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Spring 2019

# From the American People: An Autoethnographic Exploration of South African NGOs' Perceptions of PEPFAR

Antonia Asher

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**FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE:  
AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN  
NGOS' PERCEPTIONS OF PEPFAR**

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School for International Training

Community Health & Social Policy- Spring 2019

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Lastly, I would also like to dedicate this research in the memory of my host mama, Sylvia Ngcobo. Thank you for welcoming me into your home and family; thank you for offering the first place I found comfort in South Africa and for your guidance on a new way of living. You and your beautiful family will always hold a dear place in my heart. May you rest peacefully, and your memory live on.

### **Abstract**

The aim of this research was to understand what the ideal partnership would be between United States (US) governmental aid agencies and South African non-governmental organizations (NGOs), specifically concerning HIV/AIDS programs funded by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), from the perspective of NGOs. PEPFAR is the largest relief fund for a single disease; thus, I additionally sought to deeply reflect upon myself as a US citizen in South Africa, a country that has received trillions of dollars from taxpayers such as myself.

To accomplish this, I interviewed NGO staff about the nature of current partnerships, outcomes of US involvement in PEPFAR-funded projects, and the responsibilities of the US in international health. Using autoethnography, I incorporated personal experiences and journal entries alongside the views of my informants; this ultimately allowed me to bring humanity back to PEPFAR and share the journey of my relationship with the US and with developmental aid.

The findings are separated into three themes that I found as central to this topic: the structure of developmental aid and PEPFAR, the balance of power between NGOs and PEPFAR, and the nature of America's involvement in global health. Overall, this project sheds light on the complexities of developmental aid, PEPFAR's growing potential, and the role each of us can play in achieving better outcomes in PEPFAR-funded nations.

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**Commonly Used Acronyms**

<i>AIDS</i>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<i>ARV</i>	Antiretroviral treatment
<i>CDC</i>	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<i>CEO</i>	Chief Executive Officer
<i>DREAMS</i>	Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe Initiative
<i>GNI</i>	Gross National Income
<i>HIV</i>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<i>NGO</i>	Non-governmental organization
<i>PEPFAR</i>	United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
<i>SIT</i>	School for International Training
<i>UN</i>	United Nations
<i>UNAIDS</i>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<i>US</i>	United States of America
<i>USD</i>	United States Dollar
<i>USAID</i>	United States Agency for International Development
<i>WHO</i>	World Health Organization

*a gift- a small gesture  
a token of love,  
appreciation, kindness, care  
but do other intentions lie behind?*

(Asher, personal journal, 2 April 2019)

### **Beautiful Disaster**

On August 27, 2005, my family left our home in Meraux, Louisiana, to head further inland to Baton Rouge. The windows of our house were boarded with cardboard. Our neighborhood was vacant of cars and children frolicking in the streets. Everyone was evacuating the city. What I understood at the time was that we would be staying with my uncle for a few days while a storm passed. We were unaware that our home would not look the same upon our return and that this was a one-way trip. On August 29, Hurricane Katrina<sup>1</sup> made her arrival.

I remember the howl of Katrina's winds accompanied by the thunder of her tears. Since the lightning illuminating the dark skies was the only electricity, there was nothing to do but sit and listen. The lingering taste of peanut butter clung to my tongue as the humidity did to my skin. I could smell the Louisiana heat in the air. The ditches spilled water onto the streets, and earlier that day, the levee had burst, filling my home in Meraux with ten feet of water. The few days that we were supposed to be away from home turned into a lifetime as Hurricane Katrina flooded the New Orleans area. Everything that we had come to know was no longer, forcing our lives to begin anew.

I had only seen pictures of what the storm had done to my house, and the damage was devastating. Foot after foot of water remained weeks after the tragedy. I imagine how the air reeked of the swamp. There was also the fear of what lie hidden beneath the murky water. Not only was it fears of critters, but of valuables now unsalvageable. Soggy furniture was upturned and even hanging over doorframes. Our neighbor's aboveground pool was dragged down the street and across the neighborhood. Only weeks before, I was running in those streets and swimming in that pool, oblivious to the impending destruction. This abandoned neighborhood, however, was a stranger to me.

Now, all that is left of my life in Meraux is a concrete slab and memories. It is strange to visit with my grandparents and walk along the concrete where two stories of red brick once stood. My grandparents walk along the slab as if the house and its walls were still standing. They point out where each room was and reminisce upon the memories we shared in each. It is as if their minds are time machines, allowing them to relive the past. Nevertheless, reality awakens

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<sup>1</sup> Hurricane Katrina was a tropical cyclone that resulted in significant damages and loss of life, especially in the Greater New Orleans, Louisiana area. It is the costliest storm and one of the five deadliest in US history.

them from their recollections. The houses that fill the neighborhood now are unfamiliar, just like the people that inhabit them. There will be no more get-togethers at the neighbor's or barbecues in our backyard in front of the canal. Meraux will never be as it was.

In this time, one glimpse that someone cared made a big difference. I found this in the form of an orange, purple, and pink little pillow, which is currently lying on my bed here in South Africa. Following the storm, all the storm victims at my new school were called to the front office. Each of us was given a handmade pillow and a handwritten letter. That night, I laid my head on the pillow, and ever since, I have slept with it every night. A single cushion covered in ordinary fabric has become my most valued possession. It has followed me through many moves and has continued to be there through my late-night laughs, cries, frustrations, and thoughts. The hard-work and compassion of the maker is embodied within it. The overwhelming appreciation I feel when I look at this ordinary act of kindness is something that cannot be bought.

*What connects me to you*

*And what connects you to me*

*Is it that we inhabit the same earth*

*Or that we are born of the same energy*

*I know you through others I know*

*But can I really know you?*

*We may share the same interests,*

*Have struggled through the same pains,*

*We may share family, friends, co-workers,*

*But my experiences shape my experiences*

*If they are different, can they be a connection?*

(Asher, personal journal, 11 April 2019).

### Purpose of the Journey

#### Importance to Me

On 2 April 2019, I pondered:

*Is international aid an extension of this pillow offered to me in a time of need? Is it different due to the power dynamics that lie behind US governmental aid? Why does the US choose to donate to other nations' causes? Is it the same reasons a pillow was crafted for me? Is the HIV/AIDS epidemic of South Africa comparable to Hurricane Katrina? What is the place of America to contribute to global health and the principles set forth by the Declaration of Alma-Ata<sup>2</sup>? (Asher, personal journal).*

Consistently, I have drawn parallels between events in South Africa and a large event in my life-Hurricane Katrina. However, something I always contemplate is how different the same event can be for others. Studio Be -located in New Orleans, Louisiana- tells the story of the black American experience through art. The following quote was exhibited here from Arnold “MidCity Ab” Burks about his experience with Hurricane Katrina:

*I was on the roof of a Grocery Store in my underwater neighborhood for 3 days & 2 nights, and I smiled the whole time. I had maybe 5 books, Goosebumps by RL Stine. I would read at night with my only light coming from the moon. I saw dead bodies floating in water. I still remember the smell, hearing homeless people scream at night. My childhood home doesn't exist anymore. It's an empty lot now. Everything I knew about my existence left when my house was demolished. Childhood pictures, certificates, etc. Sometimes I wonder if my Pre-Katrina life actually happened. If all the people from my old neighborhood, whom I haven't seen in a decade, actually existed. Or if God, the Universe, or what have you is playing some type of game on me...MidCity, I love you. Went and tatted you on my chest, because you are all I knew. And now you're gone...*

This quote from MidCity Ab has remained with me because I can relate to his experience, as I also lost my old neighborhood and childhood home as a result of Hurricane Katrina. I too wonder what has happened to those that I knew before. However, his story shows the experience of many blacks in New Orleans; an experience that I did not have to face as I was fortunate enough to evacuate. My family could have rebuilt our home if we chose. Yet, for those in

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<sup>2</sup> The Declaration of Alma-Ata was composed in 1978 that identified key elements of primary health care and as a necessity to attain health for all across the world.

MidCity, their neighborhood was lost after Katrina as it became a white neighborhood. Further, many people have not been able to afford rebuilding and repairing their homes to return- even to this day. The common account of Katrina is that the city has recovered, but in actuality, the poorer, largely non-white neighborhoods have not. This exhibit allowed me to reflect upon the privileges that I had within that space and the narrative told about Katrina. I learned that my reality of Katrina was not everyone's.

Considering this, I acknowledge that there are multiple HIV experiences in South Africa, so my parallels do not speak to everyone. In its beginning, there was little knowledge about HIV/AIDS or how to treat it; as a result, millions of people died. Families and communities experienced loss, and it reinforced the existing cycles of poverty. Although HIV has become a chronic, manageable disease now, there is still much stigma that surrounds it, which can lead to separation and isolation. Although a different type of trauma than a natural disaster, I'd imagine HIV is a life-changing event; an event that can bring upon pain and suffering-both emotionally and physically- and where any support can be uplifting.

My family and I have come a long way from where we began, and we have learned that the world does not cease to turn. With this catastrophe, we learned to get back up again in order not to be swept away with the tide. In future tragedies, my family will do the same, and so can all of us here today, but for some, additional support is needed. Life is dangerous, yet exhilarating-a spider weaving together a web connected by beautiful disasters. The underlying beauty of it all is that through the misfortunes that came along with Hurricane Katrina, came some good. Being thrown into a place with no sense of comfort caused me to reevaluate my meaning of life. I now know what I had once taken for granted because some Katrina victims were not as fortunate as I. They did not have a place to stay during the hurricane, or a place to stay afterwards. And some even lost their lives or lives of family members. The new beginning that I was given is wonderful; I would not be the person who performed this research without it.

Before arriving in South Africa, I had just finished a final research paper for a health policy course that focused on the global impacts of US policies on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Writing this report is when I first encountered The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which is the biggest source of HIV/AIDS funding internationally and is provided by the United States government. When I came to South Africa, I had a largely negative perspective

on PEPFAR funding due to the restrictions that US policies place on funding usage, but since being here, many of those that spoke during our class lectures were grateful for American funding. Featured in many of the guests' presentations and on signage at community site visits was the symbol of PEPFAR and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). I was curious to learn more about America's presence in South Africa.

I chose to focus my independent research project on what the ideal partnership would be between South African non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and US governmental aid agencies, specifically concerning HIV/AIDS programs funded by PEPFAR, from the perspective of NGOs. To accomplish this, I inquired about the nature of current partnerships, outcomes of US involvement in PEPFAR-funded projects, and the responsibilities of the US in international health. My research provides information that can be used to improve the partnerships between US aid agencies and NGOs. Additionally, since South Africa is currently transitioning away from PEPFAR funding, these partnerships are crucial to a smooth transition such that the HIV/AIDS epidemic does not worsen. Further, these partnerships will be exemplary to other nations when they transition away from PEPFAR.

More personally, I selected this topic because I am beginning a Master of Public Health in International Health and Development this upcoming year. Before entering this field, I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity granted to me abroad to hear how South African NGOs spoke of their American governmental partnerships, improvements that could be made, and the role of the US in South African health care. Analyzing how my viewpoints on global aid and the role that foreign governments and international bodies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations (UN), change through this research process will impact how I engage in my future work.

### **Importance to South Africa**

From October 1980 to May 1981, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report published on June 5, 1981 described five unusual infections of *Pneumocystis Pneumonia*- a rare lung infection- in previously healthy homosexual males. Since then, these cases are known to be a result of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) as caused by infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). As of the end of 2017, more than 35 million deaths have occurred worldwide as a result

of HIV. In addition, 36.9 million people are currently living with HIV with a new incidence rate of 1.8 million. About two-thirds of those infected annually reside in African nations (World Health Organization [WHO], 2018). In response, a significant part of funding is sent to lower-and-middle income countries in order to improve their prevention and research efforts (Duber, Coates, Szekeras, Kaji, & Lewis, 2010).

The United States is the largest source of HIV/AIDS assistance, primarily through its program titled The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Signed into law in 2003, PEPFAR allocated 15 billion USD over five years to addressing HIV/AIDS, not only within America, but also globally (Duber et al., 2010). Fifteen countries- twelve in Sub-Saharan Africa- receive two-thirds of the funding to provide prevention, treatment, and care for millions. After the initial five years, PEPFAR was reapproved for another five as well as a budget increase to 48 billion USD (Duber et al., 2010). In 2014, PEPFAR announced that its next- and still current- strategy of achieving epidemic control (PEPFAR, 2016).

“South Africa has the largest HIV epidemic in the world, with 19% of the global number of people living with HIV, 15% of new infections and 11% of AIDS related deaths” (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS [UNAIDS], 2019, n.p.). The South African government began using PEPFAR funds in 2004 for HIV prevention and treatment, which included financing what is now the largest antiretroviral therapy (ART) program. According to PEPFAR (2018), its cumulative investment in South Africa from 2004 to 2018 was 6,258,586,198 USD. “In August 2012, the US government announced it would cut South Africa’s PEPFAR budget in half by 2017, making South Africa the first PEPFAR funded country to transition to full ownership of- and financial responsibility for- its HIV program” (Katz, Bassett, & Wright, 2013, p. 1385). From 2004 to 2009, the majority of implementation was through non-governmental organizations, but due to the PEPFAR reduction, the strategy now is to move treatment programs to the governmental sector (Larson, O’Brien, Brown, Mbengashe & Klausner, 2012; Katz et al., 2015). The relationships between South Africa and the United States will serve as a global example of how to transition funding, and it must run smoothly as there are many lives involved.

Ghanotakis, Mayhew and Watts (2009) describe NGOs relationships with PEPFAR as one-sided and American-dominated. Most of the decision-makers of PEPFAR South Africa are

American representatives of US governmental agencies and are bound to the laws of the US. Some of these laws include the Global Gag Rule-limiting funding to family planning and abortion services- or the Prostitution Pledge-organizations must oppose prostitution before receiving funds (Ghanotakis et al., 2009). Although some of these stances do not align with the mission of the NGO or the rights provided by the Constitution of South Africa, organizations admit that they will tell PEPFAR what it wants to hear in order to receive funding. Overall, the goals of PEPFAR are determined by Americans and do not align well with local needs and contexts.

However, with South Africa's more recent transition of its HIV/AIDS interventions to the government, the country has more authority over its US-funded programs. Yet, there are many patients facing disruption and decreased quality in their care- such as increased waits, unprepared staff, and low supply of ARVs- during the transition (Kavanagh, 2014). Kavanagh (2014) argues that by transitioning funding, South Africa will not be able to also expand its HIV programming to meet its goals, and that US should not cut funding before service delivery is scaled up. If not, control of the epidemic could be lost, so the role of US and PEPFAR should be to “refocus country ownership on governance and show how co-management with government breeds success” (Kavanagh, 2014, p. 250).

Comparatively, PEPFAR's website claims that sustainability and partnerships is one of its priorities; “we know the potential for sustainability, innovation, and scalability is much greater with the support and collaboration of our partners. PEPFAR is committed to full transparency, data sharing, and engagement with them, which leads to greater coordination and impact” (n.d., n.p.). Relating to engagement of community organizations, they state:

*The long-term sustainability of these programs is dependent on the full engagement of civil society at every point in their development and implementation. We also know that HIV/AIDS interventions are only successful if they are tailored to the unique needs of the communities we serve* (PEPFAR, n.d., n.p.).

Due to the nature of the HIV epidemic and PEPFAR's funding reductions in South Africa, this research is important to South Africa because it shows how congruent NGOs perspectives on PEPFAR are with what PEPFAR is hoping to achieve. This research opens the conversation on how donor-recipient partnerships can be improved.

## Methodologies

I'm sitting in the reception area of an NGO waiting to interview its director. Numerous employees pass by, but not before greeting me with a *Sawubona*<sup>3</sup> and others even in a compliment or a hug. This is not out of character of the hospitality that I have become accustomed to during my time here. The receptionist is continuously busy catering to the other guests that walk through the doors and delivering packages to employees' offices, but always running back from these other duties when she hears the phone begin to ring- which happened quite often. The director is late to our meeting, but I can understand why, given how busy the organization seems to be.

In the beginning of my research process, I had trouble scheduling interviews as I was not receiving many responses to my requests. At one point in time, I thought I would have only a single interview, but while waiting to hear from others I contacted, I began reading *Aid and Other Dirty Business*<sup>4</sup>-written by Giles Bolton-which caused me to engage more intensely with the autoethnographic portion of my research as I could relate to Bolton's narrative. Now I'm quite appreciative of the gap between my first interview and the subsequent interviews because I was able to acquire a better understanding of the complexities of developmental aid, which I then incorporated into my later interview questions.

In retrospect, I think the process went quite swimmingly, although for a moment I thought the tide would take me under. Yet, I would say that for many of the NGOs that I reached out to, they spend most of their time in the rapids with little relief. My requests to many of the organizations likely went ignored because organizations are overwhelmed with running their programs, applying for grants, preparing reports for donors, etc. I felt overwhelmed by the lack of responses, but those organizations probably felt overwhelmed by their responsibilities- some of which are related to the relationship I chose to analyze.

## Autoethnography

For this research, I utilized a non-traditional approach called autoethnography. An autoethnographic approach involves the researcher as another point of study during the research.

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<sup>3</sup> *Sawubona* is the isiZulu word for "Hello."

<sup>4</sup> Bolton, who is a British white male that previously worked in developmental aid, narrates his experiences with the system of global aid and his realizations that it must undergo radical restructuring to be effective.

Building from Ellis (2004) and Holman Jones (2005)'s ideas, authors Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) describe autoethnography as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)" (n.p.).

The first reason that I chose to utilize an autoethnography is because I recognize the inherent influence and bias that researchers have when analyzing their data and drawing conclusions; these predispositions stem from their personal experience and knowledge base. Because I was also interested in how my attitudes may change relating to the role of America in developmental aid, I challenged myself to deeply reflect upon myself as a citizen of the country that has run the largest relief fund for a disease in history, who is visiting a comparatively poorer nation that has received trillions of dollars from my country. I hope that my journey with this topic is relatable and inspires others to consciously consider the impacts of PEPFAR and their personal stake in developmental aid.

Data collection for the autoethnography aspect of my research consisted of reflective journaling before and after each interview, and whenever else I had thoughts that needed to be recorded. Part of my journaling process included the use of poetry to express my thoughts that were free-flowing and unstructured. I also used parts of assignments from my study abroad program to draw on altering views I had throughout the four months prior to engaging in this research. I also drew from creative writing that I previously wrote, particularly regarding Hurricane Katrina.

Due to the nature of autoethnography, this paper contains each of the components of a traditional paper, but it is styled in a manner that makes sense with my interaction with the research process. For instance, instead of having a traditional literature review section, my engagement with secondary sources is spread throughout the paper from emphasizing the importance of this work to South Africa to reflecting on the effects it has on the expansion of my knowledge base. Findings about myself are included alongside the findings from those I interviewed and from the literature.

Completing an autoethnographic paper has allowed me to situate myself in the research process, and ultimately, rehumanize the largest effort by a single government to combat a specific disease. At the beginning, I was unsure of how all-encompassing my personal

connection to the topic of PEPFAR and developmental aid would be but engaging with it and myself so deeply had an inspiring, view-shifting outcome.

### **Sampling**

Initially, I set out to interview a mixture of positions at NGOs in the case that NGO Directors or Chief Executive Officers (CEOs)<sup>5</sup> had different viewpoints on PEPFAR funding than others on their staff who worked in a particular area of the NGO. My final interview population consisted of three directors, one programme manager, and one district manager. One of the participants also previously worked for a district office of the South African government and was able to provide insight from that lens in addition to the NGO side. Representatives from four out of fourteen organizations contacted were represented; at one organization, two individuals were interviewed.

When I began searching for organizations, I began by emailing people who lectured for my program and had mentioned having PEPFAR funding for their research; moreover, I gathered contacts from my research advisor, Davine Thaw, through connections she had with NGOs. If the contacted individual was not the organizational director, I asked to be connected with the director to acquire organizational consent. Additionally, I used a list of PEPFAR grantees obtained online to find more organizations, which I then reached out to at their general informational email; this was largely unsuccessful as I did not have a referral from someone who could vouch for my project. As these email responses were limited, I also reached out to some organizations over the phone and was successful in obtaining the contact information of some directors. After each interview, I asked the participants if there was anyone else that they could refer me to, and when they connected me with others, that was when I had the best success at obtaining other informants. Two interviews were obtained through a SIT contact, one from my advisor's contacts, and two from referrals of participants.

### **Interviews**

As funding is a sensitive topic and PEPFAR is a key funder of each of the participating organizations, I intentionally have not disclosed any identities or descriptors that could lead to

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<sup>5</sup> For brevity in the remainder of this report, I will use the term “director” to refer to both the titles of Organizational Directors and CEOs.

the identification of an informant under the advice of the Local Review Board that approved my project; project approval can be located in **Appendix 4**. I do not want to compromise the relationship of any organization with their donors, particularly one as large as the US government. As there are a limited number of NGOs that receive PEPFAR funding in each region and each organization has specific missions and programs, providing this information, even without the name of the organization or the interviewee, could lead to identification; thus, I refer to them throughout as Informants 1-5. Due to this, aspects of included quotes may be censored and information regarding the organization's involvements and programs is vague in order to provide anonymity to my informants. Additionally, some informants referred to other organizations and projects as examples to further elaborate upon points they were making in their responses, so I chose to protect the identity of these organizations.

Before conducting an interview, I gathered consent from the participant after verbally describing my research topic and their rights as a participant. If the interview was done in-person, the participant signed a consent form; see **Appendix 2** for a blank copy of this form. If the interview was conducted over the phone or Skype, I recorded my introduction and their consent. Additionally, I asked permission to use a recording device to record each interview; hand-written notes were also taken during each interview. Due to the location of some of the organizations, three interviews were conducted over the phone or Skype and two in-person, but all in private office spaces.

Each interview was based on thirteen semi-structured, predetermined questions, which can be found in **Appendix 1**. The average interview length was 29 minutes and 34 seconds. Each question was asked in every interview, but after the first interview, the phrasing of some questions was altered to be clearer regarding what was being asked. Occasional probe questions were asked when clarification or elaboration was needed.

## Analysis

Despite funding being a sensitive topic, I believe that by not talking about the strengths as well as areas of improvement of partnership frameworks can further perpetuate bad aid. The findings presented are what I found to be the most relevant to my chosen topic and personal growth. I acknowledge that another researcher may have chosen other findings to present and may have drawn different interpretations. As an American engaging with South African NGOs, I

recognize that there are cultural factors that influence my engagement with each personal interview. Additionally, the only narrative that I can truly tell is my own and being able to tell it is a privilege in itself. My participants entrusted me with parts of their experiences, for which I am grateful, and I intend to share them with my readers to the best of my ability. They have given me power over their stories such that I can give these accounts a platform to be told.

To code these interviews, I began by listening to each recording and transcribing the entire dialogue, word for word, noting any nuances in language. After transcription, I unpacked each statement using the axial coding method. To begin, each comment the interviewee made was summarized into concise statements that represent the main point of their response. Then, codes were given to each of these statements; codes served as a method of categorizing the responses. After coding each interview, I sorted and grouped the codes beneath common, overarching themes, which became their own sections of this report. Going through each transcription again, I placed the identified theme beside its corresponding code. From here, I reread each of the participant's original responses to choose which best represented the themes and subthemes presented here.

Common themes that occurred throughout the findings were further analyzed through a comprehensive literature search using keywords such as "South Africa," "PEPFAR," "NGOs," "HIV/AIDS," "power," "funding," "foreign aid," and "relationships." I also frequented PEPFAR's website to understand how it describes its mission, goals, programs, and partnerships. *Aid and Other Dirty Business* was located on the bookshelf of my program's office and was a large source of information for the report. All these sources broadened my knowledge base and understanding of personal experiences, which then influenced how I interpreted my findings and drew conclusions.

### **Limitations**

Since funding and donor relationships are sensitive topics, organizations may have been hesitant to talk to me about their perspectives, so they did not respond to my inquiries. Even those that were interviewed may have chosen not to disclose certain details. Due to this, organizations that are familiar with SIT, my advisor, or another participant that recommended them were more inclined to participate; this along with the small number of participants means that my findings may not be applicable to all South African NGOs. Further, as South African

NGOs were interviewed, their perceptions of and relationships with PEPFAR and its staff may not be transferrable outside of South Africa. Additionally, this research was conducted in the span of four weeks, so my time for contacting organizations, setting-up interviews, conducting interviews, analyzing data, and writing the report was restricted.

A further limitation is that I set out to write about the relationships between South African NGOs and US governmental aid agencies, but due to my location, time constraints, and the breadth of my connections in South Africa, I was unable to examine the relationship from the American perspective- besides my own that is. Without the input of those working in aid agencies, I am only able to report on the perspectives of NGOs, but even with this limitation, giving voice to their views is essential.

*we are one earth*

*one planet*

*yet divided by continents*

*countries*

*mountains*

*oceans*

*but united by trade*

*travel*

*destiny*

*the actions of one affect us all*

*the health of one concern us all*

(Asher, personal journal, 2 April 2019)

## Decoding the System: The Logistics of Developmental Aid

### How Developmental Aid is Structured

*It is the role of national governments to strategize, plan, and support a system that functions well and will ultimately allow everyone to receive necessary care. The role of international bodies, such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization, is to create guidelines and recommendations that all nations should strive towards- such as the 90-90-90 goals<sup>6</sup> or the vision set forth by the Declaration of Alma-Ata. Other countries, such as the United States and its PEPFAR program, can use their resources to aid other nations in achieving the goals developed by international bodies. Global buy-in and involvement is essential because we all live on the same Earth and interact with one another through trade and travel, so health in one nation can affect health globally. NGOs often act as intermediaries to aid the national government in its missions, but to also support the community they serve in the vision they have for themselves* (Asher, personal journal, 29 March 2019).

I wrote the above as part of an assignment on my understanding of community health just before I began this research. After engaging with NGOs and literature, I now have a modified perspective on community, public, and global health. I related to and learned a lot from the experiences of Giles Bolton as someone from a Western country working in developmental aid in Africa and encountering its complexities firsthand. In *Aid and Other Dirty Business*, he describes a meeting with the Rwandan Prime Minister during his role as representative for the British Department of International Development:

*The meeting was a first insight into the extremely peculiar workings of the diplomatic and aid world in Africa. My responsibilities in Kigali were to follow and report on what was going on in the country; monitor how British aid money was being spent, and hold discussions with Rwandan ministers and senior council servants on current and future assistance. Meanwhile, I had Dutch, Swedish, French, Belgian, American, Canadian, German and Swiss counterparts, among others, all with their own offices, all trying to do exactly the same this-as indeed were various UN agencies, the World Bank, the African Development Bank and several other donors. The result was all of us spending our aid separately, with widely differing procedures and conditions attached, and only cursory attempts at coordination (Bolton, 2007, p. 99-100).*

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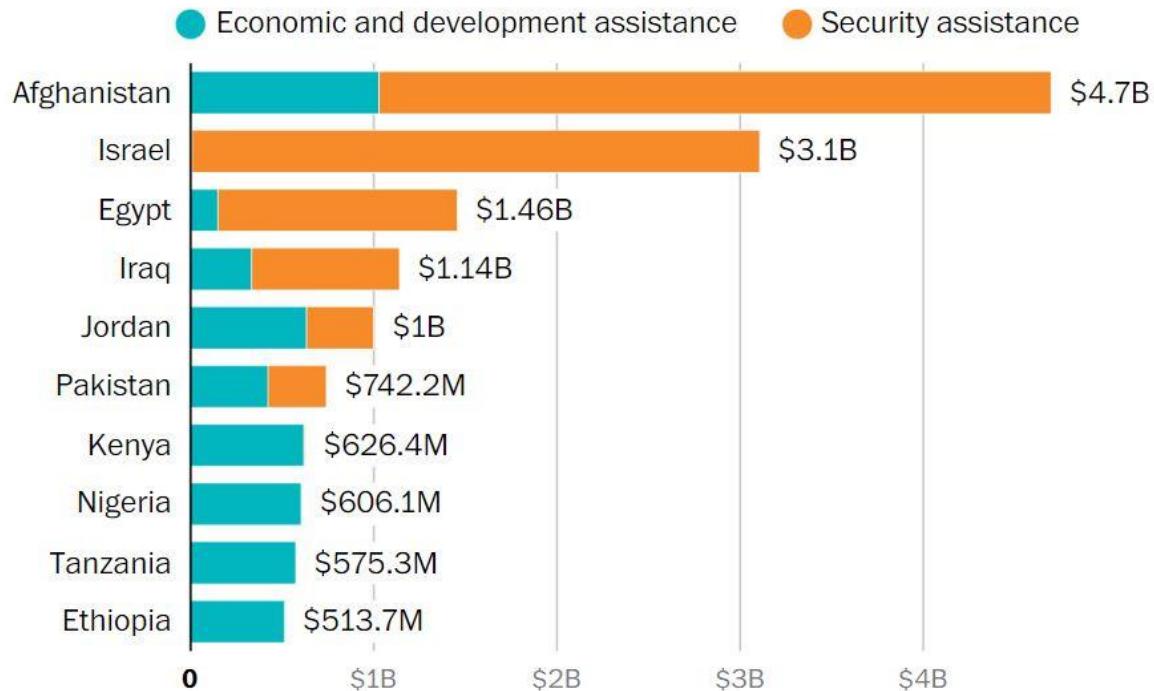
<sup>6</sup> The 90-90-90 targets aim to diagnose 90% of those living with HIV, provide ARVs for 90% of those diagnosed and achieve viral suppression for 90% of those on treatment by 2020; these were set forth by UNAIDS.

Numerous foreign governments provide funding through their aid agencies, such as USAID, that are backed by taxpayers; this is termed national aid. International organizations, such as UN agencies and the World Bank, provide assistance- termed international aid- that is also supported by contributing governments' taxpayers. Yet with all of this global support aiming to help other nations, "African government ministries have large human-resource gaps, which is partly why they need assistance, yet the few capable officials spend vast amounts of their time writing reports and sitting in meetings trying to maintain donor funding" (Bolton, 2007, p. 112).

National aid is where most taxpayers' bucks go, making it the greatest agent of potential change if its funding is used correctly. Bolton (2007) states that national aid is spent badly because firstly, it usually supports projects rather than going to African budgets; secondly, a large amount is spent on expatriates meaning that governments bring in their own people to run projects; thirdly, the amount of aid received is constantly changing as a result of each government's own political decisions; lastly, governments prioritize aid to countries of strategic interest, such as security or trade. Yet, as described by Informant 5 (2019), there is a need for national aid, such as PEPFAR, no matter how badly managed because

*[PEPFAR] acts as a supplement to improve access because you find the budget of the government, of course, is not enough; therefore, the PEPFAR funding or USAID funding, it comes as an additional funding to improve access. And especially, the community part. For instance, the Department [of Health] is working more on the facility-based, but now with the transition, where the emphasis is with the 90-90-90, the emphasis is more on community-based services. To me, then, it assists the government in terms of that.*

Using the US State Department's request to Congress for the 2017 budget, Bearak and Gamio (2016) looked at the US's foreign assistance spending, which was 42.4 billion USD of 4.5 trillion USD in the budget proposal. Going towards economic and development assistance was 25.6 billion USD, with the rest going towards security. Of the top ten countries receiving the most economic and development assistance, seven were in Africa, and Afghanistan was the biggest receiver (Bearak & Gamio, 2016). However, Figure 1 depicts the US's overall top receivers for foreign assistance and the nature of the funds:



*Figure 1.* Top ten receivers of US foreign assistance and the nature of funding received (Bearak & Gamio, 2016).

For 2016, the actual expenditure towards global aid was 0.19 percent of the US's Gross National Income (GNI) or 34.12 billion USD, but only 0.07 percent of the GNI went to Africa (One, 2018). The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution in 1970 that “each economically advanced country will progressively increase its official development assistance to the developing countries and will exert its best efforts to reach a minimum net amount of 0.7% of its gross national product at market prices” (UN, n.d., n.p.). This commitment has been reconfirmed at international conferences following, but the average in 2016 for developed nations was about 0.3%, so the US’s 0.19% fell far below this (Bearak & Gamio, 2016). On 15 April 2019, I wrote:

*Only national aid is able to truly have a chance of helping, but it rarely does due to how poorly designed it is. It rarely covers all the bases needed such that fallbacks or lapses in coverage are faced; one gap can cause the entire program’s success to be rendered. Western solutions are placed on systems that are not used to functioning this particular way. I do think community work is important because supporting systems that are well-run and functioning is a way to facilitate positive change and lasting impacts; yet I now feel that my fight is in tackling the flawed system of developmental aid.*

*Foreign governments and international organizations ask too much from the nations they're trying to help. These bodies could work together to create programs, set guidelines, monitor results, such that organizations and governments aren't catering to the needs of numerous donors whose initiatives often overlap, and can focus on the work they are doing to support their communities.*

*I came into my study abroad wanting to do international community level work because I thought I would be able to make a difference-to make an impact-on others' lives by assisting them in obtaining the needs they define. Now I'm beginning to see that true, long-lasting, sustainable impacts are hard to come by because of how the system of developmental aid is constructed.*  
(Asher, personal journal, 15 April 2019).

### How PEPFAR is Structured

Despite my previous research on PEPFAR, I entered this project with minimal knowledge on how PEPFAR is distributed, but I have since learned just how complex and complicated the process of applying, receiving, and utilizing PEPFAR funds is. For 2018 spending, PEPFAR (2018) reported that in South Africa 62% of its funding was spent on care and treatment, 19% on prevention, 7% on health systems strengthening, 6% on orphans and vulnerable children, and 5% on management and operations. Its funding is distributed to national governments, multilateral institutions such as WHO and UNAIDS, and multi-sectoral partnerships like NGOs, businesses and social entrepreneurs (PEPFAR, n.d.). PEPFAR is handled by the following US institutions: Department of State, USAID, Department of Defense, Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services, Peace Corps, and Department of the Treasury (PEPFAR, 2016). However, because of USAID's role as a developmental organization, it is the key player in the international arena; thus, each of the interviewed organizations has a relationship with USAID rather than the numerous US departments or the Peace Corps. Due to this, some informants use PEPFAR and USAID interchangeably in their responses as USAID is the vessel in which PEPFAR funding is delivered.

Two of the organizations were prime, or direct, recipients of PEPFAR funding, while two were sub-recipients meaning that they partner with a prime recipient to receive funding through the prime. Typically, smaller organizations are sub-recipients as they often do not have the

capacity to run programs themselves. Informant 3 (2019) mentioned that “We are a sub-recipient. We haven’t had luck to be prime because we still are growing and small.” Informant 4 (2019) described how prime recipients support their sub-recipients:

*USAID received the funds from PEPFAR, they gave the money to [Anonymous Organization], and they then had the staff to provide training and to provide management expertise in finance, in M&E<sup>7</sup>, and programming- those three key areas. And that was very expensive, so [Anonymous Organization] had a lot of expensive people doing a lot of work in order to make sure that we as sub-recipients were doing what was required.*

Although resources are being expended on sub-recipients because many of them do not have the capacity to fully support their programming alone, Informant 5 (2019) describes the benefits of funding community-based organizations:

*There has been a change in terms of the funding to fund the local-based NGOs. I think it has increased the service delivery because those people, they've got an obligation to their communities, unlike an organization which is coming from another area who may not have interests of that particular community.*

Another partnership framework was mentioned by Informant 2 (2019) who described working with other organizations, which in conjunction all received money from a prime partner for a specific project. This framework also has clear community benefits through partnering with numerous local NGOs to provide a similar service to a broader area. Informant 2 (2019) stated, “it was quite a great initiative because it looked at identifying peer support individuals...that actually were trained and actually went into the community.” However, this informant later mentioned that with this project coming to an end, along with other issues with funding, they no longer have the capacity to run their counseling and testing program, so they now focus on local small-scale interventions such as distributing condoms and lubrication and providing workshops around treatment.

In addition to changes or decreases in the amount funding, other costs stipulated by USAID alter the services able to be offered to the community; “a big slice of the budget is not

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<sup>7</sup> M&E is an abbreviation for monitoring and evaluation, which is a process to improve current and future performance to achieve better results.

reaching the intended beneficiaries because it's absorbed through compliance requirements” (Informant 4, 2019). Informant 4 (2019) further details this:

*If you take the total budget, the USAID budget, there's a cost at the USAID level of ensuring compliance. We have to do special audits called recipient-contracted audits or RCAs which are not just financial audits, they're also compliance audits. To give you an idea, our normal statutory audit might cost something like R50,000 but the USAID compliance audits cost R500,000- 10 times as much. So, there is a cost at USAID level of having the right people who have the knowledge to ensure compliance, there is a cost in terms of the audit requirements, and there's a cost in terms of us having people who are sufficiently trained, experienced, and qualified to ensure compliance.*

When I asked this respondent if USAID should have this level of control, their reply was:

*I think for mature organizations that have demonstrated a track record of reliability and confidence and where there is a clear understanding of what's required and their ability to do it, I think too much control is counterproductive. And the reason it's counterproductive is because it absorbs resources, it takes time. You know, every time we have a meeting with USAID, we have to stop what we're doing, and we have to prepare for it, and we have to take the time to do that, which we could be using furthering our program objectives. But I think for a lot of organizations in third world contexts, they don't have sufficient capacity and then it's really important that USAID has the capacity to do that (Informant 4, 2019).*

Admittedly, this is not something that I previously considered; my prior stance was along the lines of just give the money to organizations, and they can run their interventions. I'm realizing there is a balance to be met between USAID providing NGOs the support that they need and allowing NGOs to spend time supporting the needs of the community. Strengths of USAID in doing this include an orientation session that the US embassy runs, as Informant 2 (2019) describes, to “help prepare us as an organization to work with the [US] staff and understanding the systems and templates.” Additionally, Informant 1 (2019) mentions that “PEPFAR funding has been quite comprehensive” because it supports staff salaries and overhead costs, unlike some other donors.

Regarding the application process, Informant 2 (2019), a prime recipient, details:

*It's been a complicated process because you have to register with SAM<sup>8</sup>, so that was quite a challenging process because sometimes we had to go online to register and complete all of those documents... well the online application with SAM and all that and get a CAGE number<sup>9</sup>. So, it was very complex working with that system and to register with the US government. Initially, at the beginning, it was quite plain-sighted to do that, but what we had to do is that we needed to... because each year your SAM or your CAGE number or something expired, so you needed to reapply or activate it, and that process was very confusing and time-consuming.*

Despite the application process being confusing, Informant 2 (2019) notes that “if you read the guidelines before applying, you knew what you were to apply for” and that “we have good relationships with the staff that work there [the US embassy], so anything we have, any challenges or whatever, we can always pick up the phone or email them to ask for assistance and support.” However, Informant 3 (2019) stated “we hardly ever communicate with them because we are a sub-partner” and “I guess when they deal with the prime, they are able to pose the questions about the work that is done by the sub.”

PEPFAR-South Africa’s Community Grants website (n.d.), says after an application is received, it will be evaluated and if it scores well, a phone interview will be scheduled. Site visits to assess the project proposed and organizational risk is conducted after a successful interview. If the visit is a success, the application will progress to a final selection committee. The site reads:

*Organizations are selected for funding through a competitive process and are required to have a direct impact in their local community and have community support in the form of funding, labor and/or other services. Short-listed organizations must be able to establish clear performance goals, indicators and timely project deliverables that can be externally verified. Funded organizations are required to monitor, measure and report results achieved in accordance with PEPFAR’s reporting requirements. Once the grant is over, the organization must be able to continue on its own or with other funding from the community and/or other donors (PEPFAR-South Africa, n.d., n.p.).*

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<sup>8</sup> The System for Award Management (SAM) is a web-based, government application required in order to be eligible for US federal grants; it can be accessed at <https://www.sam.gov/>

<sup>9</sup> A Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code provides a standard method of identifying a given facility at a specific location; it is used within the US federal government and is required as part of registering on SAM

*Whose got the power?*

*It's a game that seems to change but not actually all that much*

*Europeans go to Africa*

*Europeans go to America*

*Europeans go to Asia*

*Whites, whites, whites, whites, whites.*

*The Western mind narrates the story, the history.*

*The Western word is the one largely trusted.*

*The Western ideology imposed its hierarchy of power onto others.*

*The Western opinion is validating.*

*Why do we get to decide what development means?*

*Why do we “aid” others just to stay on top?*

*The time for imposing Western standards must end*

*Western ≠ Right*

*There are many right ways to do things*

(Asher, personal journal, 11 April 2019).

### **Whose Got the Power: Control & Flexibility of PEPFAR**

*PEPFAR has Ambassador Birx as the Global AIDS Coordinator, and when Ambassador Birx splatters over coffee in the morning, there is an earthquake in South Africa (Informant 4, 2019).*

For me, this quotation sets the tone for this section and sums up the importance of America's actions- one small decision can have colossal ripple effects further downstream. Many participants mentioned how decisions made in the US, particularly the federal government in Washington, D.C., trickle down to affect the nature of their programs:

*The Trump administration, they're not funding, for example, family planning and abortion. For those that provide and were receiving funding from the US and PEPFAR for that type of work are actually caught...they're in a bit of a difficult situation because funding will be pulled out (Informant 2, 2019).*

*We understand that often, particularly with a government instrument like PEPFAR, even the officials driving the fund don't make the final decision; it just depends on what decision is taken in Congress, and they have to implement it (Informant 1, 2019).*

Although the US government appears to have the ultimate control over funding as Congress and the presidential administration decide the US budget distribution and federal policies and regulations, USAID too wields power, particularly over the application process and compliance.

*USAID stipulated key individuals that they wanted to be part of the program...and they stipulated the [application] requirements. Those requirements included things like 8 years' experience with PEPFAR, 5 years' experience in certain things..., but the point I'm coming to is that those requirements were in our opinion quite onerous and beyond what was necessary for the job and made it very difficult for us to find the right people because people with that level of specific experience are... there aren't that many of them, so there's a small pool to draw from and lots of people all betting for the same thing (Informant 4, 2019).*

Due to the nature of American politics and the structure of the USAID, NGOs explained that they often feel told what to do. Informants 1 and 4 (2019) described the relationship as "autocratic," while Informant 3 (2019) called it "top-down." Part of these descriptions is related to the programs that they can implement. Informant 5 (2019) described the programs as

“prescribed,” and Informant 3 (2019) said “PEPFAR is funding evidence-based programs, and they’ve got a list of which ones those are.” Additionally, Informant 1 (2019) remarks:

*There's very little room for creativity or to do anything else under the grant than what you initially agreed with. Even if you see ways in which you would like to improve or do something in a different way, it's not very easy to get that to happen...Most of the time, it'll be you have this goal to achieve. You know, you may have some leeway in as how you achieve that, but it depends on the program because many times you may be told 'apply this curriculum,' 'apply this process,' 'apply this knowledge.' All you need to do is just as you're told.*

The issue with this scheme is “there is no clear interlocking with the grassroots cultures. Therefore, some of the interventions may take a while to take off or they may not take off as planned” (Informant 3, 2019) Moreover, “the limitation would be that in some cases, the funding comes with a prescribed service delivery where you cannot maneuver to respond to local needs” (Informant 5, 2019). Informant 4 (2019) notes that “a group of people in Washington sit and think that they know best about how to deal with HIV and AIDS and then they’re not necessarily getting feedback from us on the ground that deal with it on a day-to-day basis.”

Conversely, other interviewees found that they had a fair amount of control over funding. Informant 2 (2019) said, “I think the present grant that we have is the most flexible” and that “looking at how do you incorporate the funding with our programming, it’s sort-of matching with what we’re doing.” When applying for funding, NGOs do have more control over what they aim to do with funding as its part of the application process, and they can match it to their organizational objectives. Yet, relating back to changes in US policies that come down as a directive, Informant 1 (2019) describes that they can cause the program to “be different to what you signed up for initially, but because it is such an all-encompassing and significant part of funding, or contribution to the organization’s causes, many times organizations find themselves with no other choice but to agree” (Informant 1, 2019).

Most NGOs, as Informant 1 (2019) suggests, are reliant on the funding, in order to provide services to the communities they support. Informant 3 (2019) estimated around 50 percent of their organization’s funding comes from PEPFAR, while Informant 4 (2019) said, “PEPFAR is 80-90 percent of the funding, and so without PEPFAR funding we would not be able to do [programs] at the scale that we currently do it.” Without funding, Informant 5 (2019)

stated, “I think a peak number of NGOs won't be able to survive. They won't be able to survive because I think 90% they are dependent on the funding.”

Informant 4 (2019) gave an example of a PEPFAR-funded project that I found illustrated many of the previous points extremely well. DREAMS is an initiative that targets adolescent girls and young women with the aim to significantly reduce this group's new HIV infections (PEPFAR, 2016). To summarize Informant 4's (2019) explanation, DREAMS stipulated specific evidence-based interventions, added additional funds onto existing partners, who were then told to deliver the interventions in the same geographical area as other partners. It was a failure as NGOs did not have the capacity to deliver within the two-year time-frame that was set and because there was not a system to uniquely identify each girl receiving services, so there was double-counting occurring. Informant 4 (2019) stated that organizations could have predicted these challenges from day one if DREAMS would have asked for feedback.

On 11 April 2019, a period in which I worried about obtaining more interviews, I wrote:

*Right now, I feel lost-powerless of sorts. Hanging on to the whim of NGOs. But I wonder if this is how they feel-stringed along by their donors, just waiting to hear what demands are next, if they'll get funding, if their organization can continue, if they can serve their community as they aspire to* (Asher, personal journal).

I would venture to say that this was a reasonably accurate assessment. Overall, I entered this project anticipating that on the balance of power, the United States weighed more heavily than NGOs. Much of this stance was due to my prior knowledge on the effects of US federal policies, particularly the Prostitution Pledge and the Global Gag Rule. Yet, I was shocked to hear that there is not much feedback provided to those creating programs from those at the grassroots level. Regardless of this, Informant 1 (2019) said “ultimately, PEPFAR agrees to us as a grantee [because] they see us as the experts in what we are going to do or as people with the capacity to do what they're going to do,” and Informant 3 (2019) mentioned that “it's up to the country and the partners to run the program.”

The partnership dynamics described as such first appeared contradictory to me. How could organizations both feel that USAID sees them as the experts, but also that there are experts in Washington D.C. deciding what communities across the Atlantic Ocean need? But then I realized that NGOs are viewed as the local experts, and they are chosen to receive funding

because they demonstrate the ability to effectively serve their intended communities. PEPFAR still has its experts in Washington D.C. that design interventions and then have organizations implement them; the intervention structure is applicable enough to achieve progress, but not flexible enough to be appropriate to each communities' specialized needs. Informant 1 (2019) suggested “[The partnership] should be, and it is to some extent, an inclusive one with the donor seeing the grantees as equal partners.” At the beginning of my research period, I wrote, “as of now, I think opinions shouldn’t be imposed and an assets-based approach should be utilized. Funding should be allocated in a manner that is adaptable to communities’ strengths and desires for themselves” (Asher, personal journal, 2 April 2019). And as of now, I still agree with this statement.

*Well-intended, creating rifts*

*Bad-intended, doing good*

*Well-good*

*Bad-harm*

*It's so easy to connect words this way*

*But in reality,*

*It's much more complicated*

*Hard to admit that ulterior motives may lead to good things*

*Hard to admit that good intentions only go so far*

*What do people really do anything for?*

*How does one be “good” if they can create harm*

*Or*

*Are motivated “ill”-ly but make positive change*

*What does it mean to be good?*

*How is good measured?*

*Can we actually be good?*

(Asher, personal journal, 3 April 2019).

**To Whom Much is Given, Much Shall Be Required: America's Involvement**

*Nowhere matters more to changing the West's retrograde relations with Africa than the United States. Indeed, nowhere has a greater influence on global business or such a powerful say in international institutions. And nowhere is there a society better aware of the importance and value of personal responsibility (Bolton, 2007, p. 330).*

At my home institution in the US, Tulane University of New Orleans, I'm a Service-Learning Assistant at the Center for Public Service. My job entails managing a few sections of Tulane's service-learning courses that are a required portion of the undergraduate curriculum. An issue that our office has encountered is that because service is mandatory, some students do not care much about the attitudes in which they engage at their service sites or the negative effects that they could be leaving behind. Before coming here, I battled back-and-forth regarding my thoughts on compulsory service as I focused on the aspect of outsiders, who may not be there if they had a choice in the matter, entering a community and not making a positive impact.

When I came to South Africa, I saw this in the compulsory service in underserved communities that South African doctors are required to complete after finishing medical school and before they receive their licensure. Additionally, I noticed it in a grander scheme with America's involvement in aspects of South African health care delivery. As mentioned by my informants, South African NGOs and the South African government are reliant on developmental aid, particularly PEPFAR for controlling the HIV/AIDS epidemic; thus, I worried about the intentions behind US governmental funding and whether the US was imposing its standards through its funds. Informant 1 (2019) stated:

*As a superpower, they have an interest-a foreign policy interest- in being seen, first of all, as influential around the world and, secondly, in winning friends. I'm not naïve enough to think that it's done purely out of the goodness of the United States' heart.*

This informant further mentioned that the United States is motivated also by humanitarian efforts, but "that falls very much second place to the political interest" (Informant 1, 2019). After this interview, I journaled: "Although the funding is not coming from 100% well-intentions, it is still doing a lot of good...Back to this battle on harm versus good- intentions don't always equal impact" (Asher, personal journal, 3 April 2019). In contrast to Informant 1, later participants stated:

*America sees themselves as a little more advanced, so they're able to maneuver the resources. We understand that everything is not well and good in the States,...but we really appreciate the fact that there is some money that is able to support somewhere. Making America a wonderful country, by the way. [The funding] is meant to show how much America cares* (Informant 3, 2019).

*It's part of the American spirit of generosity and part of its choice to do good for others. It's altruistic* (Informant 4, 2019).

When I first heard these comments, I admit I was a bit skeptical. I began this program very critical of my home country, partly because of current President Donald Trump, but also because of the current political dialogue surrounding immigration and social welfare. My viewpoint was largely influenced by the those who have the opinion of everyone can pull themselves up bootstraps, or anyone can improve their situation alone without the help of others. “American public support for foreign aid in the age of Trump” states that the majority Americans believe that US aid policies should be driven by altruism rather than self-interest; 61% believed aid should go to the countries with the poorest economies rather than nations important to trade or US security (Kull, 2017).

However, the US does have a security and trade interest in providing funding due to how connected the world is today. The Declaration of Alma-Ata reads “All countries should cooperate in a spirit of partnership and service to ensure primary health care for all people since the attainment of health by people in any one country directly concerns and benefits every other country” (WHO, 1978, n.p.). Given this, I believe that the US has a responsibility to provide international developmental aid; some participants agreed:

*I would say that countries that are better off do have the overall responsibility to help those that are not* (Informant 1, 2019).

*I think it is more than moral because without that program [PEPFAR], obviously, the number of patients who are on ARVs would not be at the level it is. I would say it's life-saving, if that is correct. It is a life-saving responsibility because the increase in the number of clients on the ARV has increased the life-expectancy of a lot of people. Without that funding, obviously, the life-expectancy wouldn't be increased* (Informant 5, 2019).

Moreover, Informant 4 (2019) stated, “if South Africans know what the risks are, and they still take the risk,... then it’s not the responsibility of American taxpayers to pay for the consequences.” It may seem like a contradiction that I also agree with this statement. If America is going to provide aid, they must provide funding to support programs that are effective. Even if one does not believe that America has a responsibility to contribute to other nations’ health, I would argue that if the US chooses to provide money, they do have the responsibility to provide it well.

Informant 3 (2019) referenced the following Bible verse: “Much will be demanded from everyone who has been given much, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be asked” (Luke 12:48 Common English Bible). Building from this phrase, Informant 3 (2019) stated “the bigger the gift, the bigger the responsibility.” Informant 4 (2019) said that when looking upon their relationship with the US more fairly, “it comes with the nature of the beast. If you’re going to give so much money, you got to have the mechanisms in place to ensure that it is well-spent and well-managed.” So, how well has the United States done with ensuring that PEPFAR funds have been well-spent and well-managed? Each one of the interviewed individuals remarked on the positive community effects:

*The community sees us as making a useful contribution that changes their lives. That is made possible by the extent of the funding that we get* (Informant 1, 2019).

*PEPFAR and USAID have been in South Africa for years and years now and they really have made an impact and supported organizations doing good work around HIV/AIDS, especially in key populations* (Informant 2, 2019).

*We are able to identify people that we may have missed if the PEPFAR funding was not there and we are able to really find them and initiate them and support them at the community level* (Informant 3, 2019).

*There are hundreds of thousands of young people whose lives have been changed from the generosity [of American foreign aid]* (Informant 4, 2019).

*If then, that extra funding was not there, you would have less people who have so many years on [ARV] treatment. That is why I say in a way it’s life-saving* (Informant 5, 2019).

From its start in 2004 to June of 2018, PEPFAR (2018) states it has supported the following outputs in South Africa:

- *Antiretroviral treatment for 3,515,573 people*
- *Voluntary medical male circumcision for 1,632,962 men*
- *HIV testing services for 16,259,596 people (In Fiscal Year 2017 alone)*
- *Care and support for 1,270,567 orphans, vulnerable children, and their caregivers (n.p.).*

With this information and the testimonies from NGOs, it is hard to deny that PEPFAR has been fruitful in achieving outcomes, but whether it has actually created lasting impacts is another story. PEPFAR will eventually be transitioned out of South Africa, so has it enabled structures in South Africa to be able to control the epidemic without its support? Informant 5 (2019) comments, “now the question is will that be sustainable? Because when the funding is withdrawn, then what will happen? I'm not too sure whether then the government will be ready to continue with that particular service [mobile clinics funded by PEPFAR].” Conversely, Informant 4 (2019) stated:

*If you look at HIV and AIDS funding as a proportion of the global health donor funding, I think it has received a disproportionate share, and I think globally it's appropriate that that should be re-balanced...I think South Africa has the financial capacity to carry more of the burden of providing for the health of its citizens than some other countries...So I think it's appropriate that HIV get a lower share of the global health budget, and that South Africa get a lower share of the HIV budget.*

HIV has morphed over the past decades from a disease of which little was understood to a chronic illness that is manageable with the appropriate treatment. Along with this, the South African government has moved away from an era of AIDS denialism to running the largest ARV program. Continuing with this trend, Informant 3 (2019) mentions that:

*PEPFAR funding started, as you can tell by its name, as an emergency fund...now the support is focusing on epidemic control, so if South Africa reaches its goal for epidemic control, then we may not need PEPFAR funding as much as you need it now-you may need it to sustain epidemic control, but you may not need trillions of dollars.*

Participants described the ideal transition as such:

*If the move is planned, you know, maybe in the next five years or so, we'd get into crisis mode, but it wouldn't be as bad as if, you know, the US were to pull out now (Informant 3, 2019).*

*If there could be a smooth transition as, for instance, if there's a reduction on the funding, then, on the other side, the government should be able to provide the budget so that you don't stop the service which was accessible those people (Informant 5, 2019).*

If PEPFAR were to pull out now:

*We can enter into a state of crisis because we rely so much on PEPFAR resources... Our facilities may collapse, our respondent facilities may collapse, but also we would lose thousands of jobs because PEPFAR employs thousands of people from the most senior to the lay providers (Informant 3, 2019).*

Furthermore, participants mentioned that PEPFAR support has equipped their organizations with a set of skills that can be continued when funding is gone.

*PEPFAR funding has allowed us to develop expertise in innovation in [HIV testing and initiation to ART], so we are able to do it more efficiently and effectively... Even if we don't receive funding from PEPFAR anymore, at least there is an area that we can use (Informant 3, 2019).*

*Unlike when you don't have people at a lower level, but people from high, the moment that funding is finished, those people, they will go. It has got an advantage when you have got people at the lower-level because they can continue... to support their communities at a lower level (Informant 5, 2019).*

When Informant 5 mentioned having people at a lower level, I realized that I needed to think about the people on a lower-level in the United States, the people that financially support PEPFAR- the American public. A large part of PEPFAR is the role of Americans; the slogan of USAID is “from the American people,” but how much of a role have we played in this besides paying our taxes? Actually, we’ve played a large role without even knowing it-well, at least I did not consider it previously. Informant 4 (2019) stated:

*I mean, I don't know what part of your life in America is democratic apart from your politics, everything else seems to be autocratic. There's somewhere... somewhere we missed the message, you know, are we actually empowering people to make their own choices or are we telling them what to do? And I can see the efficiency of that but, you know, maybe a dictatorship is more efficient than a democracy, but is it the best thing for getting the most benefits for people?*

The decisions that the general American population makes daily can have global effects just as someone like Ambassador Birx as mentioned in the opening quote of this section; the decisions that we make create waves. Although the nature of globalization has allowed businesses to become more influential- thus decreasing the government's power and voters' authority over the government, they are reliant on us as consumers to keep them open. We must remember that "when we buy something we are not just voting for that product, but effectively endorsing how it has been produced and what that company does with our money- including the way they treat their staff, who they give political donations to and what they lobby government about" (Bolton, 2007, p. 311). I think that the US has made progress towards this in some strides- for instance, many people have protested companies that had sexual harassment complaints or support anti-LGBT groups. What we haven't progressed to yet is thinking about the effects on those not as easily seen and heard. We haven't thought about how our money is wasted as our developmental aid is only effective to an extent. We have the power to be agents of change on US policies and aid delivery. Let's be less of a dictatorship and increase the benefits for people- not only ourselves-by exercising our authority as consumers, but for those that are affected by our corporations and receive our foreign assistance.

### **Bringing the Pieces Together**

*While waiting at an organization for an interview, one of the staff members stopped by to ask me to donate any unneeded clothing that I have because she donates clothing to those with HIV that her organization supports. The goal is to make those now living with HIV feel beautiful and show them that there will be a good tomorrow; their lives are not ending or over now; there are reasons to live on.*

*A gift*

*A simple gift*

*Can go a long way*

*Nothing grand*

*Anything really at all*

*Can bring peace to many*

*Can inspire a better tomorrow*

(Asher, personal journal, 24 April 2019).

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When I wrote about this experience and composed those short lines of poetry, everything that I was feeling when I described why this project was important to me came back in full-circle. The beginning of this report also began with a poem about gift-giving. I questioned the intentions behind gifts and whether aid can be deemed a gift. I also questioned how people draw connections to each other. When I reflect on how someone with HIV who receives donated clothing would feel, I think it would be pretty similar to how I felt when I was gifted my pillow, which was cared for and hopeful that everything would work itself out. The recipients are likely black South Africans living with HIV, so we do not share any similarities in that regard; however, the act of receiving an item in a time where comfort and reassurance is needed has allowed me to understand how they may feel, and that is beautiful. I need to remind myself more often to draw on these feelings to be able to empathize and bring myself down to the level of others. I have been thanked time and time again during my time in South Africa for the generosity of my country. Previously, I brushed it off because I thought so negatively of

America; yet, it truly does mean so much to the individuals that are able to receive services and support from the funding of American taxpayers. Our money enables governments and organizations funded by PEPFAR to show that people do care, and that HIV is not the end.

Considering how impactful this funding is for the lives of its beneficiaries, it's the responsibility of the United States taxpayers, the United States government, the South African government, and South African NGOs to ensure that it is delivered to its maximum potential. For starters, the majority of Americans want foreign assistance to go to the countries that need it most, but much of it is spent on countries of strategic interest to the US, which is one of the flaws of aid that Bolton (2007) described. The US should increase the percentage of its GNI that goes towards foreign assistance to reach at least the 0.7% of our GNI set by the UN in the coming years; additionally, this money must go to those that need it most. The US has the capacity to continue providing large amounts to nations important to trade and security, while also providing bigger amounts to impoverished nations. Instead of the aid budget changing year-to-year, it should progressively grow until it reaches at least the 0.7% target.

Regarding the structure of PEPFAR, a large portion of the funding does not reach the beneficiaries because it is spent on experts in Washington D.C. who are designing programs or on the professionals with more experience than necessary that NGOs must have in order to meet PEPFAR's eligibility criteria. Another drawback of funding being spent on expatriates is that oftentimes the programs they design are not appropriate when they reach the local level. Projects may take time to take-off or may not take-off as planned as evidenced by the example of DREAMS that Informant 4 (2019) provided. PEPFAR has a list of evidence-based programs based on global expertise, but this knowledge base is not comprehensive of the expertise of those on the ground.

Another cost that draws funding from reaching the beneficiaries is that of compliance. USAID audits are expensive and preparing for USAID meetings takes time away from furthering programs. However, compliance is necessary and helpful to organizations with smaller capacities, and the benefit of giving funding to these NGOs is that they have stronger ties to the communities they serve and can reach people that would not be reached without PEPFAR funding. A suggestion was to have fewer checks on compliance for established NGOs that have proven their abilities. Additionally, the criteria for staff experience required to apply for funding

should be more reasonable. However, at least PEPFAR funding has been comprehensive and supports costs such as staff salaries and overhead expenses, so that NGOs do not have to cover these costs themselves.

Informants did state that they are seen as the local experts by PEPFAR, but there is not much consensus on how much flexibility NGOs have. Some informants have found flexibility within their grants and others not so much. The degree of flexibility appears to be in applying for funding because NGOs propose their intended use of the funds, but if changes need to be made once the grant is approved, there is not much room to maneuver. Furthermore, PEPFAR has only a certain type of interventions that they will fund, so there is not much variety in the project types funded; this is supported by Ghanotakis, Mayhew and Watts (2009) whose research showed that PEPFAR programs were American-dominated. This also falls under one of Bolton's (2007) criticisms of national aid- that it is spent on projects and not given directly to supporting governmental systems; the result is that there are hundreds of projects running without coordination. This brings back the point that there is no coordination on the international level between international institutions and foreign governments all providing support to numerous projects in the same nation. More can be done on the international level to organize developmental aid such that governments can focus more on their time on their citizens and not pleasing donors. However, PEPFAR has done some work in this area; their website mentions that they partner with multilateral institutions, particularly WHO and UNAIDS, with intentions to continue expanding these partnerships (PEPFAR, n.d.).

Because the nature of HIV has changed to a chronic disease and because South Africa has one of the largest GNIs in Africa, I agree with Informant 4 that the American government's decision to transition PEPFAR out of South Africa is a reasonable one, if it is done well. What PEPFAR drops, the South African government should be able to pick up, which Kavanagh (2014) reiterates in saying that the PEPFAR should not move out of South Africa until their ability of sustained service delivery and epidemic control is ensured. South Africa is not ready for PEPFAR to remove its funding now because informants described the crisis that would occur, but they did respond that communication regarding PEPFAR's future has been good, which is a positive. Still, Kavanagh (2014) mentioned the increased waits, unprepared staff, and low supply of ARVs when HIV treatment shifted fully to the government sector.

A concern is the sustainability of projects after the transition. PEPFAR- South Africa's (n.d.) Community Grants application mentions that once their grants are finished, that NGOs are expected to sustain their programming, but whether PEPFAR provides organizations with the ability to do so is another matter. Participants described the development of expertise in new skill sets that can be continued after PEPFAR is gone, but organizations are reliant on PEPFAR funding to run programming, so they may not be able to without PEPFAR. However, a note to consider is that depending on when PEPFAR leaves South Africa, the need for HIV/AIDS prevention programs may not be as large, so there may no longer be a need for these NGOs' existence.

As for us, I think that we should consider the effects that US policies- such as the Prostitution Pledge and the Global Gag Rule- have on programs for key populations affected by HIV such as young women and sex workers. For organizations such as those that provided family planning or abortion services, PEPFAR should continue to sustain those NGOs for the duration of their initial agreement. We have a degree of control in changing policies such as these to make aid reach more people. We also have a degree of control in pressuring businesses and our government to alter the role they play in perpetuating the system of developmental aid and globalization.

*Thinking back to my initial topic, I set out to explore what the ideal relationship between US aid agencies and South African NGOs would be, using PEPFAR as a lens through which to focus. However, now I am finding it difficult to criticize this relationship as agency officials are dealing with the changing policies dealt to them by the American government. I'm realizing PEPFAR functions in conjunction with so many other donors-all asking for similar requirements and providing similar services. Now I question, what should the relationship be between all Western governments? Further, the American people must be more aware of how we are contributing to issues and diseases of poverty in South Africa, and Africa more generally (Asher, personal journal, 15 April 2019).*

### Now What?

*Let your politicians know you are watching every step they take. They made promises- now they must make them good (Nelson Mandela).*

In a world of globalization and capitalism, I felt like my voice does not carry much weight, but it carries more weight than those in Africa. Their governments do not have much power in decisions made by institutions like the World Bank. The beneficiaries of aid programs such as PEPFAR are not provided a platform on which to speak. We have more power than we think we do; corporations need us to buy their products and government officials want us to elect them into office. If we choose to hold them accountable and take a moment to empathize with the situations of others, then we can make a true impact in the lives of others. It's easy to forget about people across the ocean until we see a charity campaign or look at the news, but these moments are fleeting- as quickly as they come, we forget about them. Use them as an opportunity to remember and reflect on this report and seek out further education:

*This morning I sat in Culinary Infusion with my vegan wrap and Earl Grey tea to read over this report a final time before submitting it. My roommate, Charlotte, entered with a bag that she has just purchased from Woolworth's- a portion of its purchase goes to support the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Caring4Girls initiative to provide school girls with sanitary pads, which keeps them in school. I have been shocked time and time again throughout this process by how often things come back around full-circle. Yesterday, I wrote about how we often forget to think of others until we see a reminder to. Today, Charlotte's bag is my reminder. Before this report, I would have purchased the bag for the dual-purpose of having a nice souvenir from my time here and as a re-usable shopping bag. In the moment, I would have felt good about the proceeds going to help school girls, but I would never have thought about the school girls again and that money went to help them. However, I will now purchase this bag to be my reminder of what I learned in this report; a reminder of my story, the stories of others, and the empathy I can have for others. I will think about what my purchases are helping support. I hope that when Charlotte uses this bag in the future, she too can consider what she felt when reading this paper and think of the school girls somewhere in South Africa that received sanitary pads, partly due to her donation. (Asher, personal journal, 30 April 2019).*

Overwhelmingly, American citizens have the best intentions on our government's involvement in foreign assistance, but the intentions of the government itself are more focused

on maintaining strategic relations with certain nations rather than supporting those who need it most. I am leaving this research feeling prouder of and more connected to the general American population; I hope that our well-intentions never run dry, but we should challenge ourselves to be more aware of the impact that we have and the impact that we can make. Our government will not dedicate more of its GNI to developmental aid or donate a higher percentage of its developmental aid to the nations that need it most, unless we hold it accountable. Corporations that lobby our government for deals that benefit them are reliant on us as consumers. We should question how they use the money from our purchasing and remember that they are reliant on us to stay in business, so we have the power to cause them to change their ways, or else they lose us as customers.

PEPFAR is not all negative; there are great qualities, and I'd like to think that those who work for PEPFAR and USAID are aware of the downfalls that the current developmental aid structure has on PEPFAR's outcomes. Overall, I think that they have done their best to make achievements in HIV/AIDS in South Africa and other nations with the flawed hand dealt to them. There have been true outcomes and people who have been able to receive tokens of care from our aid. *From the American People...*this is the slogan of USAID, and one that we should be more aware of. Where is our money going? Who is it going to? What is it achieving? What can be improved?

If nothing else, I am proud of this project because of the human connection I was able to make through the work that PEPFAR has done. While I sit here in South Africa writing this paper, there are people in this country finding out that they are infected with HIV, but there are also NGOs and government facilities funded by PEPFAR that are doing their best to provide them with the support and services needed to give them a better tomorrow. Our money can provide this gift, but we just need to make sure that it can reach more people and that it is sustainable.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

When discussing relationships, it's important to discuss them from all of their angles for a clearer picture. After completing this project, I realized just how complex developmental aid is as well as how little it is talked about. PEPFAR functions in conjunction with other US foreign assistance as well as with aid given by other nations' governments and international institutions. In addition to gaining insight from US aid officials in South Africa to have information regarding on the other side of my studied relationship, the following relationships should be explored:

- The relationship between South African NGOs and the South African government
- The relationship between the US government and the South African government
- The relationship between all foreign governments providing developmental aid
- The relationship between South Africa and international institutions
- The relationship between the US and international institutions
- The relationship between aid's intended beneficiaries and aid recipients
- The relationship between the American people and the US government

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**Appendix 1: Semi-Structured Interview Guide****I. Introduction**

- a. Greetings
- b. Purpose of the study
  - i. The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of NGOs relating to what their ideal partnership with US governmental aid agencies would be, particularly centered around PEPFAR funding. This interview will include questions about the nature of current partnerships, outcomes of US involvement in PEPFAR-funded projects, and the responsibilities of the US in international health.
  - ii. Explain why this topic interests me
- c. Informed Consent
  - i. Can end the interview at any-point, can skip over any questions, or choose not to have a portion of the interview included in the report
  - ii. Can withdraw permission to use interview in the final report before its completed on 30 April 2019- if so, contact me at my email address
  - iii. Permission to record the interview
- d. Ensure confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy of their information

**II. Interview Questions**

1. How long have you been at your organization?
2. How would you describe your organization's mission?
3. What is the nature of its funding from PEPFAR?
  - a. What types of programming does it support?
  - b. Are you a direct recipient?
  - c. What percentage of your total funding does it encompass?
4. How does funding from PEPFAR influence the delivery of this mission?
5. Please describe your experiences with applying for funding.
  - a. How did you learn about opportunities?
  - b. What did the process entail?
6. What are the positives of receiving PEPFAR funding?
7. What limitations does PEPFAR funding have on your ability to implement your desired programming?

8. How much control over programming does PEPFAR have?
  - a. Should it be less or more?
9. Describe what your ideal relationship with US governmental agencies would look like.
10. How do you think your current partnership can progress towards the relationship you described?
11. Please describe your thoughts on the American government's decision to decrease PEPFAR funding in South Africa.
12. After PEPFAR is transitioned out of South Africa, what do you think your relationship with the US aid agencies will be?
  - a. Do you think it should be that way?
13. What is the responsibility of the United States in providing developmental aid?

### **III. Closing**

- a. Is there anything else that you would like to add?
- b. Are there any other organizations or individuals that you recommend I contact?
- c. Would you like a copy of the final report?

## Appendix 2: Consent Form



### CONSENT FORM

#### 1. Brief description of the purpose of this project

The purpose of this project is to explore the perceptions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) regarding what their ideal partnership with United States governmental aid agencies would look like, particularly concerning the transition away from PEPFAR funding for HIV/AIDS programs. To accomplish this, I will explore the perceived power of NGOs, outcomes of US involvement in PEPFAR-funded projects, and the nature of current and previous partnerships.

#### 2. Rights Notice

In an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT ISP proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by a Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If at any time, you feel that you are at risk or exposed to unreasonable harm, you may terminate and stop the interview. Please take some time to carefully read the statements provided below.

- a. **Privacy** - all information you present in this interview may be recorded and safeguarded. If you do not want the information recorded, you need to let the interviewer know.
- b. **Anonymity** - all names in this study will be kept anonymous unless you choose otherwise.
- c. **Confidentiality** - all names will remain completely confidential and fully protected by the interviewer. By signing below, you give the interviewer full responsibility to uphold this contract and its contents. The interviewer will also sign a copy of this contract and give it to you.

I understand that I will receive **no gift** or direct benefit for participating in the study.

I confirm that the learner has given me the address of the nearest School for International Training Study Abroad Office should I wish to go there for information. (404 Cowey Park, Cowey Rd, Durban).

I know that if I have any questions or complaints about this study that I can contact anonymously, if I wish, the Director/s of the SIT South Africa Community Health Program (Zed McGladdery 0846834982 )

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Participant's name printed

Antonia Asher

---

Your signature and date

---

Interviewer's name printed

---

Interviewer's signature and date

I can read English. If the participant cannot read, the onus is on the project author to ensure that the quality of consent is nonetheless without reproach.

### **Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Forms**

(Adapted from the American Anthropological Association)

This document must be read, signed, and submitted to the AD prior to ethics review meeting.

In the course of field study, complex relationships, misunderstandings, conflicts, and the need to make choices among apparently incompatible values are constantly generated. The fundamental responsibility of students is to anticipate such difficulties to the best of their ability and to resolve them in ways that are compatible with the principles stated here. If a student feels such resolution is impossible, or is unsure how to proceed, s/he should consult as immediately as possible with the Project Advisor and/or AD and discontinue the field study until some resolution has been achieved. Failure to consult in cases which, in the opinion of the AD and Project Advisor, could clearly have been anticipated, can result in disciplinary action as delineated in the “failure to comply” section of this document. Students must respect, protect, and promote the rights and the welfare of all those affected by their work. The following general principles and guidelines are fundamental to ethical field study:

#### **I. Responsibility to people whose lives and cultures are studied**

Students' first responsibility is to those whose lives and cultures they study. Should conflicts of interest arise, the interests of these people take precedence over other considerations, including the success of the Independent Study Project (ISP) itself, for if the ISP has negative repercussions for any members of the target culture, the project can hardly be called a success. Students must do everything in their power to protect the dignity and privacy of the people with whom they conduct field study.

The rights, interests, safety, and sensitivities of those who entrust information to students must be safeguarded. The right of those providing information to students either to remain anonymous or to receive recognition is to be respected and defended. It is the responsibility of students to make every effort to determine the preferences of those providing information and to comply with their wishes. It should be made clear to anyone providing information that despite the students' best intentions and efforts anonymity may be compromised or recognition fail to materialize.

Students should not reveal the identity of groups or persons whose anonymity is protected through the use of pseudonyms.

Students must be candid from the outset in the communities where they work that they are students. The aims of their Independent Study Projects should be clearly communicated to those among whom they work.

Students must acknowledge the help and services they receive. They must recognize their obligation to reciprocate in appropriate ways.

To the best of their ability, students have an obligation to assess both the positive and negative consequences of their field study. They should inform individuals and groups likely to be affected of any possible consequences relevant to them that they anticipate.

Students must take into account and, where relevant and to the best of their ability, make explicit the extent to which their own personal and cultural values affect their field study.

Students must not represent as their own work, either in speaking or writing, materials or ideas directly taken from other sources. They must give full credit in speaking or writing to all those who have contributed to their work.

## **II. Responsibilities to Hosts**

Students should be honest and candid in all dealings with their own institutions and with host institutions. They should ascertain that they will not be required to compromise either their responsibilities or ethics as a condition of permission to engage in field study. They will return a copy of their study to the institution sponsoring them and to the community that hosted them at the discretion of the institution(s) and/or community involved.

## **III. Failure to comply**

When the AD(s) feel that the student has violated this statement of ethics, the student will be placed on probation.

In the case of egregious violations, students can be subject to immediate dismissal under the conditions of the SIT STUDY ABROAD dismissal guidelines.

I, Antonia Asher, have read the above Statement of Ethics and agree to make every effort to comply with its provisions.

Date: 25 March 2019

### Appendix 4: Local Review Board Approval



#### Human Subjects Review LRB/IRB ACTION FORM

<p>Name of Student: <i>Antonia Asher</i></p> <p>ISP/Internship Title: <i>Whose Got the Power?: An autoethnographic exploration of South African NGOs' relationships with PEPFAR</i></p> <p>Date Submitted: <i>25 March 2019</i></p> <p>Program: <i>Community Health and Social Policy</i></p> <p>Type of review:</p> <p>Exempt <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Expedited <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Full <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Institution: World Learning Inc. IRB organization number: IORG0004408 IRB registration number: IRB00005219 Expires: 5 January 2021</p> <p>LRB members (print names):  <i>John McGladdery</i>  <i>Clive Bryant</i>  <i>Robert Finkart</i> </p> <p>LRB REVIEW BOARD ACTION:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved as submitted  <input type="checkbox"/> Approved pending changes  <input type="checkbox"/> Requires full IRB review in Vermont  <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved</p> <p>LRB Chair Signature: <i>Anita</i></p> <p>Date: 25 March 2019</p>
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**Form below for IRB Vermont use only:**

**Research requiring full IRB review. ACTION TAKEN:**

   approved as submitted    approved pending submission or revisions    disapproved   

*sit form resubmitted.*

**Appendix 5: Consent to Use of Independent Study Project (ISP)****Access, Use, and Publication of ISP/FSP**

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Student Name: Antonia Asher

Email Address: antoniaeasher@gmail.com

Title of ISP/FSP: From the American People: An autoethnographic exploration of South African NGOs' perceptions of PEPFAR

Program and Term/Year: Spring 2019

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Student research (Independent Study Project, Field Study Project) is a product of field work and as such students have an obligation to assess both the positive and negative consequences of their field study. Ethical field work, as stipulated in the SIT Policy on Ethics, results in products that are shared with local and academic communities; therefore copies of ISP/FSPs are returned to the sponsoring institutions and the host communities, at the discretion of the institution(s) and/or community involved.

By signing this form, I certify my understanding that:

1. I retain ALL ownership rights of my ISP/FSP project and that I retain the right to use all, or part, of my project in future works.
2. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad may publish the ISP/FSP in the SIT Digital Collections, housed on World Learning's public website.
3. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad may archive, copy, or convert the ISP/FSP for non-commercial use, for preservation purposes, and to ensure future accessibility.
  - World Learning/SIT Study Abroad archives my ISP/FSP in the permanent collection at the SIT Study Abroad local country program office and/or at any World Learning office.
  - In some cases, partner institutions, organizations, or libraries in the host country house a copy of the ISP/FSP in their own national, regional, or local collections for enrichment and use of host country nationals.
4. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad has a non-exclusive, perpetual right to store and make available, including electronic online open access, to the ISP/FSP.
5. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad websites and SIT Digital Collections are publicly available via the Internet.
6. World Learning/SIT Study Abroad is not responsible for any unauthorized use of the ISP/FSP by any third party who might access it on the Internet or otherwise.
7. I have sought copyright permission for previously copyrighted content that is included in this ISP/FSP allowing distribution as specified above.

*Antonia E. Fisher*

Student Signature

30 April 2019

Date

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**Withdrawal of Access, Use, and Publication of ISP/FSP**

Given your agreement to abide by the SIT Policy on Ethics, withdrawing permission for publication may constitute an infringement; the Academic Director will review to ensure ethical compliance.

I hereby withdraw permission for World Learning/SIT Study Abroad to include my ISP/FSP in the Program's office permanent collection.      Reason:

I hereby withdraw permission for World Learning/SIT Study Abroad to release my ISP/FSP in any format to individuals, organizations, or libraries in the host country for educational purposes as determined by World Learning/SIT Study Abroad.      Reason:

I hereby withdraw permission for World Learning/SIT Study Abroad to publish my ISP/FSP on its websites and in any of its digital/electronic collections, or to reproduce and transmit my ISP/FSP electronically.      Reason:

*Antonia E. Fisher*

Student Signature

30 April 2019

Date

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Academic Director has reviewed student reason(s) for withdrawing permission to use and agrees it does not violate the SIT Study Abroad Policy on Ethics.