in the sense that they hold for practices, but they are internal in the sense that the very practice cannot be described and understood without them. In this sense, Christian-reformational philosophical ethics is close to integrated empirical ethics (see also Van der Scheer & Widdershoven, 2004).[141]

It is concluded therefore that Christian-reformational philosophical ethics constitutes a distinct approach that cannot be reduced to any of the five models described by Molewijk et al. (2004). I hope to have shown with this thesis the value of the NPA for understanding and evaluating practices like development cooperation.

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140 It is interesting to notice that Aaron James (2013) takes a comparable approach. As Moellendorf (2013) summarizes, James takes a three step constructive method: "(1) The identification of the practice . . . (2) The development of a moralized characterization of the purposes of the practice, which amounts to an interpretation of the point of the practice and the interests that it serves. And (3) a moral assessment of the principles to govern the practice on the basis of what is reasonably acceptable to all" (p. 549). It should be noticed that a difference with the approach taken in this thesis relates to the latter principle of consensus.

141 One specimen of such practices is scientific practice. Integrated empirical ethics, as explained by Molewijk et al. (2004), especially focuses on this scientific practice and the values implied in the research process. Also, here, however, one can distinguish between normative principles that hold for the scientific practice and without which it cannot be understood (see also Chapter 4), and the values and norms scientists say they espouse.

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Summary

In 2010, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy published an influential report titled *Less pretention, more ambition*. One conclusion of the report was that development cooperation lacks a development cooperation ethics. Ethical problems in development cooperation include the neglect of unintended and negative *results* of development programmes, the employment of *methods* that are disrespectful of human agency, *motives* that are publicly professed to be predominantly self-interested, and operative *worldviews* that are myopic in their focus on only specific development trajectories at the exclusion of others. This thesis responds to this challenge by offering a proposal for an ethical approach to development cooperation. Therefore, the main research question is: how should an encompassing development cooperation ethics look like?

The question is answered by deploying the Normative Practice Approach (NPA). The NPA is a conceptual and normative framework that enables professionals to deal with tensions within their practices. The NPA is normative in the sense that it articulates both the normative principles that hold for professional practices, and the way they cohere and interact. It has been applied to practices as diverse as medicine and health care, nursing, education, communication, agriculture, management, engineering, and military practice.

It is argued in this thesis that development cooperation can be understood as a domain-relative normative practice. Professional development cooperation has its own normative structure; yet, development cooperation is simultaneously geared towards some domain, such as basic education, health care, or agriculture. This implies that there is no development cooperation without these other practices. This thesis focuses on development cooperation in the agro-food domain.

Development cooperation as practice has a structural, regulative, and contextual side. The *structural side* of development cooperation refers to the kind of practice it is. The structural side can be further differentiated into foundational, qualifying, and conditioning modal aspects. Modal aspects refer to ways of being of all entities, including practices. Some fifteen aspects can be distinguished. The formative aspect is foundational for development cooperation in the sense that technical knowledge first makes possible the performance of the practice. At the same time, development cooperation is characterized by facilitation and is therefore seen as qualified by the formative aspect as well, with its normative principle of meaning-oriented shaping. Facilitating the agency of farmers and other people involved with food production is constitutive for agricultural development cooperation as a practice. Practicing agricultural development cooperation means to build the capability of these actors to produce and trade on fair terms, that is, to become able to meaningfully participate in specific economic structures and networks.

Conditioning modal aspects with their respective normative principles imply clear distinguishing in the analysis of the development situation (analytical aspect), efficient and cost-effective programme planning (economic aspect), playful imagining of different agricultural development scenario's (aesthetic aspect), and the inclusion of justified interests and the equal consideration of those interests in a development programme (jural aspect). For a meaningful performance of development cooperation, development professionals should simultaneously realize all those normative principles, under the lead of the qualifying normative principle of meaning-oriented shaping. For this, responsible, courageous, and conscientious, in brief: virtuous, development professionals and organizations are needed who give shape to those normative principles in their acting, especially in challenging and competitive environments.

Because development cooperation is a domain-relative practice, its fruitful and meaningful performance requires that the respective normativity of the various practices in the facilitated agro-food domain will be respected. This thesis provides a detailed normative analysis of livestock development as one sub-cluster in the agro-food domain. Employing the NPA, again qualifying, foundational, and conditioning modal aspects are distinguished. The economic aspect is seen to qualify and the formative aspect to found the livestock farming practice. What this means is that livestock farming realizes its destination by particularly observing economic normativity. Examples of conditioning normativity include social normativity (reducing odour emissions) and jural normativity (fair trade with suppliers and buyers). Linking up with the mainstream discourse on sustainability, it is argued that sustainable livestock farming – understood as livestock farming that can be maintained over time – is farming that takes into account this normativity that holds for the livestock farming practice.

For development professionals and organizations it is imperative to facilitate especially the economic agency of (livestock) farmers and other actors in the agro-food domain. This because livestock farming and the agro-food domain in general is characterized by the economic aspect.

Faith and religion are important within development cooperation. Religion and religious practices are omnipresent within development contexts, and faith-based organizations play a significant role within development cooperation. Within the NPA, the influence of faith convictions and religious ideas is conceptualized by distinguishing a *regulative side* next to the structural side of practices. Within agricultural development cooperation, it is helpful to distinguish between different kinds of practices involved, namely farming practice, scientific practice, and faith practice. Within each of these practices faith functions as a worldview. In the farming and scientific practices, however, faith is not qualifying for the practices. There, justice should primarily be done to, respectively, the economic and analytical aspects and their respective normativity. This conceptualization prevents dichotomous models of science-based versus faith-based approaches within agricultural research and development.

It is shown in this thesis that in evaluations of dairy development programmes in Kenya, a Cartesian worldview is operative. This appears from a strong emphasis on technology transfer and adoption (especially in bilateral and multilateral programmes), on individual women's control of household resources, and on the neglect of religious understandings in relation to livestock. This Cartesian orientation puts development professionals and organizations for the *dilemma of planned development*. The problem is that the autonomy of intended beneficiaries and their organizations is implicitly thought to be opposed to that of development professionals and their organizations. It is argued that the dilemma of planned development can be dealt with by doing justice to the normative structure of the development cooperation practice, and conceiving of agency in a broader way than usual in development cooperation ethics.

The organizational embedding of professional development practitioners refers to the *contextual side* of the development cooperation practice. Organizations professionally involved with development cooperation include business, non-governmental, and governmental (including multilateral) organizations. Each of these organizational contexts make different legitimate claims on the embedded development cooperation practitioners. On this organizational level, the respective qualifying aspects associated with the different types of organizations should be kept in sight for a meaningful and complementary collaboration among stakeholders in development cooperation.

To conclude, it is suggested that the NPA can address the ethical problems in development cooperation with respect to *results* through explicitly conceptualizing effectiveness as merely one normative principle, related to the formative aspect. Simultaneously, the constitutive character of development cooperation as facilitation especially addresses problems related to *methods*. Problems with respect to *worldviews* relate to the regulative side of the NPA. This asks for acknowledgment on the side of development professionals that worldviews are at play in the conceptualization and evaluation of development programmes. Furthermore, an openness to a given normativity as articulated in various worldviews is needed. Although less attention is provided in this thesis to problems related to *motives*, it is pointed out that at the regulative side an ethos of love rather than of dominance and control is required, expressing itself in a range of virtues. In this way, all normative principles distinguished to the development cooperation practice can be simultaneous realized.

It is hoped that this thesis sensitizes development professionals and organizations for the multiple normativity that applies to their acting, and as such contributes to really meaningful development within the agro-food domain and outside.

Samenvatting

In 2010 publiceerde de Nederlandse Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid een invloedrijk rapport getiteld *Minder pretentie, meer ambitie*. Een conclusie van het rapport was dat ontwikkelingssamenwerking een ethiek van ontwikkelingssamenwerking mist. Ethische problemen in ontwikkelingssamenwerking zijn onder meer het veronachtzamen van onbedoelde en negatieve *resultaten* van ontwikkelingsprogramma's, het gebruik van *methoden* die geen respect tonen voor menselijk actorschap, *motieven* waarvan publiekelijk wordt toegegeven dat ze overwegend betrekking hebben op eigenbelang, en operatieve *levensbeschouwingen* die slechts focussen op bepaalde ontwikkelingstrajecten met uitsluiting van andere. Dit proefschrift beantwoordt deze uitdaging door een voorstel te doen voor een ethische benadering van ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Daarom is de hoofdonderzoeksvraag: hoe moet een omvattende ethiek van ontwikkelingssamenwerking eruitzien?

De vraag wordt beantwoord met behulp van de Normatieve Praktijkbenadering (NPB). De NPB is een conceptueel en normatief kader dat professionals in staat stelt spanningen binnen hun praktijken aan te pakken. De NPB is normatief in die zin dat zij zowel de normatieve principes die gelden voor professionele praktijken, als de manier waarop deze principes samenhangen en op elkaar inwerken, articuleert. Ze is toegepast op uiteenlopende praktijken als geneeskunde en gezondheidszorg, verpleging, onderwijs, communicatie, landbouw, management, bouwkunde en de militaire praktijk.

In dit proefschrift wordt betoogd dat ontwikkelingssamenwerking kan worden opgevat als een domein-relatieve normatieve praktijk. Professionele ontwikkelingssamenwerking heeft zijn eigen normatieve structuur, maar ontwikkelingssamenwerking is tegelijkertijd gericht op een bepaald domein, zoals basisonderwijs, gezondheidszorg of landbouw. Dit houdt in dat er geen ontwikkelingssamenwerking is zonder deze andere praktijken. Dit proefschrift richt zich in het bijzonder op ontwikkelingssamenwerking op het gebied van agrofood.

Ontwikkelingssamenwerking als praktijk heeft een structurele, regulatieve en contextuele zijde. De *structurele zijde* van ontwikkelingssamenwerking verwijst naar het soort praktijk waar het om gaat. Aan de structurele zijde kunnen verder funderende, kwalificerende en conditionerende modale aspecten worden onderscheiden. Modale aspecten verwijzen naar manieren van zijn van alle entiteiten, inclusief praktijken. Er kunnen ongeveer vijftien aspecten worden onderscheiden. Het formatieve aspect is funderend voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking in die zin dat technische kennis eerst de uitvoering van de praktijk mogelijk maakt. Tegelijkertijd wordt ontwikkelingssamenwerking gekenmerkt door facilitering en daarom ook gezien als gekwalificeerd door het formatieve aspect, met zijn normatieve principe van betekenisgericht vormgeven. Het faciliteren van het actorschap van boeren en andere actoren is constitutief voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking binnen het agrofood domein.

Het praktiseren van ontwikkelingssamenwerking binnen het agrofood domein betekent het versterken van het vermogen van deze actoren om onder eerlijke voorwaarden te produceren en te handelen, dat wil zeggen, om zinvol te kunnen deelnemen aan specifieke economische structuren en netwerken.

Conditionerende modale aspecten met hun respectieve normatieve principes impliceren: duidelijk onderscheiden in de analyse van de ontwikkelingssituatie (analytisch aspect), efficiënte en kosteneffectieve programmaplanning (economisch aspect), het op creatieve wijze verbeelden van verschillende scenario's voor landbouwontwikkeling (esthetisch aspect), en de inclusie en gelijke bejegening van gerechtvaardigde belangen binnen een ontwikkelingsprogramma (juridische aspect). Voor een zinvolle uitvoering van ontwikkelingssamenwerking moeten ontwikkelingsprofessionals tegelijkertijd al die normatieve principes realiseren, onder leiding van het kwalificerende normatieve principe van betekenisgericht vormgeven. Hiervoor zijn verantwoordelijke, moedige en integere, kortom: deugdzame, ontwikkelingsprofessionals en -organisaties nodig die deze normatieve principes gestalte geven in hun handelen, vooral in uitdagende en competitieve omgevingen.

Omdat ontwikkelingssamenwerking een domein-relatieve praktijk is, vereist de vruchtbare en betekenisvolle uitvoering ervan dat de respectieve normativiteiten van de verschillende praktijken in het gefaciliteerde agrofood domein worden gerespecteerd. Dit proefschrift biedt een gedetailleerde normatieve analyse van veehouderijontwikkeling als een subcluster binnen het agrofood domein. Gebruikmakend van de NPB worden opnieuw kwalificerende, fundamentele en conditionerende modale aspecten onderscheiden. Het economische aspect is kwalificerend en het formatieve aspect funderend voor veehouderij. Dit betekent dat de veehouderij tot haar bestemming komt door met name economische normativiteit te honoreren.

Voorbeelden van conditionerende normativiteit zijn sociale normativiteit (vermindering van stankemissies) en juridische normativiteit (eerlijke handel met leveranciers en kopers). In aansluiting bij het reguliere discours over duurzaamheid wordt betoogd dat duurzame veehouderij – begrepen als veehouderij die in de loop van de tijd kan worden gehandhaafd – een manier van boeren behelst die rekening houdt met deze normativiteit die geldt voor de veehouderij.

Van ontwikkelingsprofessionals en -organisaties wordt gevraagd om met name het economische actorschap van (vee)boeren en andere actoren binnen het agrofood domein te faciliteren. Dit omdat de veehouderij en het agrofood domein in het algemeen worden gekenmerkt door het economische aspect.

Geloof en religie zijn belangrijk binnen ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Religie en religieuze praktijken zijn alomtegenwoordig binnen ontwikkelingscontexten en *faith-based organizations* spelen een belangrijke rol binnen ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Binnen de NPB wordt de invloed van geloofsovertuigingen en religieuze ideeën geconceptualiseerd door een *regulatieve zijde* te onderscheiden naast de structurele

zijde van praktijken. Binnen ontwikkelingssamenwerking in het agrofood domein kan onderscheid gemaakt worden tussen verschillende soorten praktijken, namelijk landbouwpraktijken, wetenschappelijke praktijken en geloofspraktijken. Binnen elk van deze typen praktijken functioneert geloof in de vorm van een levensbeschouwing. Voor landbouw- en wetenschapspraktijken is het geloofsaspect echter niet kwalificerend. Daar moet in de eerste plaats recht worden gedaan aan respectievelijk de economische en analytische aspecten en hun respectieve normativiteiten. Deze conceptualisatie voorkomt dichotome modellen van op-wetenschap-gebaseerde versus op-geloof-gebaseerde benaderingen binnen landbouwkundig onderzoek en ontwikkeling.

In deze dissertatie wordt verder aangetoond dat in evaluaties van zuivelontwikkelingsprogramma's in Kenia, een Cartesiaanse levensbeschouwing werkzaam is. Dit blijkt uit een sterke nadruk op technologieoverdracht en adoptie (vooral in bilaterale en multilaterale programma's), op de zeggenschap van individuele vrouwen over huishoudelijke middelen, en op de verwaarlozing van religieuze opvattingen met betrekking tot vee. Deze Cartesiaanse oriëntatie stelt ontwikkelingsprofessionals en organisaties voor het *dilemma van geplande ontwikkeling*. Het probleem is dat de autonomie van beoogde begunstigden en hun organisaties impliciet wordt geacht te staan tegenover die van ontwikkelingsprofessionals en hun organisaties. Er wordt betoogd dat het dilemma van geplande ontwikkeling kan worden aangepakt door recht te doen aan de normatieve structuur van de praktijk van ontwikkelingssamenwerking, en door actorschap op een bredere manier op te vatten dan gebruikelijk in de ethiek van ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

De organisatorische inbedding van professionele ontwikkelingswerkers verwijst naar de *contextuele zijde* van de praktijk van ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Organisaties die professioneel betrokken zijn bij ontwikkelingssamenwerking zijn onder meer bedrijfs-, niet-gouvernementele- en gouvernementele (inclusief multilaterale) organisaties. Elk van deze organisatorische contexten maakt verschillende legitieme claims op ingebedde ontwikkelingsprofessionals. Op dit organisatieniveau moeten de respectieve kwalificerende aspecten, die verband houden met de verschillende soorten organisaties, in het oog worden gehouden voor een zinvolle en complementaire samenwerking tussen belanghebbenden bij ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

Concluderend wordt gesuggereerd dat de NPB de ethische problemen in ontwikkelingssamenwerking met betrekking tot *resultaten* kan aanpakken door effectiviteit expliciet te conceptualiseren als slechts één normatief principe, gerelateerd aan het formatieve aspect. Tegelijkertijd is het constitutieve karakter van ontwikkelingssamenwerking als facilitering vooral relevant voor problemen die verband houden met *methoden*. Problemen gerelateerd aan *levensbeschouwingen* hebben betrekking op de regulatieve kant van de NPB. Hier is van de kant van ontwikkelingsprofessionals erkenning vereist dat levensbeschouwingen een rol spelen bij de conceptvorming en evaluatie van ontwikkelingsprogramma's. Verder is er openheid nodig voor een gegeven

normativiteit zoals gearticuleerd in verschillende levensbeschouwingen. Hoewel in dit proefschrift minder aandacht wordt besteed aan problemen die verband houden met *motieven*, wordt erop gewezen dat aan de regulatieve zijde een ethos van liefde in plaats van dominantie en controle vereist is, die zich manifesteert in een reeks van deugden. Op deze manier kunnen alle normatieve principes die worden onderscheiden aan de praktijk van ontwikkelingssamenwerking gelijktijdig gerealiseerd worden.

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Cornelis Johannes Rademaker
Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)
Completed Training and Supervision Plan

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
Writing PhD Proposal	WUR	2014-2015	6.0
'Naar een verstaan van ontwikkelingssamenwerking als normatieve praktijk'	Workshop NPM, VU University Amsterdam	2015	0.5
'On the role of religion in the political *agronomy of Conservation Agriculture'*	Contested Agronomy Conference, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton	2016	1.0
'Towards an intervention ethics for international (agricultural) development cooperation'	Christianity and the Future of our Societies Conference, ETF Leuven	2016	1.0
'Modernising the Kenyan dairy sector?'	EurSafe Congress, Vetmeduni Vienna	2018	1.0
'Enemy or ally to targeted farmers? Dutch NGOs and FBOs promoting Conservation Agriculture'	IDEA-GREThA Congress, Université de Bordeaux	2018	1.0
Adoption of agricultural and conservation practices: Insights from behavioral theory and the decision-making process	WASS	2017	0.7
B) General research related competences			
Reading group PHI	CPT, WUR	2014-2019	4.0
WASS Introduction course	WASS	2015	1.0
Critical Perspectives on Social Theory	WASS	2015	3.5
Study group Christian Philosophy	OZSW	2014-2020	6.0
Qualitative Data Analysis with Atlas.ti: a hands-on practical	WASS	2017	1.0
Peer-review of scientific article	Philosophia Reformata	2017	0.2
Summer school Ethics and Economics	OZSW	2018	5.0

C) Career related competences/personal development

Public lectures '*Techniek en tijdelijkheid*', '*Charles Taylor en de malaise van de moderniteit*, '*Vooruitgang en secularisatie*'	Wijsgerige Kring Eindhoven	2015	0.2
Cambridge Scholars Network conference	FOCL	2015	4.0
Orientation on Teaching for PhDs	ESD, WUR	2016	0.9
Guest Lecture within Ethics of Science and Technology	CPT, WUR	2016	0.2
Mobilizing your - Scientific - Network	WGS	2017	1.0
Master thesis & intern supervision	WASS & Woord en Daad	2017-2018	4.0
Total			**42.2**

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load