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Transforming cultural norms: 

the role of women and youth

Submitted by

Eveline Hendrika Jordans

MSc, MA (Distinction)

Submitted for the qualification of Doctor of Philosophy in Intercultural Communication

by Published Work

Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick

January - 2022
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Acknowledgements

The research journey that ultimately has resulted in this submission for PhD by published work started over thirty years ago. Throughout the writing of this synthesis document, and the research on which it is based, I have received a great deal of support and inspiration. I am grateful to those people who contributed significantly to my development as a scientist.

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey, whose expertise was invaluable in the research and analysis for this synthesis, and also in the research and publication of the book on leadership in Africa. Your encouragement, insightful feedback and probing questions helped me to focus my thinking, discover patterns and brought my work to a higher level.

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Over the course of my work and research in Asia and in Africa I feel privileged for getting to learn from countless men and women: including women farmers in Bangladesh and young leaders in Africa. They have provided me with their stories, which has inspired me and also made me believe in the power of people to be able to transform: individually and together.

I could not have completed this research journey without the support of my friends and family across the world, who provided stimulating discussions as well as happy distractions and a world outside my research. Finally, I thank my parents Antoon en Tineke Jordans. I am forever grateful to Pjotr Prins, for his support and encouragement throughout the years. Having prepared this synthesis over the course of 2020 and 2021 amidst multiple lockdowns, I am very grateful to him, and my cat Max, for giving me a happy, warm family life.

Declaration

This thesis is my own work except where it contains work based on collaborative research. In the case of collaborative research, the nature and extent of my and other authors’ individual contributions has been detailed in signed statements included in Appendix 1. I hereby confirm that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.
Abstract

This submission draws together six publications and a covering document to set out an original contribution to knowledge in the field of intercultural communication. Critical attention to cultural norms change has been relatively scarce in this field; the publications gathered here offer insights into desired cultural norms change initiated by groups of underdogs, based on gender and age, notably in Asia and Africa.

My publications focus on detailed studies of these underdog groups, exploring the needs and drivers that lie behind their desire for cultural norms change and the subsequent tactics they used to achieve that transformation. The publications include a gender analysis focusing on women farmers in Bangladesh, a technical guide supporting development practitioners in addressing gender issues, a literature review that explores perspectives on leadership in Africa, case studies exploring perspectives on leadership by civic leaders in Nigeria and Kenya and an analysis of a leadership development initiative in Kenya.

Following an initial theoretical overview, which outlines the frameworks that help to conceptualise the transformation of cultural norms, the covering document sets out a novel approach to understanding the process of cultural norms change in different contexts. This synthesis demonstrates the value of viewing culture as a diverse mosaic within societies. The larger society imposes cultural norms on sub-groups, or underdogs in my studies; power imbalances cause some of these norms to be to their disadvantage in reaching their goals, which in turn provides them with an incentive for change.

To achieve cultural norms transformation, grassroots bottom-up actions and external dedicated support ideally need to be combined. I propose an integrated transformation model that promotes change through a transformation approach that is based on the dynamic interplay of agentic and communion dimensions of the interpersonal circumplex. The combined research thereby generates a new conceptual framework for understanding cultural norms transformation driven by underdog groups.
Introduction

In this introduction to the synthesis of publications selected for examination for the degree of PhD in Intercultural Communication by published work at the University of Warwick, I outline some of the contextual influences on my published work and what have been the key drivers behind it.

During my career, spanning 30 years, I have had the privilege to be an irrigation engineer, gender specialist, leadership trainer, executive director, management consultant and a researcher. I have worked in various intercultural contexts in over 30 different countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. Chronologically my career, including research for the publications, is summarised below in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Career overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991-2002</td>
<td>After my graduation, MSc Land and Water Management at Wageningen University, The Netherlands, I worked in International Development on Diversity and Empowerment issues with Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and United Nations Organisations in Asia and Africa. Research for the first two publications was conducted from 1996 to 2001.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2014</td>
<td>In 2002 I completed a Postgraduate degree in Intercultural Communication at University of Luton (with distinction), with MA dissertation research focused on Working in International Teams: Managing Cultural Diversity. Between 2003 and 2014 I worked on Leadership Development, Diversity and Empowerment issues in the private sector, of which 7 years as Executive Director leading international teams. The focus was on actively supporting transformations in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 – to date</td>
<td>Since 2014 I have been working on Diversity, Empowerment and Leadership issues in Africa and Asia with United Nations Organisations, combined with research. Research for Ref. 3, 4 and 5 on Leadership in Africa was conducted from 2015-2019, resulting in a book published early 2020. Support to leadership seminars in Kenya and research on its impact (Ref. 6) was conducted in 2020 and 2021.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1 Career overview*

Main themes running through my publications, and in fact my entire career, are:

- Contribution to sustainable and equitable development: this requires transformations of cultural norms;
- Leadership and culture: diversity, empowerment and support for transformation;
- Focus on underdogs: disadvantaged groups challenging cultural norms, i.e. women challenging cultural gender norms in Bangladesh or ‘new’ leadership by women and young leaders in Africa.

My drive to support disadvantaged groups in their empowerment emerged from the ‘trigger event’ of being a woman studying for an Agricultural engineering degree in the mid-eighties. Although the
number of women students was increasing, I was among a very small number of women and all my teachers were men. Not only I myself as a student encountered gender-based stereotypes, but gender-based ideas were also very commonly applied when working with women farmers in developing countries. I started to see that gender inequality or injustice was widespread and that it limited women farmers in equitably accessing resources and services, and thus improving their and their families’ lives. After graduating in 1991, I strove to address these inequalities, supporting empowerment of those groups lacking access to and control over resources, education, opportunities, and their destiny.

The portfolio of published work draws together my publications from these different vantage points. Table 2 below presents the published works submitted for the PhD by Published Works. In Annex 1 statements can be found on my contribution and the contribution of co-author(s) to these works.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Research period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Muttooni, K., Ng’weno, B. and E. Jordans (2020) Changing leadership perceptions: Leaders in the private sector in Kenya. (pp. 211-257)</td>
<td>2015-2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Portfolio of Submitted Published Work

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1 For a full list of publications see Appendix 2
Transforming cultural norms

The aim of this synthesis is to retrospectively re-analyse and interpret my published works.

In Chapter 1, I present a theoretical framework with some key conceptual issues associated with the transformation of cultural norms.

In Chapter 2, I analyse my publications by exploring the following questions:
- Why do certain individuals or groups – especially underdogs based on gender and age – feel the need at certain points in time for cultural norms change?
- What challenges do they experience?

In Chapter 3, I analyse in-depth evidence on the underdogs’ response to their desires and challenges, drawing on evidence from my publications on Bangladesh and Kenya. I explore the following question:
- What are the different transformation approaches applied in order to bring about cultural norms change? How does this change happen?

Based on this analysis, the second half of Chapter 3 proposes an integrated transformation model that has been developed from the insights that have emerged from the process of cultural norms change. The chapter concludes by making some recommendations for implementing this model.
Chapter 1: Theoretical framework on transforming cultural norms

The focus of this synthesis is on (a) underdog groups in certain societies, notably women and youth, and (b) their desires for transformation of cultural norms because of the disadvantages that broader society imposes on them. I examine the need for change that they report and the approaches they use to (try to) bring about these changes.

This chapter considers the conceptual underpinning of my research. For the purposes of this synthesis I focus on two conceptual themes that are especially central to my work, namely: (i) cultural norms and (ii) interpersonal behaviour and leadership. For this I draw upon a range of conceptual viewpoints and disciplines associated with transformation of cultural norms, such as insights derived from (social) psychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, leadership studies, business studies and development studies.

1.1 Cultural norms

An understanding of cultural norms as a central theme in this synthesis is indispensable. Two aspects are of particular relevance: (i) what is the group that a cultural norm is meant to be linked with and (ii) how cultural norms are constructed and manifest themselves in a society against a background of power imbalances.

In the cross-cultural literature, culture in most cases is interpreted in terms of different dimensions of cultural values at the national level; the values are identified and nations are compared on these value differences (such as the work by Hofstede, 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2004). However, studying cultural values per nation based on cultural ‘dimensions’, which is classified by Claes (2020) as a ‘positivist’ view of the intercultural context, does not help with understanding intercultural dynamics between different groups within a nation, particularly when studying cultural norms linked to gender and age.

Therefore, cultural differences are in this synthesis mostly viewed as diversity between sub-groupings within nations. In the latter context it is useful to present Chao and Moon’s (2005, p. 1128) concept of the ‘cultural mosaic’, whereby individuals draw on combinations or patterns of cultural influences and form several sub-groupings based on this. They distinguish between demographic sub-groupings (such
as gender, age and ethnicity) geographic sub-groupings (such as rural or urban and region or country) and associative categories of cultural sub-groupings (such as family and religion) (p.1130). My research data predominantly focus on cultural sub-groupings in relation to demographic factors, notably of gender and age.

Gender refers to “culturally based expectations of the roles and behaviours of women and men. Unlike the biology of sex, gender roles, behaviours and the relations between women and men are dynamic. They can change over time and vary widely within and across a [societal] culture.” (IFAD, 2010, Annex V). Against this background, Ely, Ibarra & Kolb (2011) argue that men and women experience different impediments to leader identity development, since in many contexts leadership is still construed as a masculine entity in which women face particular challenges. Mikkola (2019, para 1.1) states that “many differences between women and men were socially produced and, are therefore, changeable.” Although traditional gender norms can remain almost static for many centuries in patriarchal as well as matriarchal cultures, my study in Bangladesh (Ref 1) shows that these norms are indeed socially constructed and dynamic, as these norms can be changed within a few years.

Age refers to the length of time someone has lived (or something has existed). In the research for the book on leadership in Africa (Refs. 3, 4, and 5), we found a general perception that leaders up to the age of 35 are considered young, which is also the official definition of youth given by the African Union (2006, p. 3). This differs from the one used by the United Nations who define ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (United Nations, 2013, p.1). As such, perception of age is influenced by cultural notions. In this synthesis the term youth leaders refers to people under 35 years in leadership roles.

In terms of the second aspect, how culture is constructed and manifested, the intercultural field has traditionally focused on values (such as Triandis, 1994; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 2006). More recently, cross-cultural psychology/intercultural researchers (such as Bird, Oddou & Bond, 2020; Fisher & Schwartz, 2011; Leung & Morris, 2015) have realised the limitations of focusing only on values and have started exploring other concepts including social norms. In another example, Spencer-Oatey, Lefringhausen & Debray (2019, p. 1218) state that “cultural socialization affects not only values but also conceptions of situational variables and behavioural norms, leading to various kinds of cultural patterns, all of which affect behaviour in complex and interacting ways [including gender and age differences].”
In order to analyse behaviour and cultural norms, in this synthesis the following working definition of culture by Spencer-Oatey & Kádár (2021) is used; it draws on the definitions given by Spencer-Oatey (2008, p. 3) and Ting-Toomey and Dorjee (2019, p.14):

... “a complex set of meaning systems that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, schemas, norms, and symbols, that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a social group and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour”.

In line with this definition of culture, I am treating norms as an integral part of the complex set of meanings that comprise a cultural group. Societies have norms that apply to certain gender groups and certain age groups. Each gender or age group is not a culture in its own right; rather the dominant members of the larger society define – or impose – their norms on these sub-groups. Bicchieri’s work (2006/2017) on social norms explains that these are informal norms, rules of behaviour that individuals prefer to conform to when they believe that (a) most people in their reference network conform to it (empirical expectation), and that (b) most people in their reference network believe they ought to conform to it (normative expectation). What Bicchieri terms empirical expectation (a) closely aligns with what social psychologists would call a ‘descriptive’ norm, while the normative expectation (b) aligns with an ‘injunctive’ norm (see for example, Cialdini, Reno & Kallgren, 1990). Lefringhausen, Spencer-Oatey & Debray (2019, p. 1103) state that descriptive norms refer to what one believes about how others typically behave in a given situation, whereas injunctive norms refer to what people believe they should do (or not) in a given situation because important others approve (or disapprove) of it (the norms of “ought”).

In my publications, women and youth are seen to be underdogs based on prevailing cultural norms within the context they live, i.e. a village, their family or the workplace. Their desires for change, as well as the strategies they use, occur within the context of power imbalances. Underdogs often have to adhere to descriptive and injunctive norms (Cialdini et al, 1990) that are construed and maintained by ‘upperdogs’, to use corresponding terminology, to serve their interests. With less power to influence these norms, underdogs, either individually or as a group, can decide to no longer conform to these norms and risk disapproval or resistance. My publications focus on cases that “aim to change societal structures and not just observe them” and they “highlight power imbalances” in the communication between cultural groups, which Claes typifies as the ‘critical’ approach (2020, p.388). Kabeer (1990, p.
437) states that “empowerment is inescapably bound up with disempowerment and refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire this ability”. Empowerment of underdogs thus entails instigating a process of change – a change in cultural norms which is bound to be affected by, and affect, existing power relations.

As such, I take a constructivist view of cultural norms transformation. I believe we create and can influence cultural norms through ideally combining bottom-up grassroots change strategies with external support. In this synthesis I use the term transformation, to signal a change that is broad-ranging and considered an improvement. Many of the theories of change focus on organizational change. Common theories are based on the concept of a leader who leads followers in a step-by-step manner towards a change goal, a so-called ‘synoptic’ view of change (such as Lewin, 1951; Kotter, 1996). Process thinking offers a different, more dynamic perspective as it argues that change is the nature of reality, that living is changing (for example Whitehead, 1978; Bergson, 1912). In line with this process perspective, Ladkin states that leading towards a vision “involves discussion, debate, compromise, experimentation, uncertainty, ambiguity, giving up long-held beliefs and taking on new ones on the part of all those involved, including the leader” (2010, p.125). This raises the question as to who could or should play a role in the transformation process for underdogs and the role of leaders in this.

1.2. 

Interpersonal behaviour and leadership

The focus of this synthesis is on the desire for transformation among underdogs – notably women and youth, and the approaches they use to (try to) bring about this change in a context of power imbalances. For this, an interpersonal relations perspective is useful for understanding how individuals, and groups, negotiate and aim to change their status and power vis-à-vis other individuals and groups, especially in the context of transformation. This naturally implicates leadership. I draw on, and extend, two frameworks in relation to this.

1.2.1 The interpersonal circumplex (IPC)

The interpersonal circumplex is a model for conceptualizing, organizing, and assessing interpersonal behaviour, traits, and motives, and is used in psychology to analyse interpersonal rather than individual
behavioural tendencies. Many interpersonal domain researchers, both early and contemporary, notably Sullivan (1940, 1953), Leary (1957), Wiggins (1996) and more recently Locke (2000, 2019), see the interpersonal domain as having a two-dimensional, circumplex structure. The IPC is typically defined with reference to a vertical *agency* dimension that concerns the degree of pro-activeness and a horizontal *communion* dimension that concerns the degree of affiliation and connection to people.

The scale ends of these two dimensions in this synthesis are named as follows:

- **Degree of agency**: agentic vs. unagentic
- **Degree of Communion**: self-focus vs. communal focus (focus on others)

A visual representation of the model, as proposed by Locke (2000), is presented below.

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 1 The interpersonal circumplex (adapted from Locke, 2000)*

With the use of the IPC model one can thus describe individual behaviour towards others, and in the context of this synthesis particularly the use of transformation approaches, in terms of the degree of agency and the degree of communion. In this synthesis, the behavioural choices and decisions made by individuals are usually labelled ‘tactics’ that can affirm, modify or neglect cultural norms at the micro
level (Forgas, Fielder & Sedikides, 2012). Dedicated and planned external support is in this synthesis considered a ‘strategy’.

The IPC with its two dimensions is used in this synthesis for understanding the dynamic in interpersonal interactions. This dynamic application of the IPC is different from its wider use as a diagnostic. In the latter case it is used for categorisation purposes, whereby individuals or teams are assessed and placed into one fixed, static location on the circumplex depending on their scores on survey items measuring their degree of agency and communion (for example Locke 2014; Locke, 2019; Ponikiewska, Cieciuch & Strus, 2020).

Here, the diagnostic application of the model is less relevant than its qualities for analysing diversity and flexibility in behaviour and chosen transformation approaches, and the dynamic between the two dimensions. Behaviour is very much dependant on who interacts with whom, and the underlying social, cultural norms, as well as the purpose of the interaction (Spencer-Oatey & Kádár, 2021). These dynamics become evident in my research data in people’s individual perceptions as well as in the enactment of cultural norms through these interactions. As we saw above, cultural norms concern individuals and the groups they belong to, including their families, community, social group, and so on. Transformation of these norms thus concerns and affects both individuals and ultimately groups in society as it is directed at the transformation of a ‘shared’ meaning by a certain group. Multiple individual interactions can actually contribute to changing wider societal, cultural norms. So this brings us to a second extension of existing work: the distinction between individual and communal.

1.2.2 Individual (Self-focus) vs. Communal

Within this synthesis the distinction between individual and communal needs and perspectives is very important. In Chapter 2, I make a distinction between individual needs and goals, and those shared and felt by a group of people, which I have termed communal needs. The terms individual and communal are mirrored in the IPC dimension ‘degree of communion’, i.e. one end of the scale is self-focused while the other end of the scale is focused on others (i.e. an individual/self vs. communal focus). As such, these needs are thus closely aligned to this IPC dimension. Simultaneously, my findings reveal that individual needs and goals are closely influenced and interrelated with communal ones, and vice versa.
The dichotomy of individual versus community needs/desires is also an important one in the cross-cultural literature; this IPC dimension seems to align closely with the individualism versus collectivism dimension which is widely documented in cross-cultural psychology, for example by Triandis (1994). The communal end of the dimension also seems to relate to the African concept of Ubuntu, meaning “you are who you are because of how you relate to others around you”, which features widely in the literature on leadership in Africa (e.g. Gaylord, 2004; Metz, 2018; Hailey, 2018).

What is clear from my research data is that although individual or self-focus can be analysed separately from a communal focus, at the same time these perspectives are very much interconnected. It is precisely this reciprocity that forms the central and dynamic thrust of this synthesis and that helps offer new insights in the context of cultural norm transformation.

1.2.3 Leadership and the IPC

The focus on context and flexibility in interpersonal relationships is mirrored by my view on leadership as a dynamic interpersonal relation. In my publications, leadership and ‘underdog’ leaders are the focus of my research in Africa (Refs. 3, 4, 5 and 6), whereas in Ref. 1 and 2 leadership is studied more indirectly. Clark and Clark (1996) and Ladkin (2010) consider leadership as a process that has a number of interconnected dynamic elements, namely a leader and followers who work in a particular context and have a common purpose or aim. In this view, leadership is not simply the behaviour or qualities of the person in charge (i.e. the leader); rather it is the enactment of a complex and dynamic interaction of four key elements (Spencer-Oatey, 2020). Who is considered a leader, how a leader and followers should behave, and what would be a common goal are seen in my publications to be influenced by cultural norms. In other words, their shared meanings have been socially constructed, i.e. “developed over time through culture, historical events and meaning-making systems of interpretation and dissemination across generations” (Ladkin 2010, p. 19).

The leadership circumplex model proposed by Redeker, de Fries, Roukhout, Vermeren, & Filip (2014) applies to leadership the same fundamental dimensions as in the IPC, resulting in eight interactional styles that leaders may have with their followers, whereby each style corresponds to one of the octants of the IPC. The leadership circumplex is a model that was used to analyse leadership styles and desire
for transformation in my research, documented in Refs. 4 and 5. Redeker et al.’s (2014) leadership circumplex is shown in Figure 2.

![Leadership Circumplex](image)

*Figure 2 The leadership circumplex (Source: Redeker et al., 2014, p. 442)*

However, similar to the static, diagnostic use of the IPC, the leadership circumplex categorisation of eight leadership styles may also obscure (a) the dynamics and flexibility of how a leader uses multiple styles that respond well to particular followers, contexts and goals, and (b) the process of transformation of leadership styles by individuals or groups in society. Moreover, some of the styles are presented more negatively than others, whereas each style has its merits in a specific context. As such, the leadership circumplex presents a useful foundation, but my research challenges the static view and instead proposes a more dynamic approach.

The agentic and communion tactics and subsequent different leadership styles used by leaders in Africa to effect a change resonate with the global leadership development competencies of Bird (2013), as well as frameworks used by two African leadership development programmes (Pérezts, Russon & Painter, 2020; Bolden & Kirk’s, 2005). These three frameworks recognize an individual level, an
interpersonal/relational level and a collective (organization or community) level for a leader’s spheres of influence. This is also in line with the three levels of leaders’ identity recognized by DeRue & Ashford (2010). Clearly, the individual level corresponds to the self-focus; the interpersonal and organizational levels both involve interactions with people, and I would suggest these thus both relate to the communal level. However, though these leadership development frameworks distinguish different levels of leadership competencies and identities and recognize their interrelation, I am building on their work and extending it in two ways. Firstly, I explore whether and how a leadership process is affected by diversity in terms of age and gender, especially for women and youth leaders. Secondly, I explore the dynamic reciprocity between individual and communal levels and how this affects, and supports, the transformation process for underdog groups.

1.2.4 Complementarity within the IPC

Furthermore, in this synthesis I am exploring what tactics these underdogs – individuals or groups – use when they behave in deviation of a cultural norm and as a result face resistance from others. For this a related dynamic application of the IPC regarding complementarity in behaviour is insightful. This details how during interpersonal interactions people influence each other’s behaviour in systematic ways. Carson (1969), cited by Fournier, Moskowitz & Zuroff (2011, p. 61), wrote that complementarity occurs on the basis of reciprocity in respect to the agency axis (agentic behaviour tends to induce unagentic behaviour or submission, and vice versa), and on the basis of the communion axis (self-focused induces self-focused behaviour, communal induces communal)” (p. 112). This reciprocity within the IPC thus indicates the response that we are likely to elicit from others with our behaviour. Agentic will "pull" for a unagentic, submissive response, and conversely unagentic “pulls” for agency. But it works differently with communal and self-focused behaviour, as these pull for similar behaviour. This complementarity in behaviour is represented in Figure 3 below by Penberthy (2016) (who labelled the extremes of the axes slightly differently). The colours indicate the degree of positive or negative reciprocity. The concepts of pull and reciprocity are key to understanding and managing other people’s reactions to behavioural change.
1.3 New Insights

This synthesis presents a conceptual framework, underpinned by empirical evidence, which aids understanding of the dynamics of transformation of cultural norms by underdog groups. The thinking behind the conceptual insights has been stimulated by a review of empirical data into the experiences of transformational leadership and ways of transforming gender norms. Evidence for this comes from two continents – Africa and Asia. Overall, this leads to two main types of contribution to the literature presented in this synthesis: empirical and conceptual.

Regarding the empirical contribution, Ref. 3 documents that little or no data has been collected on non-political leaders in Africa, and especially on women and youth leaders. Chapters 2 and 3 in this synthesis, drawing on research reported in Refs. 5 and 6, address this gap. Refs. 5 and 6 provide data from Kenya on the transformational leadership of women and youth, documenting women and youth’s tactics used to enact leadership roles in a society where senior men are typically considered leaders. The research on women farmers in Bangladesh (Ref. 1) documented a process of transforming gender norms that was previously not documented. The analysis of these two sets of original data against the background of
norms that are culturally constructed creates new insights about transformation of cultural norms by ‘underdog groups’. As I explain below, I found that the use of multiple transformation approaches is essential, along both agentic and communion dimensions, and that these dimensions are dynamically interconnected. Subsequent analysis of these findings in Chapters 2 and 3 leads to new insights on how the combination of self-focused and communal agentic support strategies were, albeit not consciously planned, essential in the change process for these ‘underdog’ groups.

These data and their analysis lead to new conceptual insights into how the process of transformation is handled by individuals and groups who are in an underdog position in society, as well as the role of supporting organisations. The approaches used are analysed with the use of the following framework of four distinct styles of interactional behaviour, based on the agentic and communion dimensions of interaction that underlie the IPC.

![Framework for four distinct transformation approaches based on IPC](image)

**Figure 4 Framework for four distinct transformation approaches based on IPC**

As I explain in Chapter 3, I found that the flexible and reciprocal combination of transformation approaches that increase both individual agency and communal agency is crucial. In addition, the use of unagentic communal approaches form an effective response for dealing with resistance to change by
‘upper-dogs’. The combination of these different approaches ultimately has the potential to lead to a gradual acceptance of norms change by both individuals and a community. This insight leads to the presentation of a dynamic integrated transformation model for understanding interconnected approaches for transformation of cultural norms within communities or societies.
Chapter 2: Cultural norms change – perceived needs and drivers

In this chapter I report on and explore the perceived needs and drivers for change in cultural norms that my publications reveal, along with associated challenges. This chapter therefore demonstrates how my publications have provided insights on the following questions:

1. Why do certain individuals or groups – especially underdogs based on gender and age – feel the need at certain points in time for cultural norms change?
2. What challenges do they experience?

In combination, my publications reveal the multiple factors that can stimulate a desire for change. In this chapter I examine the evidence from Bangladesh (Ref.1) and Kenya (Refs. 5 and 6) to better understand the perceived needs and drivers behind their desires for change. Ref. 4’s findings on leadership in Nigeria are very similar to the Kenya case study (Ref. 5) and thus support the findings presented. (These are not included here for space reasons.) A change in cultural norms can start with a need or desire amongst individuals. I will analyse the individual perspective first, before turning to communal needs and drivers that are shared among groups and focused on desires for changes in society. The last section explores challenges experienced in trying to bring about the desired change.

2.1 Individual needs and drivers

Individuals have specific needs and drivers that lie behind their choices and priorities. The evidence presented below points on the one hand to tangible, economic needs and on the other hand to ideological drivers.

In Bangladesh, growing impoverishment and an increase in female headed households and landlessness have made it progressively more difficult for the poorest households to maintain cultural ‘purdah’ norms. ‘Purdah’, literally meaning curtain or veil, is the practice of female seclusion, which prescribes marked gender segregation in tasks and activities, roughly corresponding to an “inside/outside” divide. It constrains women’s ability to move freely in the “outside” world (the fields, the roads, and the marketplace) and
confines them to tasks and activities that can be performed within the precincts of the homestead (Kabeer, 1990).

Ref. 1 was the first study exploring the role of men and women in agricultural field tasks in North-West Bangladesh. The research established that, contrary to the established ‘purdah’ norm, women – and particularly those who belong to the poorer categories of households – carry out at least 50 per cent of all tasks in rice production, including many tasks in the fields (Ref. 1, p. 6 and p.14). Providing an economic rationale for working in her rice fields, one Muslim widow, Bacha Mai, in Rangpur, explains: “I became a widow 21 years ago, and was lucky to inherit some land from my late husband. I had five young children at that time, which I had to feed. My only choice was to cultivate my land to produce food for the family” (Ref. 1, p. 15). Ref. 1 thus reveals a previously unrecorded process of gender transformation in agriculture in Bangladesh, with family survival, earning an income, and self-reliance emerging as key needs and drivers for change for predominantly poor women. Not only in Bangladesh but in other countries in Asia and Africa, increasing poverty has led to a gradual process of renegotiation and reinterpretation of aspects of gender relations, with women assuming traditional male roles in agriculture. This entails a transformation of cultural gender norms and has become known as the “feminization of agriculture” (Kelkar, 2009). Kelkar (p. 3) cites Ref. 1 as evidence that gender division of labour in Bangladesh was already changing many years before her review of the feminization of agriculture in 2009. In other words, increased representation of women in agriculture necessitates by itself a change in cultural norms.

In Kenya, prevailing cultural norms are that leaders are typically considered to be senior men; women and youth are not encouraged to occupy leadership positions; see for example Okello (n.d). A new provision in the amended constitution (Government of Kenya, 2010) recognizes the need for diversity in leadership and stipulates that not more than two-thirds of members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender. The constitution states this as a desirable outcome, however there is still a long way to go to change the underlying cultural norms; for example, in 2017 women were elected to only 9% of all political seats, which is only slightly up from 7% in 2013 (NDI, 2018).

My review of the literature on leadership in Africa reveals that research has focused predominantly on senior male leaders, particularly in political contexts, while much less has been documented on women and youth leaders (Ref. 3). I therefore took the decision to fill this gap and gather data in this area. Consequently, Refs. 4, 5 and 6 report findings of a range of senior women and youth leaders who are, despite the cultural norms, actively engaged in leadership roles. My research identifies previously
unknown insights into the aspirations and ideas of these diverse leaders, and analyses how they choose their tactics to deal with deviating from cultural norms in the contexts in which they operate. Publisher records\(^2\) show that the book’s e-chapters have been downloaded 4,300 times since its publication in early 2020, and so far there at least 4 citations in refereed journals. The book has been reviewed and endorsed by several African scholars and practitioners, including a review by Braimah (2020), a young Ghanaian woman, who asserts that the book is “a refreshingly inspiring departure from the reductive scholarship on leadership in Africa in that it draws on the lived experiences of people in these countries and their interactions with the concept”.

My research data reveal that African women and youth leaders’ individual economic need is to run a business, earn an income, and that they are driven to be successful and have a career. For instance, a senior female leader in a financial company in Kenya expressed her drive as follows: “My journey so far has taught me that it is important that you need to discover what drives you, your passion – the rest will then follow by itself. I found my niche eventually in governance.” (Ref 5, p.249).

In addition, many women and youth leaders interviewed in Kenya felt an ideological drive for integrity while performing a leadership role; instead of being corrupt (as they perceived many existing leaders to be) they are striving to be honest, accountable and to be guided by responsibility and moral principles, which indicates a shift in norms and values. Integrity relates to the concept of ethics, which can be seen “to encompass the means by which social relationships are regulated, such that an individual’s wants, needs, aspirations and rights are balanced against those of another” (Clement, 1996, quoted by Ladkin, 2017, p.15). On top of this, for many young leaders, social responsibility is another ideological leadership ambition: their own progress and success needs to go hand in hand with ‘doing good’ for disadvantaged groups. For some this relates back to their experiences in their own childhood. “In my own village and region near Lake [Victoria] there are very high rates of HIV/AIDS [...] and there is a stigma attached to this as well. My passion is to make people's lives better, especially of youth.” Henry, young male leader, ICT sector (Ref. 5, p. 244.)

2.2 Communal needs and drivers

Communal needs and drivers are those that are focused on desires for changes in groups, communities and the wider society.

Poverty alleviation is one such communal need. The Grameen Krishi Foundation (GKF), meaning Village Agricultural Foundation, was the first organisation in Bangladesh to actively and openly support women farmers in field-based agriculture. This was very innovative and daring at the time, as it had not been done before, and it needed to be documented. Ref.1 played that role by documenting the implementation and by analysing the impact of pilot activities supporting women farmers. The findings helped to validate and improve the pilot activities and also enabled sharing of the findings within and outside Bangladesh. It has laid a basis for scholarship about gender, agriculture and the environment (including feminist political ecology). Overall, Ref. 1 has been cited 63 times, including by Farhana (2009), Harris (2009), Houweling (2012), Clement (2012) and Arora-Jonsson (2014). In fact, it was still being cited many years after its publication in 1997.

GKF was convinced that to achieve poverty alleviation supporting women is needed and that this is more effective in terms of improving the living conditions of poor families than targeting men. In a personal communication (1995), Professor Mohammed Yunus, who is the charismatic founder of micro-credit Grameen bank and was the Chairman of GKF, explained: “When a woman brings in some income, the immediate beneficiaries are the children; the second priority is improving the household. A man has a different set of priorities, which do not give the family a top position...[but instead his own personal needs are prioritised].” (Ref 1, p. 19). As such, support for the transformation of traditional behavioural and cultural conventions regarding gender was not a goal in itself for GKF, but these conventions needed to be changed in order to achieve the goal of poverty alleviation.

Africa is experiencing a demographic phenomenon termed the ‘youth bulge’: 75% of Kenya’s population in 2019 was under the age of 35 (KNBS, 2019). A literature review on youth employment in Kenya (DFID, 2017) notes that while annual GDP growth of more than 5 per cent has been regularly recorded, Kenya's youth (ages 15-24) unemployment rate has shown little to no positive development, and is estimated at 26% (ILO, 2018). My research data indicate that many Kenyan women and youth leaders are frustrated
with the governance of their country and feel a strong need to change their society, and that the youth bulge is a potentially powerful driver of change.

Interestingly, in some instances communal needs and drivers are connected to individual needs and drivers. Leaders’ individual desire for integrity transposes to dissatisfaction with the lack of integrity of current leaders and translates to the consequent desire for fair, accountable leadership. For example, a senior female leader in a financial firm had to deal with the misuse of vehicles by senior leaders in her organisation, while avoiding direct confrontation. “...I proposed to senior management the introduction of procedures that would make staff accountable. This was accepted and became the new policy and managed to stop the misuse. I thus managed to solve the situation amicably and without personal confrontation”. (Ref. 5, p. 245). This is an example of how an underdog is no longer adhering to the norms set by ‘upperdogs’ – in this case senior managers. One thus has a choice; (re-)enactment of these norms is the essence of cultural norm consolidation whereas challenging or offering alternatives to these norms is the entry point for transformation.

2.3 Perceived needs and drivers

In summary, the findings from my publications open up new ways of thinking about the desire for change. Individual needs are often of an economic nature, and form a powerful motivation; individual ideological values, such as integrity or social responsibility are also important drivers.

Communal needs and drivers include poverty alleviation and transforming leadership so that it addresses socio-economic challenges, aims to improve governance and shape society’s and business’ future.

Overall, the shared motivation is to seek an improvement in the current state of affairs, both at individual and communal levels. Some needs and drivers are reflected at both levels, albeit in a different form; an example of this is the case for an individual leaders’ value of integrity which translates to a communal drive for more accountable leadership. Likewise, an individual’s desire for social responsibility leads to a communal drive to address socio-economic challenges. Both these ideological values are felt at individual level and then also directed at changes in society.
Interestingly, a common feature is that none of these needs and drivers aims directly to transform a cultural norm; instead it is the other way round – realising the needs and drivers necessitate a cultural norm and value change. Table 3 below presents an overview of the different needs and drivers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Individual needs and drivers</th>
<th>Communal needs and drivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women farmers</td>
<td>• Earning an income and family survival</td>
<td>• Poverty alleviation in most effective way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-reliance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO GKF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kenya</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior women leaders</td>
<td>• Income, employment and career</td>
<td>• Dissatisfaction with lack of integrity of current leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Integrity</td>
<td>• Fair, accountable leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth leaders</td>
<td>• Income, employment and career</td>
<td>• Critical of socio-economic challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Integrity and social responsibility</td>
<td>• Address poverty; repair the ills of society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3 Perceived needs and drivers behind cultural norms change in Bangladesh and Kenya*

**2.4 Challenges**

My publications document that when women and youth set out to meet their needs, they run into various challenges and opposition. For example, the Muslim widow, Bacha Mai, in Bangladesh, recalls negative reactions when she worked in her fields: “People in the village made very rude remarks. They said ‘she is a tribal’ or ‘if she prays, God will not accept her prayer,’ and ‘she is the husband of a man’ and other similar things. I continued with my struggle”. (Ref. 1, p. 15). In addition, many women farmers face practical challenges like lack of access to land, irrigation water, and credit to buy inputs and agricultural skills.

Women in Kenya who take up leadership roles similarly face several challenges. A widely expressed challenge reported in Ref. 5 is the resistance and negative attitude they experience from other people in society – notably from senior male colleagues. Another challenge is being denied opportunities or promotions because of being a woman. For instance, an interviewee, a young female leader recounted:
“Male colleagues often grab opportunities or they are easily given to them [...]. A [leadership] opportunity came up and my male boss prioritized him [my male colleague] instead of me. I asked “why? I can do this!” My boss [...] never gave any reasonable explanation to explain this” (Ref. 5, p. 235).

Specific challenges are faced by youth leaders in Kenya, who face constraints in being taken seriously by people who are senior to them, even to the extent of being undermined on purpose. A young female leader recounted in an interview: “Currently, I am leading a team of enumerators, some of them are senior in age. Not all of them feel like they need to respect me. Some feel like ‘I can do what she is doing, plus I am older than her so I should be leading her not the other way around’. So they try to throw me off my game, or embarrass me by asking questions I cannot answer” (Ref. 5, p. 234). Youth leaders have to navigate the cultural value that respect comes with the seniority of the leader. These challenges are thus particularly daunting for young female leaders in Kenya, as they face a double ‘curse’ of gender and age.

A fundamental problem that some women leaders in Kenya remarked on was their lack of self-confidence. For example, a senior female business leader disclosed: “... not selling myself is what allowed me to be subdued into the character I had become, it did something to my self-confidence. Demanding things from people, [...] I was not able to. I would have characterized myself [...] as a push-over (Ref. 5. p. 254). Also, established cultural norms influence a leader’s self-image and curtail aspirations. Ref. 6 (p. 16) presents a case of a young female participant in a leadership seminar who initially maintained that men are more suited to leadership roles, thereby reflecting society’s perception of female leaders. This, together with her introvert personality, caused a lack of self-confidence and hesitancy to be a leader.

Challenges documented in my publications are thus negative reactions from others, disrespect, and attempts to undermine someone from reaching their goal. Fundamental challenges are the lack of self-confidence and impact on self-image. Tellingly, the fact that these challenges occur is in itself an indication or proof of the established cultural norms and their boundaries, since cultural norms are often not openly labelled or mentioned.

2.5 Conclusion

My research findings reveal a complex and diverse set of needs and drivers; some are unique to an individual or a specific group, whereas others are widely shared. What is evident is that none of these
needs or drivers led people to consciously aim for cultural norms change; instead all implied or necessitated a change in cultural norms in order for the goal to be realised³.

The motivation for change is, perhaps not surprisingly, strongest for those ‘underdog’ groups that are in a disadvantaged position due to established cultural norms, such as poor women farmers in Bangladesh or female and youth leaders in Africa. Cultural norms in actual fact are not homogeneously adhered to; diverse individuals and groups in society enact and experience them differently. This is supported by recent psychological research which showed that there is as much, often more, variation within a country than across different countries (Fischer & Schwartz, 2011).

My publications offer the insight that when the different needs and drivers are sufficiently worthwhile underdogs undertake a course of action that challenges and ultimately changes prevailing cultural norms and deals with the challenges and push-back by others in society against this change, in order to reach their desired goal.

The approaches used to meet these challenges and accomplish the desired changes, are reported on and analysed in the next chapter.

³ We cannot however conclude that individuals or groups never directly aim for a cultural norms change. Activities to directly change cultural norms have been documented by UNFPA (2020), for example to change norms that are considered particularly harmful such as around child marriage or female genital mutilation.
Chapter 3: Transformation approaches for cultural norms change

Chapter 2 identified a range of needs and drivers and I argued that addressing these needs implies dealing with the challenges of cultural norms change.

In this chapter I build upon the two case studies on Bangladesh and Kenya (Ref. 1 and Refs 5 and 6), which provide in-depth evidence in relation to the following question: *What are the different transformation approaches applied for bringing about cultural norms change, and how does this change happen?*

After this I propose an integrated transformation model that I have developed from the insights that have emerged from the analysis of my publication data, including these two case studies, on the process of cultural norms change. The chapter concludes with some impact reflections and some recommendations for implementing this model in the context of international development.

3.1 Case study 1: Transformation among Women farmers in Bangladesh (Ref. 1)

In this case study I first explain the process of what happened, as documented in Ref. 1, and then draw out conclusions on the main transformation approaches used.

In the mid-nineties, the Bangladesh NGO GKF undertook initiatives to support poor farmers in improving their agricultural productivity. Initially, only men were involved in its programme, in line with established cultural norms and perceptions. However, after a broader needs assessment, GKF started an innovative support programme for women farmers who they had discovered were interested. GKF used two main strategies to support these women farmers: (a) an increase in access to resources such as water and credit, and (b) support to form groups.

Responding to their need for earning an income from agriculture, GKF’s efforts focused on increasing women’s access to irrigation wells, hence Ref. 1’s title “A well of one’s own”. In addition, it facilitated access to land, provided credit for agricultural inputs such as seed and fertilizer, as well as general loans,
and also organised capacity building. For example, Fatima Begun, a Muslim widow, benefited from this support: “I own 0.45 acre of land. I obtained an agricultural loan of Tk 1,000 (about 25 USD) from GKF for dry season paddy cultivation. My only son is still young and goes to school, so I did most of the work myself. I repaid the loan in weekly instalments of Tk 40.” (Ref 1, p. 25).

Cultivating rice in her fields as a woman farmer was not in line with the prevailing purdah norm for women to remain in their homes. Nevertheless, her paddy production was very successful and this increased Fatima’s confidence, so she expanded the next season: “I obtained another loan for wet season paddy production and have managed to lease 0.25 acre of land from a villager and cultivate it as well. The second loan enabled me to increase my agricultural production by investing in the lease of land and buying inputs.” (Ref 1, p. 25).

Input support loans for seeds and fertilizer were, before GKF’s decision to support women farmers, only given to men. Since the onset of programme activities for women, the percentage of acres cultivated by women under this scheme increased from none in 1992 to 40% of the total in 1995. Out of the overall amount of general loans provided in 1995 (almost 250,000 USD), which also covered livestock and crop processing activities, 63% was borrowed by women.

This part of the strategy thus focused on increasing access to economic resources, and also knowledge and skills, thereby focusing on supporting women farmers in non-traditional field-based agricultural activities. Results were encouraging – the seasonal net income from irrigation proved to range from Tk. 1,000 to Tk. 5,000 per woman farmer, which is significantly higher than what they would earn from other income opportunities (Ref. 1, p.7). The increased capacity to generate their own income and subsequent larger contributions to household income strengthened women’s self-confidence and reduced their dependence on male intermediaries (Ref. 1, p.7).

Next to providing access to resources, the second key strategy of GKF was the formation of local groups within a village, with each group having five members. Given the high degree of gender segregation in Bangladesh society, women and men were organized in separate groups. By 1995, a total of 1,588 groups were formed, 69% were women groups, bringing together 5,485 women.

GKF considered organising women into groups an efficient and effective strategy to engage with project beneficiaries, as it facilitated the provision of training, credit and agricultural inputs. Group members were also mutually responsible for loan repayment, a system termed “solidarity lending.” Under this
system, each member agrees to guarantee the loans of the others in the group. If any one individual member defaults on his or her loan, the other members of the group are required to cover the shortfall (Jaffer, 1999). Group members supported each other and exchanged labour; some groups jointly implemented activities such as cultivating crops like rice or maize or managing an irrigation pump.

Although some men resisted their wives or female relatives becoming group members, many others appreciated the increased knowledge and skills women gained through their membership, as well as the additional income they earned. Fulfilling the role of group leader further strengthened women’s skills and status. One female group leader was a very strong and outspoken woman. In a meeting where some men were present, one man remarked: “She is a powerful woman. We, the men, are also afraid of her, but she is a good person” (Ref 1, p. 21). The likelihood for female control over income and loan use was also enhanced when women were group members (Ref. 1, p. 31). Being a member of a group also helped women to dare challenge social barriers related to prevailing gender norms (Ref 1, p. 32). For example two women farmers felt empowered by their group membership and were planning to attend irrigation meetings that previously were only attended by men: “These [irrigation] water distribution meetings used to be only for men. Earlier we sent a male relative, or we eavesdropped in the surrounding. Now we have become members of the GKF women group. We now feel the need to attend the farmers' meetings ourselves. Next irrigation season, we are determined to participate” (Ref. 1, p. 24). Likewise, when discussing the possibility of managing an irrigation well with a women group, one woman confidently said “Of course we can operate a DTW. There is hardly any difference between women and men, nowadays, in agricultural work. And do we not have our sons to help us?” (Ref. 1, p. 25). These quotes indicate recognition of the right to change the norms relating to meeting attendance and irrigation management (i.e. changing the perception about who is entitled to attend or manage). This is related to the recognition of the right to engage in this kind of agricultural activity and to be seen as a legitimate and equal member in meetings. Over time this was indeed the case, with women farmers becoming full members of water management organisations in Bangladesh, including in leadership roles (see LGED, 2017).

As such, group membership had an empowering effect on women. They learned to hold meetings, received new information, performed leadership roles and felt stronger together with other women; this in turn gave them the courage to challenge existing gender norms, for example related to agricultural work and irrigation management.
Community support for the activities was in some villages lacking. Although many men, especially husbands, valued the changes positively, as it was accompanied by a direct improvement in the family situation, there were also villagers who resisted this change. To address this challenge, before the activities to support women started, GKF consulted villagers and assessed local sentiments towards the envisaged new roles of women. When local concurrence was absent, introduction of the programme was postponed till interested villagers themselves had convinced more conservative people in their village of the need for women to form groups and participate in the activities (Ref 1, p. 32). The poorer villagers set out to convince others of the importance of accessing these opportunities, fuelled at a basic level by their need to survive.

A common belief at the time was that the presence of female field staff was a prerequisite for working with women farmers. Although some female staff were hired, support to women farmers was provided by both male and female GKF Field Managers in order to support all groups. They formed and trained women groups, discussed their needs and supported them in their chosen activities. Experience showed that, contrary to the common belief, women farmers trusted and worked better with the male staff, as they were more experienced. A female GKF group member actively involved in producing rice, referred to a GKF male staff as a family member: “After the harvest we will ask our ‘bhai’ [i.e. brother] to help us with selling our produce.” (Ref.1, p. 22). It thus appeared women were not particularly concerned about gender issues per se, but instead mostly over their concrete economic needs, with male staff at times better placed to support them. Thus, gender norms were no longer pertinent for these socio-economic groups.

3.1.1 Commentary

A key strategy by GKF for meeting the individual needs of women farmers focused on the increase in their access to tangible resources and knowledge. This enabled women farmers to cultivate crops and break free from purdah norms. Their greater resource base was also reported to lead to increased self-confidence. Ref. 1’s title “A Well of One’s Own” draws an analogy with the essay of Virginia Woolf “A Room of One’s Own” (1929). In her essay, Woolf argues that in order for women to write fiction “A woman must have money and a room of her own...” (1929, p. 1); in other words, women need increased access to resources. GKF’s efforts to increase individual access to resources and knowledge can thus be categorised as agentic, individual or self-focused strategies (with the understanding that ‘focus on self’ is in practice a focus on the household) (see Table 4).
In addition, GKF formed and strengthened women groups, mostly for instrumental project management reasons. Although not intended as such, research results indicated an empowering effect of this group formation on women. Their strength in numbers gave women the courage to use tactics to confront social resistance to their new roles, or in other words: ‘One stick can be broken, a bundle of sticks cannot’” (Kabeer, 2012, p. 228).

This group-based approach can be thus be categorised as an agentic, communal strategy (see Table 4). The group activities and consequent empowerment led in turn to increased individual self-confidence. Changing existing resource distribution patterns implicitly challenged existing power relations – between men and women, and also between poor and richer households (Ref 1, p 32). Empowered groups felt encouraged to deal with resistance to these changes.

Lastly, when the consultations by GKF to assess villagers’ concurrence showed there was no support for the activities, yielding to this view and waiting for conservative men’s support to grow can be categorised as an unagentic, communal strategy.

Summarising these insights and placing them along the dimensions of the IPC, Table 4 below presents an overview of approaches used for achieving individual and communal needs and drivers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agentic, Self-Focus</th>
<th>Agentic, Communal focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women farmers</td>
<td>• Cultivate crops and break free from purdah norms</td>
<td>• Women groups cultivate crops, manage irrigation equipment and market produce together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take loans and attend training</td>
<td>• Access to solidarity lending in women groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attend irrigation meetings</td>
<td>• Focus investments on women through women groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO GKF</td>
<td>• Increase women’s access to resources (irrigation, land, credit and knowledge)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build women’s self-confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO GKF</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Community consultation and dealing with resistance, yielding/waiting for opportune time for the transformation towards gender equity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: Bangladesh: Transformation approaches used for achieving individual and communal needs and drivers along IPC dimensions*

We can conclude that individual needs and drivers were met by several agentic, self-focus approaches. Importantly these were then combined and complemented by some agentic, communal approaches.
Interestingly, reciprocity is noted between the self-focus and communal focused agentic approaches which reinforced each other; together these became a form of agency that was transformative.

Unagentic, communal approaches were used predominantly to respond to resistance to change. Unagentic self-focus approaches were not noted in the data.

3.2 Case Study 2: Transformation among Women and Youth leaders in Kenya (Refs. 5 and 6)

While Case Study 1 reported on a single development project involving an outside agency, Case Study 2 reports on multiple people’s perspectives on the process of becoming and being a leader. As explained in Chapter 2, in Kenya, women and youth leaders have a range of individual and communal needs and drivers. Youth and women leaders in Kenya consciously set out to change their own and others’ perspectives on leadership by being different leaders. This in turn implies challenging established cultural norms around leadership.

Whereas in Case Study 1 women farmers’ initiatives to improve their lives received external practical and financial support in the transformation process, women and youth leaders in Kenya mostly ‘pull themselves up by their bootstraps’, meaning that hard work and self-determination form the core of their tactics, rather than getting assistance from someone else. External support, for example in the form of leadership skills development programmes, was reported as very rare (Ref. 5, p. 252). This is not to imply that external support is of no benefit; amongst other aspects this case study documents how a leadership development programme, which was designed in line with the findings of Ref. 5, had a very positive impact on MSc students at Pwani University, Kenya (see Ref. 6).

This Kenya case study documents women and youth’s behavioural tactics in the process of becoming and being leaders and dealing with common challenges, as well as strategies used by external support organisations. These transformation approaches can be categorised as follows: (a) self-focused, agentic approaches to boost confidence and develop leadership skills, (b) communal agentic approaches to engage with others and undertake group-based actions, (c) unagentic communal approaches to deal with resistance by followers and (d) flexibility in approaches used.
Self-focused agentic approaches: Ref. 5 documents several examples of how women leaders took specific actions to combat persistent prejudice through performance, qualifications and perseverance in making themselves visible and acknowledged as leaders. Central is the building of self-confidence, which entails overcoming problems of self-doubt. Many women and youth reported that they built up confidence through being given responsibilities, both within their families and in schools, universities and in sports teams. The research also documented the importance of having a role model; however fewer women reported having benefitted from a role model, which is likely to be related to there being fewer female leaders who could set an example that they could aspire to (Ref. 5, p. 215).

The senior female business leader introduced in Chapter 2, who had previously received feedback from her sister and friend that she was too easily controlled by others, managed to turn this around after self-reflection on this feedback and became more self-directive. She explained: “I was self-doubting but now I am confident, I did not believe in myself but now I am totally a believer in myself.” (Ref. 5. p. 254).

Among leaders’ attributes that were mentioned and considered important in the context of individual tactics to achieve their goals, in Ref. 5, both ‘candidness’ and ‘decisiveness’ featured. Increased self-confidence enabled the development of these two attributes, which can be categorized as related to self-focused agentic tactics. In Ref. 6, one female participant reflected that an increased assertiveness enabled her to give candid feedback to her research supervisor: “The [training] sessions on giving feedback, conflict resolution and communication skills helped me address a problem I had with my research supervisor. I was busy with university work, including online classes and my research supervisor gave me a lot of reading materials to prepare for my research project. I was able to effectively communicate to my supervisor that I appreciated the reading materials but I was struggling to balance reading those with the work I already had” (Ref. 6, p.16)

Ref. 6 documents the externally supported strategy of helping individuals become aware of their individual personality and leadership attributes; this helps them envisioning themselves as having leadership potential. This focus on the ‘self’ was the starting point for the leadership seminar series, and provided the foundation for subsequent competencies involving interacting with others. The female participant who had maintained that males were more suited to leadership roles, and doubted whether she could be a leader (see Chapter 2) underwent a transformation. She moved beyond the constraints of gender norms and opted for a leadership opportunity shortly after the seminars completed and then successfully led a large group in an international bioinformatics internship. This is her story in her own words: “I was elected the leader of my group which involved guiding the group through the various tasks.
Before the leadership training I didn’t think of myself as a leader, I always thought I was a follower. The training made me realise that people are not born leaders and you can build your leadership skills” (Ref. 6, p. 16, 17). Thus, her self-esteem had increased and consequent perspectives on her leadership role had fundamentally changed.

b. **Communal agentic** approaches: Findings indicate that transformation sought by both women and youth leaders centres around **how** to enact leadership. Survey results indicate that most preferred leadership styles are communal, or people-oriented styles (Ref. 5, p. 226), the use of which form a communal agentic tactic. These leadership styles, such as an inspiring or coaching leadership style, fit best with their perspective on good leadership. For example, a young female leader in the hospitality sector explains: “I am not authoritarian. I do not give instructions. If only specific instructions are given, people do not tend to think wider and they feel enslaved” (Ref. 5, p. 228).

Among leaders’ attributes that were mentioned in Ref. 5, ‘integrity’ and ‘doing good’ featured; both can be categorized as related to communal agentic tactics. Several senior female leaders reported they mentor young men and women; however one of them remarked that she notices a difference: “*male millennials – they need more help as they feel more entitled [...], seem to think because they are men it will be OK for them*” (Ref. 5, p. 233).

‘Doing-good’ was a key focus for youth. Ref. 5 provides several examples of youth who, acting upon their analysis of what is wrong in society, chose to form groups or associations to better advance their goal of ‘doing-good’. In this way they are translating their individual drive for social responsibility into impacting a change for disadvantaged groups in society (Ref 5, p. 244). For instance, the young male leader working in ICT (see Chapter 2) commented: “I have initiated a programme in my home county, aiming to reduce the number of HIV infections. If we could just be successful with a few people, this would save not only them, but also their kids.” (Ref. 5, p. 244). The initiatives towards doing-good reported in Ref. 5 were initiated by youth leaders without receiving external support.

The group activities and communal sharing of experiences documented in Ref. 6 led to an increase in communal agency among the trainees, which helped these young leaders feel more confident and more readily opt for leadership roles. Unlike the case of Bangladesh, fewer instances of other communal strategies such as group-based approaches were noted except for instances of youth communal actions for doing good.
Ref. 6 findings also indicate there is reciprocity between individual and communal agency: when youth and women leaders start feeling more self-confident, they then take on leadership roles and are able to use leadership skills flexibly and are able to achieve success in leadership situations, this in turn then increases their self-confidence further.

c. **Unagentic, communal approaches:** Unagentic, communal-focused leadership styles turned out to be a useful tactic to deal with challenges to their leadership role. The young female leader who was challenged by her team of enumerators (see Chapter 2) recounted how she dealt with this: “*My patience helps me. I answer their questions if I can; if not I say I will refer and get back with feedback. If it continues, I have 1:1 with the particular enumerator, not a confrontation but more like a discussion to address his/her concerns. [...] Thus being a young leader requires patience and excellent communication skills. [...] You just have to manage expectations, and engage them on a mature level*” (Ref. 5, p. 241).

The young female leader thus used a participative leadership style; asking questions, listening, without responding directly to the underlying challenges. Set against Carson’s insights as represented in the framework of Penberthy (2016), this participative unagentic, communal leadership style is likely to elicit a positive reaction – thus a communal, ‘friendly’ and agentic reaction. The chosen leadership style is thus a tactic to stimulate positive communal agency in others and to model a leadership style that diverts from the cultural norm: in this case portraying patience is thus a pro-active tactic.

d. **Flexibility in use of approaches:** A fifth leadership attribute that featured in Ref. 5 is ‘adaptability’. Even though a preference for people-oriented styles was noted, leaders indicated that a pre-requisite for succeeding is to have a broad repertoire of tactics and leadership styles, including more self-focused ones, and to be able to use these styles flexibly for example in reaction to specific followers they work with. This people-orientation and sensitivity to context both result in adaptability. The young female leader in the hospitality sector stated: “... the open leadership style does not apply to everybody, it depends on the people you work with - some need more guidance” (Ref. 5, p. 228). Adaptability also means being able to react to different contextual needs. As an example of responding to different organizational contexts, a senior female leader working in ICT explained: “*I have worked in academia, private sector and government. My style changed as a leader when working for government. Before government I was a consultative leader, I liked to make everyone feel that they are contributing to decisions even if I would ultimately make the decision. [...] . But in this government job I found sometimes one needed to have dictatorial tendencies. Authoritative was key. I tried to be consultative but because of protocol no one would give their opinions. I had to make decisions*”. (ref. 5, p. 222).
Since leadership development in Africa is often largely influenced by Western leadership development frameworks and material (Iwowo, 2015), adaptability is also required to ensure leadership development initiatives match the Kenyan context. Ref 6 documents an example of this contextualisation process, which built upon Ref. 5 insights and case study material and the adoption of a practical and experiential learning approach to enable reflections on participants’ own leadership experiences in the Kenyan context.

3.2.1 Commentary

At an individual, self-focus level, increased self-awareness and development of leadership skills, with or without external support, was seen to increase assertiveness and self-confidence and can be categorised as a tactic to increase self-focused agency. This turned out to be especially crucial for women and youth leaders who are keen to be a different kind of leader. They need this agency in the first place to be leaders at all. Underdogs on top of that need the agency to overcome resistance from ‘upperdogs’ who may be dominant and attempting to block them from reaching their goals.

At a communal-focus level, tactics include the effective use of people-oriented leadership styles that are agentic, such as inspiring and coaching others. As a strategy, group-based training also increased communal agency for students. Furthermore, creating impact for disadvantaged groups in a community, notably through efforts at ‘doing-good’ by youth leaders, meets communal needs and increases communal agency. Like the husbands in Bangladesh, this will make people see the benefits of a different leadership style and a shift in cultural norms with regard to leadership roles can then follow. Reciprocity between communal agency, such as successful use of people-oriented leadership styles and self-focus agency was noted; a team’s success was seen to lead to increased self-confidence in its leader.

Less agentic people-oriented leadership styles, such as participative, consulting styles were also used by women and youth leaders as these fit with their view on leading with integrity, and also were seen to help manage cultural challenges to their leadership by encouraging constructive attitudes.

Overall, flexibility in the use of different tactics and leadership styles was emphasized, with leaders adapting to different followers and context.
Summarising these insights and placing them along the dimensions of the IPC and Leadership Circumplex, Table 5 below presents an overview of transformation approaches used by women and youth to achieve individual and communal needs and drivers.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Agentic, Self-Focus</th>
<th>Agentic, Communal focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior women</td>
<td>Assert oneself through initiative and directive leadership style</td>
<td>Use agentic people-oriented leadership styles (inspiring, coaching);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaders</td>
<td>• Build confidence</td>
<td>Facilitate leadership transformation by being a role model and mentor youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth leaders</td>
<td>• Assert oneself through initiative</td>
<td>Use agentic people-oriented leadership styles (inspiring, coaching);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build confidence</td>
<td>Group activities and communal sharing of ideas in context of leadership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doing-good, initiate communal action for change</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-Agentic, Self-Focus</td>
<td>Use un-agentic people-oriented leadership styles to get buy-in and deal with resistance (participative, yielding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women &amp; Youth leaders</td>
<td></td>
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Table 5: Kenya: Transformation approaches used for achieving individual and communal needs and drivers along IPC dimensions

3.3 Towards an integrated transformation model

Analysing the empirical data from Bangladesh and Kenya at a conceptual level, it is apparent that not one single transformation approach but multiple approaches were used by underdog groups and support agencies for meeting individual and communal needs, which in both contexts required a change of cultural norms.

Though these transformation approaches were applied in two countries on two continents and in very different contexts, they show some interesting common features. Analysing these commonalities leads to new conceptual insights into how a process of cultural norm transformation is handled by individuals and groups who are in an underdog position in society and supporting external organisations. I detect the following common features:
women and youth used both agentic and communal tactics in order to meet their needs and achieve their goals; as such a diverse range of transformation approaches is used,
- not one single approach but a combination of different approaches is used;
- these diverse approaches are interconnected and reinforce each other;
- specific approaches are used to deal with resistance against change;
- transformation occurs as a result of the interconnection between self-focus and communal agentic approaches; and lastly
- the transformation approaches used had not been consciously planned or chosen for their agentic or communal aspects, nor was the dynamic and reciprocity between them fully appreciated and understood.

These insights lead me to present a dynamic model that aids understanding of which tactics are used by underdog groups, and which strategies used by support organisations, for transformation of cultural norms and how these diverse approaches are interconnected. Analysing the data based on the four quadrants of the IPC, leads to different elements, or building blocks that together form an integrated transformation model. Although these elements are interconnected, and also do not necessarily follow the particular order below, for greater clarity I start with describing the separate elements of the model.

**Element 1: Agentic, Self-focus approaches (marked green):** An increase in self-focus agency emerges as a key element of the approaches used. An increase in individual agency can for example be achieved through an organisation’s strategies that support learning new skills, increasing income and enabling access to resources. Increasing self-confidence is another essential tactic that increases individual agency and helps ‘underdog’ groups in daring to take initiatives, assume leadership roles and challenge established cultural norms.

![Figure 5 Element 1 Integrated model](image)

External support strategies in the form of capacity building, mentoring or role models help increase self-confidence; though self-driven increases are also possible. The transformative power of individual agency was also documented by Campos, Frese, Goldstein, Lacovone, Johnson, McKenzie & Mensmann,
(2018) in Togo, where the strategy of personal initiative training increased firm profits by 40% for women entrepreneurs, compared with only 5% for ‘normal’ business skills training.

**Element 2: Agentic, communal approaches (marked blue):** Efforts to increase communal agency emerge as a second key element in the approaches used. This increase can for example be achieved by the strategy to form women or youth groups, which can have an important empowering effect on its members. It can also take the form of starting initiatives to increase communal action to address socio-economic issues. It is also evident in the tactic to use people-oriented leadership styles that inspire, coach or mentor others.

Kabeer in her empirical research in Bangladesh on empowerment of women by development organisations also documented the empowering effect of a group based, or communal, approach: “the women spoke of the value they attached to the relationships that they had formed through their group activities: ‘One stick can be broken, a bundle of sticks cannot’” (2012, p. 228).

**Element 3: Combination and dynamic interconnection (green and blue arrows) between agentic approaches:** Before turning to the next IPC quadrant, a crucial element is that self-focused and communal agentic approaches are combined to bring about changes in cultural norms. An increase in agency is important in the context of taking the lead in directing a change: both for individual leaders and for groups of underdogs.

Furthermore, the reciprocity between agentic self-focus and agentic communal focus and vice versa strengthens underdogs. Communal strategies such as group formation or group-based capacity-building increase individuals’ self-confidence; increased individual agency and assertiveness enables and drives
the initiation and adoption of communal strategies. This dynamic interconnection has not been widely documented in the literature, as the focus tends to be on one or the other; i.e. Campos et al (2018) limited their study to a focus on individual agency.

The interconnection between self-focus and communal agency is best understood against the background that cultural norms are in essence a ‘shared’ meaning and socially constructed, so their transformation concerns and affects both individuals and groups in society. Therefore, while self-focus agentic approaches are key, at the same time communal agentic approaches are essential to work towards changing a ‘shared meaning’. Tactics to simultaneously enhance individual and communal agency are also crucial in order for underdogs to have the courage to assert themselves and face resistance against changes. Through this reciprocity underdogs face a better chance of dealing with resistance to the transformation, succeeding in their goals and creating a lasting change. The aspect of dealing with resistance is further elaborated in the next, fourth element.

Element 4: Unagentic, communal approaches (marked yellow): This fourth element was less commonly used, and when applied it was mostly for dealing with resistance. These approaches take, for example, the form of a strategy of facilitating a community consultation and planning processes, which potentially can lead to acceptance of the change, but also can result in yielding to resistance – i.e. accepting social, cultural resistance to a transformation. Likewise, the tactic of using a participative leadership style, displaying unagentic behaviour, can be used to handle resistance by followers. Leadership can in this context thus be deliberately unagentic.

In line with the thinking on complementarity on the agency and communion axis (see Carson (1969); Penberthy, 2016), the use of unagentic communal strategies tends to elicit communal agentic behaviour, which could be constructive in a change process.
**Element 5: Unagentic, self-focus approaches (marked red),** the fourth quadrant of the IPC, were not noted in either of the cases. These tactics could be used by people who accept the status quo and are not trying to reach goals that would require transformation of the status quo. The latter requires a degree of agency for taking action or initiatives and also a communal focus of engaging with others. Interestingly, Locke, Sayegh, Penberthy, Weber, Haentjens & Tureckil (2017) document their own and other clinical psychologists’ outcome of mapping severely depressed people onto the IPC, which shows their behaviour (without outside help) is often unagentic and self-focused.

**Figure 9 Element 5 Integrated model**

**Integrated transformation model**

Combining the five elements discussed above, the integrated model includes both self-focused and communal agentic approaches (marked green and blue), including the important dynamic interaction between these two that mutually reinforce each other (green and blue arrows).

**Figure 10 Integrated transformation model**

Unagentic communal approaches form an effective response for dealing with resistance to change by ‘upper-dogs’ or submissive and passive followers (marked yellow). Unagentic, self-focus tactics/strategies are not a common feature in a process of initiating transformation.

The combination and implementation over time of these different approaches ultimately has a good chance of resulting in a gradual acceptance of a norms change by individuals and a community.

According to this model, successful and lasting cultural norm change cannot be forged by focusing on a single approach; instead it needs a combination of self-focus and communal agentic approaches, as well as approaches to deal with resistance to change. These approaches take place in the realm of
interpersonal interactions: these can take the form of tactics such as conscious behaviour, different leadership styles and a range of strategies to support underdogs in their transformation. The integrated transformation model I present above captures this diversity and reciprocity between different approaches. It represents a reality where people flexibly adopt multiple approaches composed of combinations of agency and communion, as well as respond to others through complementarity reactions. The combination of these different approaches ultimately results in a gradual acceptance of norms change by both individuals and a community.

Cultural norms are not neutral; they often reflect power imbalances in society (see, for example, Kabeer, 2012; Eger, Miller & Scarles, 2018), and can cause a group to be disadvantaged in terms of their resources and possibilities. People in an underdog position have by definition less agency than others and may therefore need to focus more on increasing their agency to effect a change, both at individual and communal level. This is termed a ‘transformative form of agency’ by Kabeer (2005, p. 15), who defines this at individual level as “those achievements that suggest a greater ability on the part of poor women to question, analyse, and act on the structures of patriarchal constraint in their lives”. The International Development Research Center also recognizes this, as they define gender-transformative change at communal level as “a process of addressing dimensions of power to transform unequal power relations. It applies to more than individual actions and focuses on the structures that perpetuate and normalize unequal patterns between women and men” (IDRC, 2019, p.24). The advantaged groups – or ‘the upperdogs’ – may see little reason to change the status quo. They may need a compelling reason to support a transformation; for instance, husbands in Bangladesh seeing the benefit to their families. Those without power, or minimal power, who aim to bring about change use subtle acts of disruption by behaving in unconventional ways. This disruption seems to happen in a slightly different way from that which occurs in an organization where the disruption is a critical tactic for bringing leaders’ attention to important patterns and shifts (Ladkin, 2010, p. 142).

Throughout this analysis the important interconnection and reciprocity between self-focus and communal-focus forms a central dynamic in the context of cultural norm transformation. It is important to note that this complementarity is not included in Carson’s work or Penberthy’s framework. How this interconnection impacts on a transformation process, and the role and function of development or change at individual and communal level is rarely viewed as interconnected. For example, in their study
on gender and learning in Morocco, Eger, Miller & Scarles (2018, p. 217) conclude that “capacity building and empowerment are often studied in isolation with a predominant focus on the individual”.

My integrated model reveals the dynamic interconnections between these levels: an individual, self-focus level and a communal level in situations where underdog groups seek to fulfil their needs or reach their goals, which in essence requires a cultural norm transformation. It also helps to show the role of power and empowerment, in effect an increase in agency in this process, as well as the crucial role that unagentic communal approaches play.

3.4 Impact Reflections

3.4.1 Societal Change

What can I conclude about the success and impact of the approaches in terms of actual norms change in the contexts I have studied? Answering this question is not simple and straightforward; change in societal cultural norms takes time. Some indications of impact on cultural norms change have emerged from Bangladesh. More than 20 years after Ref. 1 was published, women are now routinely supported in irrigation activities in Bangladesh, and recognized at policy level. For example, gender and women’s involvement is an explicit part of the Guidelines for water resources development projects by the Government of Bangladesh (LGED, 2017, p. 39). This seems to have contributed to a wider, societal transformation: the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index indicates that Bangladesh reduced gender-based gaps between 2006 and 2020 (WEF 2006; 2020).

Regarding the impact on changing cultural norms on leadership in Kenya, my research provides evidence of individual success stories, but also persistent challenges. This aligns with my literature review on leadership in Africa (Ref. 3) that indicates that although some women leaders in Africa have made a difference in their roles, and mostly feature as examples of “bright side” leaders (such as Sirleaf in Sierra Leone, and Maathai in Kenya – see Jallow, 2014), a wider cultural norms change has not been achieved yet (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009). These women have all shown considerable perseverance, and as such serve as role models for younger female leaders in Africa. However, it can be questioned to what extent these individual struggles have led to systemic improvements for women leaders so far, as my two Kenya case studies (Ref. 5 and 6) show that women leaders continue to face similar constraints today. Limited communal agentic approaches were used; when used these were confined to women’s and
youth’s own families or work situations with little impact on the wider society. To achieve a wider impact, a vast number of leaders changing their own immediate environment could tip the balance, together with a critical body or community of youth and women leaders aiming for the same change. More external support in the form of widespread leadership skills development would also contribute towards the transformation.

3.4.2 The role of practical guides

Practical guides are a way of increasing impact on cultural norm transformation by translating research data into supportive practical actions. Ref. 2, the Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) guide on Irrigation responded to the identified need to “move beyond research studies that were raising awareness about the role of gender in irrigation, to help translate positive intentions into concrete action” (Giordano, Samad & Namara, 2006, p. 5). Translating this awareness into action led to the development of the Irrigation Sector Guide (Ref. 2) for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The Guide was prepared in 1998 and was discussed and tested in training workshops with around 100 irrigation engineers from Africa and Asia, and then finalised in 2001. A Google search gives at least 38 citations, mentions and reposts, including by The World Bank, OECD, and The Oxford Handbook of Water Politics and Policy (Conca, 2018). Furthermore, Ref. 2 set the format for several other SEAGA sector guides, including, for example, the guides on FAO’s Project Cycle (2017), Emergency and rehabilitation programmes (2008), Livestock (2005) and Rural households and resources (2004).

As a result, Ref. 2 provides practical guidance to technical irrigation experts, who are predominantly men, offering step by step advice on how they can incorporate gender aspects in the planning and implementation of irrigation schemes. By intentionally using this ‘cook-book’ approach, the aim was to reduce possible resistance by male engineers, as integrating gender in this fashion is less ambiguous and it is clear to them what needs to be done. The guide contains a mixture of agentic and communal strategies. On the one hand an explicit focus on individual access and control over resources, and especially access to these resources by underdogs, represents an individual, self-focus agentic strategy; on the other hand a focus on communal water management groups represents a communal agentic strategy. Furthermore, the guide recommends the use of several participatory tools and processes, representing communal unagentic strategies, to be used during inclusive community consultations and
planning processes. These strategies are also useful for dealing with possible resistance. The range of strategies that were recommended at the time was developed intuitively. Systematically analysing them with the help of my conceptual integrated transformation model shows the strategies included are in line with this model.

3.4.3 International Development approaches

Common approaches in international development have been influenced by various theories and policies, going back to colonial times. This history spans several decades and there is a body of work analysing it. Here, I draw out some key features of particular relevance in the context of this synthesis.

Individual/Self-focus: Initial ‘technocratic’ approaches focused mostly on individuals and on transfer of technical skills, which was founded on the Modernization Theory. This was crystallized by Rostow (1962) in his book, “The Stages of Economic Growth”. The modernization theory was also reflected in, for example, the ‘Green Revolution’, which focused on research and technology transfer to increase agricultural production in the South. This approach is mostly guided by a synoptic view of change; it uses several planning tools that are based on causality and step-by-step approaches (such as Logical Framework, see Wiggins & Shields, 2005 and Theory of Change – see Vogel, 2012).

Communal focus: Heavy criticism of the modernization approach (see, for example, Pack, 2009; Pingali, 2012), lack of equitable impact and an increased focus on poverty alleviation led to the emergence and spread of community development from the mid 1960-80s. The United Nations defines this broadly as "a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems" (UN, n.d.). Community development practitioners have been influenced by structural analyses as to the causes of disadvantage and poverty i.e. inequalities in the distribution of wealth, income, land, etc. and especially political power and the need to mobilise people power to affect social change. Influential scholars and practitioners who contributed to a paradigm shift in development studies towards more ‘people-centred’ and bottom-up approaches have been, for example, Freire (1967), Schumacher (1973) and Chambers (1983). The approach is widely used and particularly by Non-Governmental Organisations. The implementation of this approach is also often guided by a synoptic view of change, although elements of process thinking can be present.

Both technocratic and community development approaches are being practised today; sometimes these are integrated but more often these are implemented in parallel. Only recently, development agencies have come to recognize that while it is necessary to focus on treating the symptoms of inequality, such
as unequal access to productive resources for women, this is not enough on its own to effect change (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2020, p. 3). These agencies therefore have started to promote the use of a set of ‘Gender transformative approaches (GTAs)’, although these are not yet unpacked to create understanding of how a transformation is brought about.

My integrated transformation model can help these agencies unpack the approach to understand, design and implement transformative approaches that combine individual and communal focused strategies. In order to inform these agencies of my research insights and promote my integrated framework I have started conducting workshops and webinars, including ones for the World Bank and Georgetown University, both in Washington DC and the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Southern African region. They have all been received with great interest. The leadership development initiative analysed in Ref. 6 in Kilifi Kenya will be further expanded and institutionalised through a Training of Trainers programmes at the University and discussions have started to introduce the approach in the IFAD funded project ‘Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa: Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs’ which is so far being implemented in Kenya, Rwanda and Nigeria. I am also preparing further publications on the model’s application in international development and have started applying the model in my consultancy work for the UN.

3.5 Conclusions

The process of synthesising my published research has led to several conclusions regarding its contributions to the intercultural, international development, and change management fields.

Regarding the contribution to the intercultural field, my work goes beyond the constructions of culture common in intercultural communication research. My integrated transformation model proposes a conceptual framework to move beyond individual cultural values to understanding interpersonal behaviour in transformation of cultural norms. Furthermore, my analysis demonstrates how groups within a nation, based on gender and age, diverge in their views as to what they can, should or should not do compared to established cultural norms. When their needs and drivers are sufficiently worthwhile these ‘underdog’ groups undertake various actions to reach their goals, even if that requires transforming cultural norms and dealing with challenges by others in society who oppose this change.
Cultural norms change plays out against power imbalances and supporting and opposing forces against norms change.

Both the IPC and the leadership circumplex are seldom used in intercultural research – this synthesis has proven them to be suitable and useful frameworks for analysing interpersonal interactions in a process of transformation, both in Asian and African contexts. Case study evidence in very different contexts shows the universal nature of the agentic and communion dimensions and their inherent reciprocity. It is particularly this dynamic interpretation that is most useful in understanding the transformation process, rather than their use as a categorisation framework.

Regarding the contribution to the international development field, my integrated transformation model provides a helpful handle for steering support to underdogs in achieving their goals; it provides an anchor to show what they are, and should be, doing. My analysis shows that it is important that support focuses on a dynamic combination of agentic and communion focused approaches, which mutually reinforce each other. Support can help to increase individual agency – through, for example, capacity building and access to resources – and at the same time it needs a communal focus – through, for example, group empowerment and community actions for an effective and sustainable change to occur. Moreover, unagentic communal approaches can be essential in creating more support for transformation in a community.

In terms of change management, my work explores transformation of cultural norms in relation to disadvantaged groups within societies in Africa and Asia; a type of change that is not yet widely documented. In addition, it is particularly helpful if this transformation is understood as a dynamic change process that it is bound to create disruptions and challenges, in line with process thinking. However, some degree of ‘synoptic’ planning would be hard to avoid when support is provided by external funding agencies, which normally requires preparation of budgets, planning of activities, monitoring of progress and impact reporting. As such, this process can be facilitated by seeking the middle ground or balance between facilitating the transformation from a dynamic process view, while operating within a ‘synoptic’ context of planning and reporting.

My combined research generates new possibilities for understanding cultural norms change within societies, and as such is one piece of the bigger jigsaw of understanding change processes in social
groups. Future research could apply my integrated transformation model to different intercultural contexts, along with different types of support and strategies to achieve change, documenting their impact and the change process itself. Further research could explore the application of my integrated transformation model to change processes within organisations, for example companies in the process of addressing diversity & inclusion. A bigger question to explore is how my integrated model could help in understanding how a government can change social norms and behaviour of different social groups, for example in the context of managing a pandemic like COVID-19. This future research would further enhance the understanding of other pieces of the jigsaw, and ultimately offer a fuller picture of the complex picture of social norms change.
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Appendix 1: Written statements on work conducted in collaboration

Ref.1:

Statement contribution

Publication:

The extent of individual contribution to the material

Eva Jordans and Margreet Zwarteveen developed the research approach and methodology together.

Eva Jordans drafted the survey questionnaire, and then revised it based on discussion with Margreet. Literature review was done jointly. All the data collection was done by Eva, including the interviews and collecting information for the case studies, with the help of the staff of GKF. First data analysis was done by Eva, as well as documenting the case studies based on field notes and observations. Further analysis and drafting of the chapters was done jointly. Revisions and drafting was done jointly over the course of 1996 based on comments from external reviewers.

Margreet Zwarteveen commented on the survey questionnaire. Literature review was done jointly. Margreet commented on the initial data analysis done by Eva, and contributed to the analysis of the data and drafting of the chapters was done jointly. Revisions and drafting was done jointly over the course of 1996 based on comments from external reviewers.

Conditions and circumstances under which the work was carried out

The research was carried out by the staff of the Women Support Program of Grameen Krishi Foundation, in North-West Bangladesh, where Eva Jordans, a Dutch Associate Expert working with GKF, was posted and working from 1993 to 1995. The combination of data collection and regular work provided the advantage of giving the researchers a much broader perspective and provided the opportunity for action research over a period of time. Margreet Zwarteveen, IIMI’s gender specialist, provided additional support during two visits, the first of three weeks duration, and the second one two weeks. A workshop presenting the findings and draft conclusions was organised at IIMI HQ in Colombo in January 1996. The research was financially supported by the Ford Foundation.

Signed by collaborating parties:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Margreet Zwarteveen</th>
<th>Eva Jordans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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</table>
Statement contribution

Publication:

The extent of individual contribution to the material
Estelle-Marie Heussen-Montgomery discussed the literature review with Eva, reviewed key literature, built on and added to a first draft prepared by Eva and set-up the chapter framework. Estelle then commented and contributed a few times on subsequent draft versions of the chapter. Eva and Estelle then jointly formulated the conclusions.

Eva Jordans did an initial on-line library search, and discussed the literature review with Estelle, identified and reviewed key literature and prepared a first rough draft of the chapter. Upon receiving a revised version from Estelle and agreement with a chapter framework, she prepared a revised version. Upon receiving feedback from the editors and the series editors, Eva did a much broader literature review and then added to and considerably revised the chapter. Based on Estelle’s comments, the chapter was then further revised. Eva and Estelle then jointly formulated the conclusions. Eva interviewed an author of key literature on leadership development (lwwwo) and obtained consent to use her material. The revised chapter was again reviewed by the editors and then finalised by Eva.

Conditions and circumstances under which the work was carried out
The work was carried out as part of defining the conceptual framework for the case studies in the book “Developing Global leaders: Insights from African Case Studies”. The chapter contains a literature review and analysis of literature on leadership in Africa, with a focus on peer reviewed literature in the last 15 years. The project was initiated by Eva Jordans, further developed with two co-editors (Bettina Ng’weno, Helen Spencer-Oatey) and implemented with a number of co-authors.

Signed by collaborating parties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Estelle-Marie Heussen-Montgomery</th>
<th>Eva Jordans</th>
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<td>Signature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>November 5, 2019</td>
<td>5/11/2019</td>
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Statement contribution

Publication:


The extent of individual contribution to the material

Estelle-Marie Heussen Montgomery invited her network to participate in the interviews. Estelle discussed the case study with Eva and commented a few times on draft versions of the chapter, contributed to the drafting of the summaries and the analysis, and validated the survey findings and analysis of the interviews.

Ike Nwankwo invited his network to participate in the initial survey and in the interviews. Ike conducted five independent interviews, and prepared the interview transcripts. Survey and interview findings were discussed with Eva, and Ike validated the survey findings and analysis of the interviews.

Eva Jordans did the initial survey design, survey data collection and analysis, and prepared the interview structure. Eva did five independent interviews and prepared the interview transcripts. Eva discussed core issues emerging from the data with Ike and Estelle. Eva did the coding of all the interviews and subsequent data analysis, and drafted the first version of the chapter. Eva revised the chapter a few times based on comments and additional inputs from Estelle and (later) by the editors. Graphs were prepared by an IT specialist under Eva's guidance.

Conditions and circumstances under which the work was carried out

The work was carried out as part of five case studies in five countries for the above mentioned book. The project was initiated by Eva Jordans, further developed with two co-editors (Bettina Ng Weno, Helen Spencer-Oatey) and implemented with a local co-author based in each country for the case studies.

Signed by collaborating parties:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Estelle-Marie Heussen-Montgomery</th>
<th>Ike Nwankwo</th>
<th>Eva Jordans</th>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>November 5, 2019</td>
<td>22-11-2019</td>
<td>09-12-2019</td>
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Statement contribution

Publication:


The extent of individual contribution to the material

Kanini Mutonzi invited her network to participate in the initial survey and supported the identification and submission of the surveys for the Kenya case study data collection. Kanini discussed the case study with Eva and commented on a draft version of the chapter, provided additional insights, and validated the survey findings and analysis of the interviews.

Bettina Ng’weno conducted five independent interviews, and prepared the interview transcripts. Bettina and Eva identified jointly core issues, which were then used in the coding. Bettina commented a few times on draft versions of the chapter and provided additional insights, and validated the survey findings and analysis of the interviews.

Eva Jordans did the initial survey design, survey data collection and analysis, and prepared the interview structure. Eva did seven independent interviews and prepared the interview transcripts. Bettina and Eva identified jointly core issues, which were then used in the coding. Eva did the coding of all the interviews and subsequent data analysis, and drafted the first version of the chapter. Eva revised the chapter a few times based on comments and additional inputs from Kanini and Bettina and (later) by Helen as editor. Graphs were prepared by an IT specialist under Eva’s guidance.

Conditions and circumstances under which the work was carried out

The work was carried out as part of five case studies in five countries for the above mentioned book. The project was initiated by Eva Jordans, further developed with two co-editors (Bettina Ng’weno, Helen Spencer-Oastey) and implemented with a local co-author based in each country for the case studies.

Signed by collaborating parties:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Kanini Mutonzi</th>
<th>Bettina Ng’weno</th>
<th>Eva Jordans</th>
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Ref. 6: **Statement contribution**

**Publication:**


**The extent of individual contribution to the material**

**Eva Jordans** reviewed the literature on leadership and its development in Africa, designed the evaluation surveys, collected and analysed the survey data and prepared the structure for the impact interviews. She also analysed the interview data. On this basis she drafted the first version of the chapter. Subsequently, Eva revised the chapter a few times based on comments and additional inputs from the co-authors and the book editors.

**Maria Derakhshan** conducted half of the impact interviews, contributed her observations and findings from facilitating the seminars and cross-checked the analysis of the surveys and interviews with her own observations and impressions. She also commented on different versions of the chapter.

**Zoe Rutter** conducted half of the impact interviews, contributed her observations and findings from facilitating the seminars and cross-checked the analysis of the surveys and interviews with her own observations and impressions. She also commented on different versions of the chapter.

**Santi de Villiers** conducted interviews with Pwani University staff, contributed her observations and findings from the seminars and cross-checked the analysis of the surveys and interviews with her own observations and impressions. She also commented on different versions of the chapter.

**Bettina Ng’weno** commented a few times on draft versions of the chapter, provided additional insights, and confirmed that survey findings and analysis of the interviews align to her own experiences of the Kenyan situation.

**Conditions and circumstances under which the work was carried out**

The work was carried out as an integral part of a series of pilot leadership seminars at Pwani University in Kilifi Kenya in early 2020. Santi de Villiers initiated the leadership seminars at Pwani University and supported their implementation. Eva Jordans facilitated the first seminar for staff and student and subsequently designed the eight seminars, together with Maria Derakhshan, Zoe Rutter and Santi de Villiers. The seminars were subsequently facilitated by Maria and Zoe, under the guidance of Santi de Villiers.
Signed by collaborating parties:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Eva Jordans</th>
<th>Maria Derakhshan</th>
<th>Zoe Rutter</th>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>7/10/21</td>
<td>08/10/2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santie de Villiers</td>
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<td>Bettina Ng’weno</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>08/10/2021</td>
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</table>

Statement regarding publications status:

Luconne University of Applied Sciences and Arts
HOCHSCHULE LUZERN
Business

Eva Jordans
Dijksweg 16
9975 VN Vierhuizen
The Netherlands

Zentrumstrasse 3, Postfach 2690, CH-6002 Luzern
T +41 41 228 41 11
www.helu.ch
Institute of Management & Economics M.R.
Prof. Dr. Ingo Stolt
Professor International Leadership & Management
Co-Head Comparative Center Business Development,
Leadership, and HR
Tel.: +41 41 228 42 66
ingo.stolt@helu.ch

Luconne, 03 January 2022
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CONFIRMATION UPCOMING PUBLICATION

Dear Ms. Jordans,

Hereby I confirm that your chapter “Developing Global Leadership in Africa: Addressing young leaders’ ambitions for a people and community-oriented approach” (authored together with Derakhshan, M., Rutzen, Z., de Villiers, S. & Ng’weno, B.) has been accepted and co-edited and is in the process of being published in the book “International Leadership – Effecting Success Across Borders in a Boundaryless World”, edited by Stoltz, I. & Scherner. The book is being published by Springer/Gabler, CH, and is due to be available in the first half of 2022.

Kind Regards,

Prof. Dr. Ingo Stoltz
Appendix 2: Bibliography

Single and first authored publications (in chronological order)


Second and third authored publications and blogs


FAO (2001). Participatory Training & Extension in Farmers’ Water Management (PT&E-FWM), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations AGLW - Water Service of the Land and Water Development Division, CD rom, Rome Italy. (Contributed to this training package as a consultant).


