

**A Transfer or a Transform organisation.  
Implications for World Vision.  
by Philip Hunt.**

Much of what we have talked about today and yesterday<sup>1</sup> has left us confused. We see problems and tensions but cannot understand why they occur. We see that things should be different, but cannot describe the future.

I want to attempt to bring comfort and hope, and then a challenge. I want to attempt to describe an organisational framework that might explain our present dilemma. That should bring **comfort**.

At the same time, I want to show a different kind of organisation to which, I believe, many think we should aspire. That should give us **hope**.

Finally, I will leave us with a **challenge**, for if we are to accept the full implications of what I shall share, World Vision International (that is us) is in for a radical, far-reaching, scary, destabilising catharsis.

Let me begin. Before one thinks about organisational structure, one should think about strategy. The first rule of strategic planning is that *structure follows strategy*.

An organisation like World Vision could choose from a few different strategies. We may see our strategy to be the *implementation of projects in poor communities*, or *fundraising in support countries*, or *transferring funds from support to field*, or *transforming lives to be more consistent with the Kingdom of God*.<sup>2</sup>

I want to suggest that of these, **transfer** best describes where we are coming from, and **transform** best describes where we are going to.

<b>♥ Strategy</b>	<b>tranSfer</b> The organisation's common task, the one thing that everyone contributes to, is the transfer of resources from the rich to the poor.	<b>transForm</b> The organisation's common task, the one thing that everyone contributes to, is to empower people so that their individual and community lives will be transformed in ways that bring the Kingdom of God alive.
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From this beginning position, I now attempt to describe an organisational structure that best fits the accomplishment of such a strategy. There are many aspects to organisational structure. The organisational chart may be the least helpful.

Throughout the following analysis I use two symbols. The heart ♥, and the distribution symbol ⚙. As organisations grow beyond 25 or so people, some activities and responsibilities are delegated. As the organisation gets bigger, some of these delegated functions are duplicated. A company with three manufacturing plants in three cities might duplicate hiring, personnel, marketing, process management and design, research and

<sup>1</sup> This paper was delivered at the 2-day IAC/WVI Board Consultation at Asuza Pacific College, California, U.S.A. on Sunday, 10th March, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Some may suggest that World Vision can have all three strategies. I agree to a bit. I submit, however, that any single organisation must have a single over-arching strategic emphasis or it is, in effect, not a single organisation. Thus, if we are a partnership, we must have a single mission, vision, strategy, even though many sub-strategies might fall out from this single common strategy. Therefore, when I suggest that WV might have a strategy of *fundraising*, I imply that projects would simply be a product created to sell to donors. As a secondary consideration they might help the poor. Obviously, such a strategy would be satisfactory to none of us. In the absence of a clearly articulated **integrating** strategy, I submit we have *de facto* assumed the *transfer of resources* strategy as our way of integrating our two sub-strategies of *fundraising* and *field projects*. Obviously this is debatable, and I hope it will be debated.

development. Most likely it will keep some at the centre (perhaps marketing and R&D) and distribute the rest.

However, even when functions are distributed, they may not be fully delegated. For example, the three plants may be required to produce their products in exactly the same way, using the same process, on the same kind of machinery (e.g., MacDonalds or Coca-Cola). In such cases the **activity** is distributed ✨, but the **system** is common ♥. The system remains at the heart of the organisation. In such a factory, the centre ♥ of the organisation might not care too much about hiring and personnel policies (so they would be distributed ✨, each plant manager making up his or her own mind about what kind of people to hire, and how much to reward them).

An understanding of this ♥/✨ dichotomy is essential to interpreting the following analysis. I am not saying that ✨ activities do not occur in the organisation. They do happen. But if they are ✨ (distributed) they are fully accomplished by different management groups according to locally developed standards and may therefore vary considerably across the total organisation. Furthermore, few people at head office, or in corporate groups (like a Global Management Team) will spend time on them, because they are being effectively accomplished on a distributed basis.

The corollary is that matters of the ♥ are held in common. Everyone does them the same way, and the organisation invests ♥ time and attention on them.

♥ Strategy	tranSfer	transForm
<b>♥ Structure</b> What kind of structure will accomplish this strategy?	<b>Partnership .. hierarchy</b> It is likely that the organisational charts of both organisations may be similar. The differences will lie in power relationships. This organisation will have the traditional hierarchical autocracy. There may be participative processes, but the boss is still boss with whom the buck stops.	<b>Partnership .. hierarchy</b> The chart might look the same, but the relationships may be more autonomous and negotiated. Such an organisation will yield to the centre the right to arbitrate on matters of principle. What those matters of principle are, of course, is a critical strategic question.
<b>♥ Goal</b> What will be the primary goal of the organisation? There will be many goals, all should contribute to a key objective.	<b>Cost efficiency</b> Let's get as much money transferred from point A to point B as quickly as possible with the least cost possible.	<b>People change</b> We want to see people changed from their present conditions, to a better life in all of life's dimensions.
<b>♥ Success Criterion</b> How shall we know if we succeed? If we do this one thing, we shall know we did good.	<b>Adherence to budget</b> If you brought it in on time, and on budget, you are a good manager. The emphasis is on things you can measure and count. How many wells were dug? How much did it cost? How long did it take? E.g., the LSD evaluation presentation included an overhead describing the achievements of the project. It talked about how many things were done, how much money was spent. People were mentioned once. They were counted.	<b>Signs of the Kingdom</b> If we see signs of the Kingdom, love, peace, joy, ... we shall know we did good. I asked Corrine Villacorta, Operations Manager for Peru, how she measured people change. "I look for an increase in cooperation, in understanding, in love."
<b>♥ Skills</b> What kind of skills will be most valued by this organisation.	<b>Analysis, Planning, Numerical, Organisational</b> All the skills that help us to design and deliver good plans and budgets.	<b>People development, team building, envisioning</b> All the skills that help us empower change in people.

♥ <b>Strategy</b>	<b>transfer</b>	<b>transform</b>
<b>Heroes</b> As a test of most valued skills ask who are the heroes in this organisation?	Mr Fix It, Mr Do It. Emergency Relief Directors	Coach, Mentor, Trainers
♥ <b>System</b> What will be the system we shall all have in common, and which we shall give attention to at head office and when we meet in corporate forums?	<b>Financial Planning and Reporting</b> <i>How are things going in Bangladesh?</i> <i>Fine. They got an excellent audit.</i>	<b>People Development</b> But do we ever spend time at WVI partnership forums discussing the kind of person we are looking for to be the new Field Director in Bangladesh? No. This decision is fully distributed.
<b>Identity Test:</b> If we want to find out which kind of organisation we are, ask Who is leaving? The ones who leave will be those least valued by the organisation. Who do you see in World Vision's list of least valued?	<b>Development people</b> will figure prominently in turnover lists.	<b>Accountants, Systems People, Supervisors, MBAs</b> , will figure prominently in this organisation's turnover lists.
⚙️ <b>concerns</b> What will be the concerns we shall be prepared to distribute away from the centre, allowing managers to develop their own standards and methods?	<b>Values, Vision, Paradigms</b>	<b>Financial systems, Budgets</b>
♥ <b>concerns</b> What will be the concerns we shall guard close to our organisational heart and ask all staff to adhere to?	<b>Budgets, Plans of Action, systems training</b> Read the resolutions of the Planning Task Force.	<b>Mission, Vision, Values, People, training in these things</b> Read the Core Values.
♥ <b>Activities</b> When we come together at the organisational heart (WVI Board, IAC, IO) what shall we spend most of our agenda and money on?	<b>Financial plans, budget, fund allocation, common systems</b> (SRD, IDT)	<b>Communications (e-mail), learning, hiring, team development</b>
⚙️ <b>Activities</b> What shall we be prepared to distribute around the organisation so that managers can develop their own standards and methods?	<b>Learning, hiring, vision and values formation</b> Deans quote.	<b>Financial systems, \$ computer systems</b> Corollary of Dean's quote.
♥ <b>Control Tool</b> What will be the dominant management tool used to control people?	<b>Budget</b> WVI has an international audit department which trains and employs auditors from around the partnership.	<b>Vision and Values.</b> WVI has a couple of dozen ways to measure, demonstrate and communicate failure to adhere to budget or commitment. We have no way of ensuring that any person or entity adheres to our vision or values. This kind of organisation needs a Vision and Values audit process, controlled at the centre. Johnson & Johnson's Vision Challenge process is a possible model.

