Development in Our Own Words

A Survey of Development Perspectives between Cameroonians and Americans in Yaoundé, Cameroon

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Abstract

It is said that development addresses the quality and progression of life; that a country be self-sustainable in accessing its resources, educating its children, curing its sick, and guaranteeing its citizens contribution to a sufficient political and social environment. If the term is so, how do we justify development on a world scale? Do development projects that begin in the West have the same capacity for efficiency in the Third World? How does development aid make certain that those who are in need receive what they are promised?

This paper is a field-based case study that analyzes in first the progression of the term development starting with early economic theories, moving into discussions of modern western and alternative theories, in second, the ideas of employees of the development field in Cameroon of both American and Cameroonian decent. In using both historical and modern perspectives of the subject, this discussion on development seeks to define effectively the overall term of development as it applies to different people working in different levels of society, and assess why projects of Western foreign aid often fail at bringing overall development to the Third World.

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An Introduction to Development

In 1949, President Harry Truman of the United States of America addressed the country after a devastating Second World War:

“We must embark on a bold new program for marking the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas…For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people. The United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques. The material resources which we can afford to use for the assistance of other peoples are limited. But our imponderable resources in technical knowledge are constantly growing and are inexhaustible. I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.”

(Truman Inaugural Address, Washington, DC 20 January, 1949, Refer to Appendix A)

Following the War’s destruction of the European colonial powers, the United States began a mission to free those living in less fortunate areas of the world; a duty bequeathed by their founding fathers before them: “a call to every nation to follow in their footsteps” (Sachs 1). It was the first time anyone in the world had used a term such as underdeveloped to refer to separate regions. With its use, an era of intervention by the West of the Third World commenced, where the United States was at the top of an industrialized “social evolutionary scale” and the Third World was falling behind (Sachs 2). [The term Third World in this paper refers to the area of the world which receives the greatest amount of foreign aid from the West. I have chosen to use this expression throughout as I have found it to be a general term used by theorists and academics in the field. Other terms used to describe this region are “developing nations” and the “South.”]

Today, our world is seemingly split between an economically and socially sufficient West and an impoverished and invariably corrupt Third World. The aim of development from the West is to increase the monetary wealth of poorer countries following Truman’s dream. Yet years have gone by since Truman’s address and the Third World remains behind in economic sustainability. Is the West looking at development all wrong? How do citizens feel about foreign aid in the Third World? Where does Western donor money go? Although decades of theorists have taken a stab at the term development and what it means on a world scale, the fact remains that development is different in all regions. What exists today is a conglomeration of heavily economic, typically Western ideas of development following Truman’s initial analysis, and alternative forms of looking into individual human amelioration as an overwhelmingly Third World perspective. Outside of theories, those
working and living in the development field today have their own very separate visions for what development entails, which provides still a different element to the subject.

This paper analyzes development and its many interpretations, hypothesizing that purely economically driven development projects are not successful in Cameroon. I have spent the past few weeks interviewing subjects, both American and Cameroonian who work at the World Bank, the United States Embassy in Cameroon, the United Nations Development Program, CARE, the Peace Corps, and the University of Yaoundé. All have done substantial work on development at the organizational and field level, and have provided evaluations of the subject on both a personal and organizational bias. With their opinions, I cannot answer in theory the question of good development or bad, but I can look into how trends of past development projects have worked based on implementation and follow-up. The topic of development itself is exhaustive. Theorists past and present have considered the subject and tried to prove how it can and cannot change our world for the better. Still wealthy nations send hefty foreign aid packages to the Third World; still there are those who are unaware and uneducated of the process and its means for improvement. Humanity must come to a medium of understanding where the West and the Third World work together so that development does not go overlooked, and more of us learn to understand its journey.

**Methodology of Research**

I chose to work on the topic of development after reading divergent articles by authors such as Wolfgang Sachs who saw development as a process where the West was heavily neo-colonialist in its misunderstandings of helping those in the Third World. Development appeared to me as a word I had always thought of and yet never fully understood. I recall a lecture on development by David Tiomajou, Peace Corps Cameroon’s Training Manager, where he asked the SIT Study Abroad class to define development in their own words. Most came up with long winded definitions, yet compiled together, they were of the same understanding and shared one common relation; being from America. David’s definition of development was simple, had to do with providing education, health, and equal rights for all, but started with the individual of which the students had all forgotten to mention. At this moment I realized that even though people have different definitions of development, they generally come from a similar understanding for those who are of a common birth region. I then started to read more about Western theories of development and sought to ask local Cameroonians how they viewed the subject. Between informal interviews and general conversations, many expressed that they wanted improvement in the many areas of development, but they were frustrated and exhausted by being helped and
having no success to account for it. I learned by talking to people, that development comes in many shapes and forms. It does not just have to do with economics or social programs, but it has to do with cooperation and successful implementation. Especially in Cameroon, where there are over 250 different cultures living 250 separate lives based on 250 different needs and traditions, one overarching development perspective or project cannot work effectively for everyone. Furthermore, it is common knowledge that in Cameroon overall development is hindered by corruption. Because of this, Cameroonians are forced to worry about other problems that must be addressed before development is even possible.

My official research began by giving questionnaires (Refer to Appendix D and E) to subjects who had offered to participate in the study. They were asked to define development in their own words, by their organization’s standards, and for how they believed those in the West would define development compared to those in the Third World. After the questionnaires were finished, I sat down with each person to discuss their answers and the historical relevance on the topic of development as a whole (Refer to Appendix F for formal interview questions). After gathering all the information from my interviews, I organized people based on their ideas of the process of development. This was where I realized that my hypothesis had been overturned, as I was grouping Cameroonians and Americans in the same pools of thought when I thought they’d be separate. It is interesting to note however that many subjects working in the same organizations had similar opinions. One subject pointed out to me that in certain instances after many years of working for an organization, one’s views and the objectives of his or her program become inseparable.

The biggest constraint faced during the execution of this study was time. It was difficult to spend essentially three and half weeks researching a subject that many spend their lives contemplating. Also, it would have been beneficial for the research to have included more people from different facets of society. Due to time and resource constraints, the focus was mainly on those working for large scale international development organizations. The study took place in the capital Yaoundé, as there are more Americans as well as Cameroonians available who work for large-scale development organizations. There are many different approaches that could have been valuable, for example, interviewing more Cameroonians at the local level and how they perceive development would have given a more general view of those who are both educated and uneducated in the field. The missionary community is a primary development actor, as are local NGOs and Ministries. Also, this study could be valuable in places other than Yaoundé. If I had chosen to stay in the North or the West, the opinions of people would also have been different. I am content with the research I did complete, as I believe looking at key global organizations is imperative in understanding the foundations for
where aid comes from, how it is used, and whether or not it is effective. This paper does not represent a complete analysis of development as this would be nearly impossible, but it addresses a broader idea that should be more noticed and more generally understood.

Initially, my hypothesis was that Western economic development perspectives fail to accomplish sustainable development in the Third World because ideas of development are very different between those from the West and those from the Third World. I realized progressively throughout my research, that it isn’t all about popular opinion. Rather, every individual has an idea what development is, and this is affected by certain things that are beyond one’s control. For instance, comparing the Third World and the West on culture and ideals alone is very difficult. Then looking at the differences in realities of governance, political rights, and basic infrastructure between the two is another challenge. Opinions are shaped based on education, experience, and general work environment. Those who focus their lives working on development projects may have different points of view than those who have never left the rural areas of Cameroon. I now realize that even though we can classify theories based on more typically Western or Third World beliefs, that labelling ideas as such is somewhat problematic. One needs to get to the root of why problems in development occur, and how and what can change to ensure that it will be more successful in the years to come. It is not all just about the West or the Third World as separate partners, but the global community as one team fighting for a common goal.

I hope that in reading this paper, one will commence if not continue to think about development and how it can be effective throughout the world. It is a part of everyone’s life everywhere they stand and live at each part of every day. Learning and asking about the subject of development enables for increased global awareness between peoples, a crucial factor in helping to change the world for the better.

Origins of Development: The Early Thinkers

Where does one begin in the discussion of development? It could be argued that development began with the civilization of the Egyptians who transformed menial life activities into technological skills. We could talk about medieval times when the construction of religious development was used as part of a need to secure a peaceful living. There was mercantilism, a political policy drafted throughout much of the later centuries of the last millennium, aiming at “increasing national power, symbolized by the political might of the state” (Peet 20) and a wave of economic theories beginning with Adam Smith and his *Wealth of Nations* [published in 1776] who asked questions such as what causes wealth in the lower and higher sects of society and how does happiness fluctuate with material gain? Yet how was development in the modern sense composed and who contributed to
its creation? Early Western thinkers of development provided a backbone in theory to how we look at the process today. It is from their ideas that modern development theorists have continued to analyze the term.

Paul Narcyz Rosenstein-Rodan, an Austrian economist for the World Bank in the early 1940s, coined the phrase “economically backward areas” with his marginal economic theory of explaining hierarchy of want between peoples in underdeveloped economies and the West (Rodan Wikipedia 1). Arthur Lewis, British Nobel Prize winner, addressed “the gap between the rich and the poor” explaining why in developing nations wages of workers were low while capital rents remained high (Sachs 7). In 1944, development as a policy began at The Bretton Woods Conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. The world at this time saw a great need for aid between nations as the First World War had reigned terror some years before and the Second World War was in its wake of devastation. It was here that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) were born, organizations based on financial recovery as means to solving “underdeveloped country’s” crises. For the United States, some argue that when Truman made his famous inaugural address in 1949, that it devised its method of development; one where the country took on the duty of offering a move from the traditional to a modern way of life, using aid money and foreign programs to boost technology, health, education, and the economy of less fortunate countries. For President Truman, Europe’s destruction after World War II was completely overturned by economic initiatives from the United States. He felt that if the same notion of economic recovery were applied to those in the poorer parts of the world, namely the Third World, that similar projects of development would also succeed in growing to match the evolutionary industrialization of the West.

Adam Smith, the father of economic theory in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, sought to solve the question of development economics based on the philosophy of human nature. In his first book, \textit{Theory of Moral Sentiments}, Smith tried to understand the conflict between the pursuit of material gain and the personal morality of happiness, as he saw that there was validity to each as a solvent to development. Smith believed heavily in God, that natural laws of human nature were divine above anything. He found that people in nature were sympathetic to one another and that only through the achievements and goals of others could each man see himself clearly (Peet 24). When in 1776, Smith published the \textit{Wealth of Nations} he sought to turn this idea of moral humanity into a system of economics. Smith saw human selfishness as the drive for growth. Economic growth was dependent on monetary gain, so that those at the top of the society became an example for those at the bottom (Peet 25). Translating this onto the global scale, Smith saw the free market as a place where risks could be taken and wealth could be shared. Markets had the potential for creating “social efficiency” (Peet 26) and moral value
of world goods. A global market of labour and production would be able to establish natural prices for all peoples so that goods would be reduced down to terms of personal human gain and prosperity.

Of the same pool of economic theorists, William Godwin in the late 1700s examined the ways of which humans were susceptible to constant and inevitable improvement. He generated a sense of optimism of which human amelioration would improve with development on a natural evolutionary scale. Theorists after him such as Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), thought that human progress would be continuously disturbed by natural wants and desires of things that were out of reach to some in society (Peet 27). In the latter parts of the nineteenth century, Alfred Marshall, a professor at Cambridge University, sought a way to increase opportunities for both the rich and the poor, seeing that capitalism in total could raise the standard of living for ordinary people everywhere. British economist W.S. Jevons (1835-1882), explained how economics dealt only with the issue of quantity and not with quality which was needed to evaluate success on developmental levels. Father of the Keynesian Growth theory, John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), suggested that supply and demand based on consumers in the market had the power of fluctuating opportunities for all sorts of workers in all facets of society. The government was seen as the more important aspect of increasing development (rather than social sectors) because it had the greatest amount of national wealth. Using the example of the Great Depression in the United States, Keynes proved that the free market did little justice in maximizing the human quality of life (Peet 38).

In the late 1930s, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed that freedom from want everywhere should be one of the basic needs of man. In 1944, the international Bretton Woods Conference held in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire established the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as instruments to regulating the global economy and relieving those in the wake of development. After World War II, the United States under the Marshall Plan, [which introduced the “public gesture of giving” (Sachs 62)] aided Western Europe with $19 billion to finance its recovery from the war. And then there was President Truman’s Inaugural Address to the United States in 1949. He posed development as an obligation of the more fortunate to create a global stability whose model originated in the Western First World. Truman’s idea of development regarded the Third World as needy; as backward according to an inevitable standard of normality and progress that was natural for the evolution of the world (Sachs 66). Development should be seen as a word of promise; of hope for more food and clothing, more materials and technology, to enable prosperity and peace and “lighten the burden of the poor” (President Harry Truman Inaugural Address, 20 January 1949). Truman spoke of the need of
an economic base of support that would reach the people of each country creating an overall uplift to possibility and new developmental beginnings.

In the years that followed, President John F. Kennedy of the United States adhered to development of the less fortunate, but he viewed need as more than just purely economic. Kennedy understood that for social progress to take place, economic growth alongside political and technological intervention would lighten the world of poverty. Kennedy too referred to those in the Third World as people “liv[ing] in the bonds of misery” (Sachs 92); as those desperately lacking of political and social stability.

It was this point in time that some see as the beginning of a new colonialism waged by the West. In the early colonial era, Africa was undivided and untouched by the modes of developmental thinking of the overworked, fast paced models of the West. Africa as a continent was composed of tribes and cultural groups that each had their own way of initiating societal laws and technological advances. When the West came, it overturned traditional law and put different peoples ruling over one another through nation states in place. These nations became poor under the standards of the West. Those living in the Third World came to know development as what the West would provide for them, as what they were taught to become when invaders made them forget where they traditionally came from. Truman and Kennedy regarded the Third World as underdeveloped because it lacked typical necessities of culture that those in the West knew to love and understand. It is in this belief that they homogenized nations under one kind of people. “Development came to mean assuming the mental models of the West (rationalization), the institutions of the West (the market), the goals of the West (high mass consumption), and the culture of the West (worship of the commodity)” (Peet 86-87). It was here at this point that a new type of economic development theory was set upon the Third World. This was a process that would “embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of [the United States’] scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas” (President Harry Truman, Inaugural Address, 20 January, 1949).

**Modern Economic Theories of Development**

Truman and the early economic thinkers pre-exposed modern development ideas. Purely “Western” (I will label them as Western because they sit under the common belief of economic and monetary capitalist gain as solvents to development, factors commonly applied in the American economic and political system and in Western waged development organizations such as the World Bank and IMF) theories of development define the term as “a linear view of history in which the West is further along a given path of progress than the Third World
countries. [It is] the advocacy of values like freedom, justice, and equality as experienced and defined in the West” (Peet 154). Progress is based upon a complex of natural, economic, social, cultural and political conditions where the notion of improvement comes from a society being able to ‘trickle-down’ its resources from the wealthy to the poor. In capitalist societies and by monetary aid organizations such as the World Bank and IMF, development is measured by the size of a country’s economy or its Gross National Product (GNP) which measures “the total final output of goods and services produced by an economy” (Peet 4). The higher the annual growth of GNP per capita, the more rapidly a country is said to be able to develop. The United Nations Development Program’s Human Development Report of 1996 addresses “human development [as] the end—economic growth a means” (What is Development 2).

Capitalist economic theories view development as increasing the amount of goods people can buy. The more that can be produced and sold will eventually increase wealth and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the sum total of all goods and services produced within a country over a time, counted annually. To some critics, the goal is to maximise the GDP because it ensures that aid resources go into producing what will increase sales to the people with money, not to what will most satisfy urgent needs of the population. It puts priority into things that will result in the most sales and gives more freedom to those who steer production. For the general public in the West, development is understood as investing in capital; hence people who do so are attracted by their governments and financed. It also emphasizes participation in the free market, which Adam Smith suggested in his first theories. This aspect of development postulates that things must be sold on the market to determine valuable prices. All items if turned into commodities on the market will increase influence on a global scale. “[The United States] want[s] a system that enables [it] to get most of the available wealth. Having market forces determine who gets it, not only ensures the rich get the wealth, but it legitimises the process—it makes it seem OK because everyone is free to bid in the market” (Trainer 3). Capitalist development also focuses on trade and globalisation as a means for increasing wealth of nations. The goal of this is to become like the rich nations who have high living standards and modern ways.

Modernisation Theory, another economic theory, argues that infrastructural changes such as building highways and improving buildings create an efficient apparatus for evaluating social change (Joshi 1). Modernisation Theory came about in the years directly after the Second World War when the United States aided Europe with the Marshall Plan. The theory focused on the deficiencies in countries between the poor and the rich and sought a capitalistic, technological approach to ending this demise. Because the Third World did not experience a similar advance in modernisation that flourished in the West, the task of the Third World under
Modernisation Theory was to “transform itself from tradition to modernity” (Joshi 2). Traditional societies believed that kinship relations rather than individual achievements were the basis for distributing economic goods. An underdeveloped society is hence one that lacks a strong division of labour (Peet 78). Societies in the traditional world were authoritarian in personality and unable to collectively move towards new technological advances unless the leaders viewed technological improvements as roads to their success (Peet 80). The “primitive” societies with time were expected to model that of North America and Europe.

The Rostow Theory of development, paralleling Modernisation Theory, was designed by Walter Whitman Rostow, author of “The Stages of Economic Growth.” His theory addressed modernisation on a progressional basis, where societies went through natural stages of evolutionary development. The First stage, the Traditional Society, describes a stationary society based on traditional agricultural means of development. In the second stage, The Preconditions for Take-Off, an environment for investment is improving, and outside buyers are beginning to participate in the market (Mallick 6). The third stage, Take Off, can last for decades where a society is sustainable in its economy, is maintaining a healthy source of investors, and requires no outside support. The fourth stage, the Drive to Maturity, describes a society that is driven heavily by economic and technological enhancement. The fifth and final stage, the age of High Mass Consumption, describes a society where every single citizen lives in a state of contentment and has available choice and a multiplicity of sufficient resources at all times (Mallick 7). Rostow’s theory assumed that a move from a traditional to a modern way of life would be the solution to development issues. As most Western societies sit in the third and fourth stages (you can argue fifth stage although I do not believe this exists in our world as of yet), modernisation theory assumes that to be more developed, you must move away from what is traditional. It also enhances the ‘trickle down approach’ in which money from investors, moves throughout facets of society and eventually reaches people at all levels and incomes (Mallick 8).

Many economic theories of development like Rostow’s Modernisation theory use the West as the vision for what the rest of the world should strive to become. They fail to evaluate regionalism, tribalism, and the individual, and see monetary wealth as a solution to ending poverty (the goal of the World Bank and United Nations Development Program in their Millennium Goals, Refer to Appendix B). The West is seen to understand development on a Western standard where it understands need based on what it knows as need. It then implements similar strategies in countries that are lacking in basic functions, and that operate on a completely different set of customs. This is what happened when Truman defined “underdeveloped” nations. He suggested there be a move from a traditional, less fortunate way of life that ignored fast paced growth of technological
advance and monetary market gain, to a society that honoured these things as defining overall life (Hawi 4). Also in defining poverty by GDP alone, Western economic theories put top priority on what will result in the most sales. Those who have more purchasing freedom benefit from production, and demand gain on the market. In Third World countries, goods are scarce and countries have usually one or two good commodities at best in the market. They lack the purchasing power to buy their own goods. Those who have the wealth and power already, namely the West, take at the expense of the Third World because they have the means to buy foreign products. Modernisation Theory in particular assumes that as Third World countries prepare to develop, they need assistance such as funds, technology, and new markets to keep them going. What it fails to recognize is if the society fails to develop in the projected model of the West, there is no education or assistance to teach the public how to develop in the projected way. The theory ignores inequalities in the system; that the rich and the poor cannot benefit from the same assistance. It ignores that there are only certain resources available to each country and that if all the money goes into the hands of the rich, it might actually diminish the chances of others to have better lives. Modernisation Theory has been maimed by dependency theorists such as Raúl Prebisch, as historically Eurocentric in nature, hence Western and unworkable for the Third World.

**Alternative Theories of Development**

It is hard to find theories that match what I want to call ‘Third World Theories’ yet some do a better job than Western economic theories at analyzing need based on sociality and customary difference. The Appropriate Development Theory devised by Ted Trainer, Visiting Fellow of the University of New South Whales, Kensington, Australia says that before considering development, one must begin by asking questions such as “what do we want produced first, where should development resources be focused to do most good, what should we make sure is not developed, what kind of economy do we want to build, and when will we know we have a satisfactorily developed economy” (Trainer 1)? Appropriate development focuses on developing what is needed by peoples in different places. Trainer sees that even countries with high GDPs also have high rates of poverty with little to no improvement done on a societal level to help those who are struggling (The United States is a great example of this. It has a GDP of $133 trillion and 12.3 percent (in 2006) or 36.5 million of its population is living under the official poverty line, and 17 percent are living under the 50 percent median income. These percentages exclude those who are considered to make liveable wages but in reality are struggling still to make ends meet (State and Country Quickfacts). Appropriate Development Theory suggests lowering the GDP per capita to focus more on building a higher quality of life. Take the example of coffee production. “If some of the
coffee used to export to rich countries was transferred to the production of food by and for local people, the GDP would drop” (Trainer 1), but the quality of life would increase. The problem is that the West fails to benefit from such a system where GDP is not an indicator of life progress. The capital needed to produce sufficient wealth is living within the workable land and resources of the people. As Appropriate Development Theory suggests, working together to promote production and a push from the roots of civil society can increase individual wealth from a grassroots level. A core principle of Appropriate Development Theory is to “minimise connections with the rich countries and the global economy” (Trainer 3) so that life depends on local and national connection.

Appropriate Development Theory ignores capital as the major sense of achievement as well as the market force of competition as sole ways of increasing happiness. The theory enables people to meet their basic needs quickly by using their own skills and resources to get there. Similarly, the Basic Needs Approach Theory introduces a non-monetary concept of gain to development. This theory addresses the decency of life in terms of health, nutrition, and literacy focusing on gaining sufficient food, health services, safe water, primary education, and housing. It was designed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and provides a basis for their work in the field. Some critics argue that the technique still fails to recognize human interest on a diverse level, but it takes a step in ignoring capital as a soul indicator of progress. The Human Development Approach, another UNDP theory, defines a process for “widening people’s choices and the level of their achieved well-being” (Hawi 3). It enables access to the income and resources needed for a healthy standard of living that includes education, human rights, and political freedom. It focuses on human choice, accepting the fact that there are different traditions, ideologies, and cultures in the world.

Dr. Hamed Omer Hawi, Head of the Department of Political Science at the University of Juba in Khartoum, Sudan has offered his solution to development as the Alternative Theory. The Alternative Theory is an Afro-centric theory that allows for development to be directed by “African foundations, cultural possessions, habits, beliefs, and not an imitation to the Western method” (Hawi 6). He believes that Western ideas should be understood, but applied to tribal customs and norms. There will always be alternative forms of how to install development, but if translated into how each group of people can use it best, the knowledge of development becomes necessary enough for that group of people to succeed. Dr. Hawi fears that Western development seeks to destroy traditional African culture. He values Western development and culture, but believes that it should be used to activate itself.

“It is high time that Africa should make its history by itself. Using its own culture. By culture we are talking about far more than literature, music, dance, art, sculpture, theatre, film, and sport. All of these, of course, are for any social group part of its shared joy in the business of being alive. But culture is
more than the arts. It is about shared patterns of identity. It is about how social values are transmitted and individuals are made to be part of a society. Culture is how the past interacts with the future” (Hawi 6).

Alternative development believes in Africa as its driving force for change. It believes that Africa has the key factors available to understand its own needs for development. More so, there must be a connection between Africa and the Western world, where one is not presiding over the other, but each help the other in understanding resource management and development. The West must stop doing the things that hinder Africa’s progress and Africa must cooperate from the ground up to increase solidarity and collective effort for successful development. Cameroon cannot depend solely on the outside world to aid its progress. The movement must come from within (Hawi 10).

Dependency Theory, a somewhat sharp critique of development says the origins of poverty cannot be understood without looking at the entire international economic system and its flaws. It assumes that economic growth in advanced countries created Third World poverty in its wake, and not simply that the Third World is poor in comparison with the Western nations (Joshi 2). Poverty in other words did not happen by accident. It is rather a necessary ally to the success of the Western economy. One example is the slave trade, which took place in West Africa before and during colonisation which set up plantation systems to meet the needs of the colonists. Even though the Africans were the ones with the resources, they were forced as labourers on their own land, and were made to give their resources to the colonists and Western mother nations. The colonists benefited at the expense of the Africans on their own land. Dependency theory suggests a new sense of imperialism exists today where the West is still taking from the less fortunate and the less fortunate do not have a choice because of their position of impoverishment compared to wealthier nations (Joshi 3).

In moving back to some earlier thinkers, Albert O. Hirschmann, a 1940s American-German economist, straddled the line between political and economic development perspective. He believed in economics as the “handmaiden of political power between states” (Fonseca, Albert O. Hirschmann 1) meaning that money controlled political dealings between countries. His theory, contemplated during the execution of the Marshall Plan, suggested scepticism around European agreements with the United States. Hirschmann more or less rejected pure economics as a solution to development. “Imposing a uniform doctrinal structure, regardless of local circumstances, Hirschmann argued, was a sure-fire recipe for disastrous development” (Fonsoenca, Albert O. Hirschmann 1). He was one of the first theorists to argue that economic foreign aid should be analyzed on a country-specific basis (Fonseca, Economic Development 3). Similarly, Argentinean economist for the United Nations Commission for Latin America, Raúl Prebisch, argued that international trade and colonial expansion
had been used unsuccessfully in terms of development gain for the Third World. By gearing institutional and social development towards the Western model, the economically executed projects created further structural problems in the colonized regions. Prebisch suggested that the Third World was not necessarily “underdeveloped” but “badly developed” (Fonseca, Raúl Prebisch 1). The fact that Third World countries were already plagued by detrimental structures caused by colonialism, international trade and foreign assistance only enhanced a sense of dependency of the South on the North. His solution included using a sort of monitoring process in trade and import procedures, so that countries would be educated enough to enter a self-sustaining development (Fonseca, Raúl Prebisch 1).

Theories in the Real World

Aside from looking at the various early and modern theorists, people working in development organizations today have a variety of different development perspectives. It is important to note that these eleven individuals surveyed do not by any means represent the whole idea of the West or the whole idea of the Third World, but that where and how they perceive development can help to educate those in the unknown. Subjects are grouped based on how they view development as a process.

I. Development as Economic and Social Integration

Mary Barton-Dock of the World Bank Group in Cameroon, Romeo Fugainj volunteer for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Poverty Reduction Sector, and Steven Nakashima, Project Manager of the UNDP, see development as it applies on both an economic and social scale. Although they each come from different backgrounds of study and hold different positions in their line of work, together they represent a notion that economic aspects of development are key to ending problems like poverty. At the same time, development in general must be honoured differently from place to place as there are major differences between regions and cultures. Collectively, they hold trust in large scale organizations such as the United Nations and World Bank, but understand that successful development comes by a sufficient execution of projects. Originally, I would have labelled them as purely economic thinkers, although they represent a very important social side to development that fits directly in with Alternative Development Theories.
A. Mary Barton-Dock, Country Representative of Cameroon, World Bank Group, American

Mary Barton-Dock is the Country Representative of the World Bank Group in Cameroon. She has been working in different countries of Africa with the World Bank for the past 20 years. Before her work at the Bank, she was a student at Harvard University where she attained her Master’s Degree. Amidst travelling and a busy holiday season, Mary and I had thirty short minutes to discuss her views on development.

“Personally, I would define development as improving the quality of life of people. By the World Bank, it means reducing poverty. I must say though, when you can’t eat, economics becomes important. It would be nice to come to a level where you’re not always under the threat of losing your personal possessions and that economics doesn’t have to be a soul factor for happiness.”

Development to Mary Barton-Dock is a matter of a combination of social and environmental factors. In the World Bank she focuses on building infrastructure in the country of Cameroon. Before coming to Africa on a student exchange program at age 17, Mary had hardly considered development as a subject. Like many Americans, the concept was unknown, visible only if you asked to know what it meant, and Mary like many others before, had not thought to ask. After working for the Bank, she grew to understand development as it applied to the implementation of good and bad country projects. For Mary, projects may have good and bad design, but ownership is what is important. The Bank deals directly with the government, so she can hope that the money put in goes to where officials say it will go, but there aren’t many checks to ensure so.

In defining development for Cameroon, Mary used the electricity of Yaoundé as an example. She explained that in the next year, the city would experience an electricity crisis. She asked me if I thought Yaoundé with all of its businesses and people could survive without electricity. She said she could argue whether or not increasing electricity capability for the next year would help decrease poverty overall in Cameroon, but as a social aspect of the country’s particular society that needed serious attention, this would count as development. In preparing to avoid the electricity crisis, the Bank knows that dams and oil wells need to be built, structures of which are unpopular on the development side of things for Cameroonian. She knows electricity is an issue and she wants to fix it for the people, but in order to do this, she must design projects that are not going directly to the civil society. Mary explained that this is where problems with opinion on the World Bank’s success come in. If people are uneducated about what the projects are working to solve, they’ll criticize what they cannot understand. Mary brought up the Bank’s Cameroon-Chad pipeline project which brought oil to and from both countries. She noted that it was a very controversial project for the World Bank and received criticism across the board, but the Cameroonian government was the actor that had the most say in implementing the project. She
believes on the whole that Cameroonian citizens and the World Bank need to work harder together to ensure better success, but “development aid is a duty of the West as much as it is a duty of people as human beings. The West is a greater more powerful force, and thus should work more to develop less fortunate nations.”

We spoke about the difference between understanding development from an office/investor’s point of view as opposed to a volunteer’s point of view. Mary reminded me that most of the folks who work for the World Bank are sitting in offices in Washington, DC and in that sense she is the one out in the field. Even though her office is in Yaoundé, she tours the country to help broaden her view of issues plaguing the nation. At the same time, her job is to supervise projects from a banker’s point of view. By being in the office, she can evaluate real progress on the ground.

Overall, for Mary, Cameroon is undeveloped with a lack of total infrastructure and political development, problems with governance, and very low human indicators of progress. She feels that before the Bank can ensure overall development in Cameroon, the government must improve and corruption must end. Indicators such as from the Millennium Development Goals can help the Bank to understand at the end of 2015 where Cameroon stands in comparison with other Third World countries. From this they will know in which sectors need more focus on projects. The Bank spends over 55 percent of its funds on transport finance and infrastructure improvement. The private, education and social development sectors receive only 18 percent of the budget combined (Cameroon Portfolio 1). The government of Cameroon has 2, 276 billion CFA annual budget (Essogo 7). The World Bank contributes an annual $100 million (Refer to Appendix C to view US donor aid).

B. Romeo Fugainj, Volunteer, United Nations Development Program, Cameroonian

Romeo Fugainj is a volunteer in the United Nations Development Program Poverty Reduction Sector. He has worked for the Program now for two and a half years in the forestry and agriculture division. I was fortunate enough to catch Romeo while he was in Yaoundé during his office hours. Volunteers for the UNDP spend most of their time in the field executing country projects, and the first week of every month at the office in Yaoundé. The Poverty Reduction Program (Le Sous-Programme de Réduction de la Pauvreté à la Base en bref) works with the Minister of Economics in Cameroon to help reduce the poverty of the rural sector by financing community micro-projects that generate profit and sustainable usage of the natural resources of targeted populations. Financed by both international programs such as CARE, the Arab Gulf Fund and the Cameroonian Government, the UNDP Poverty Reduction Sector spends over 7,000 million US dollars each year on service projects for Cameroon (Le Sous-Programme de Réduction de la Pauvreté à la Base en bref 2).
In defining development, Romeo said that it meant “to use one’s useful natural, technological, and cultural acquirements to promote one’s social and economic growth.” By the UNDP’s standards, he feels development seeks to change the situation of a country so that the people are self-sufficient. Development overall is something he thinks of in a case by case basis, where needs should be addressed by whomever is benefiting from a project or fund. Romeo believes that not all Northern (he refers to the West as the “North” and the Third World as the “South”) development works in Cameroon, because it fails many times to assess the real needs of the people “en basse” (on a grassroots, local level). He used the protection of the environment as an example. In the United States, we think of protecting the environment as saving trees from being cut down and as creating a safe space for animals and plants alike. For some forest communities in Cameroon, the pygmies as an example, they must use forests in a different way. Some need to cut trees down and kill bush animals in order to survive traditionally in their own lifestyle. Are we to say they cannot do this simply because we understand forest protection in a completely different sense, Romeo suggested? Furthermore, he asked, is Cameroon expected to accept Northern forest conservation projects if they do not work for the well-being of Cameroon’s peoples? He feels that even though the North and South benefit from one another, the North tends to extend projects of development that have worked in its own countries, but misunderstand need on a Southern level. What is wonderful about the UNDP is that it serves community need on a local level. Being a Volunteer, he sees that the UNDP does a good job in letting the population know what is out there in terms of development focusing on programs which highlight what can be done and not what must be done. He feels that the UNDP brings development closer to the ground by using government funds and translating them into projects for the people, yet the UNDP’s role in development is more economic than social. “Economics improves development. If you don’t have the minimum of money, how can you eat?” He referred then to the World Bank as an impressive organization that brought much wealth to the world and discussed the eight Millennium Goals as important indicators for ending poverty and suffering across countries of the world.

Romeo feels that before the North transformed development into an economic theory concerning the less fortunate, people all over the world knew countries on a personal level. He feels that policies like Truman’s merely categorized countries into what we see them as today. Development for him is more of a process that is natural with technology evolution and civilization continuity, where culture and progress are always changing. He feels that the North has not infiltrated Cameroon. Rather it is modernisation which has brought computers, cars, and businesses. Cameroon needs these things just the like the rest of the world, he says. It isn’t just the North that benefits from sustainable technology.
After working two and a half years for the UNDP, Romeo realizes that both the North and the South need each other. Although he feels patriotic towards Cameroon and wants first for the people of his country to have rights and resources, he too understands that there is neither an obligation of the North to aid those in the South, nor should people in the South expect the North to be an example for overall development. He believes that for some time, the North has been an example because it is strong and powerful and did not come from a situation like Cameroon.

C. Steven Nakashima, Project Manager, United Nations Development Program, American

Steven Nakashima, manager of the Avian Influenza project in Cameroon, received his Master’s Degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington. He worked in public health municipal jobs in the United States for ten years, created a Refugee camp in North eastern Thailand, initiated a rural roads project in Bangladesh, has lived in Sri Lanka and Cairo, and is now in Cameroon working on his first ever UNDP assignment. Steven admits to knowing little about the theories and global processes of development, yet his personal views on the subject provide an excellent inventory of credible knowledge and honest evaluation.

For Steven, the most important aspect of development is identifying goals and methods that will help implement and evaluate progress for future generations. Generally, he feels that the goal of development for all individuals both in the North and South (he too uses the terms “North” and “South” to refer to the West and Third World) is to solve the plight of individual need. He says that development works differently on the ground, depending on your background and organization affiliation. For instance, working for a local NGO will build a different perspective on development than a student at a university or a government employee in Cameroon. He argues that money in development is important, but if there is no end point for where it goes, then it can become destructive. After working for the Foreign Service he sees that many Americans go abroad with large scale development ideas and are often shot down because they have failed to realize the differences between local customs and traditions. For Steven, development in reality, takes patience and observation. The actual process across the board should be the same, but nations in conjunction must be receptive to accepting aid. He says that a specific problem with development in Cameroon is that people here are thinking too heavily on the near term. They would rather be concerned with next week’s pay check than think about a long-term development project where they are not guaranteed physical results, and what is lacking most certainly from Cameroon projects is a clear projection of goals, how money will be used, and what the plans are for follow-up. He sees that corruption also hinders success. He is always thinking about corruption in the back of his mind when handling transactions.
in Cameroon. “When you live in a place where it is evident all around you every day, it is hard not to be aware of it in executing simple tasks.”

In terms of modelling development, Steven believes that America has the money and “entrepreneurial spirit” necessary for efficiently solving crises. This process of course takes several different mechanisms and there are some more efficient organizations than others. USAID for example, gave Steven’s Avian Flu Project a roomful of boxes full of free equipment to help in the development of his project. He was very impressed and thankful for this and used it as case for how the United States really can help. He admits that sometimes money is left unused because of political and social restraints. He used the examples of “Just say no” campaigns for combating AIDS and abortion which are clearly flawed in approach. Yet he feels that the United States overall is a leading development example for the world. The term bravado came up a lot in discussion, which he used to describe how people in the United States believe that because things work in their own culture that they should use similar tactics in others. At the same time he told me of a saying he reminds himself of often (although he doesn’t remember who told him) is that “when all other options have been exhausted, use the Americans!”

Steven feels that many processes are taken for granted in the United States such as money transfer and accountability in society. In Cameroon these transactions are not so simple. He believes that to improve development in Cameroon, a transparent process must be implemented that broadens the private sector. There must also be an environment where people have incentives for building success, and do not turn to corruption as an easy way out. Steven trusts that organizations such as the World Bank, IMF, and UNDP have sufficient and workable goals that encourage people to be more sustainable at all levels. (He gave me a copy of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals and said that these were indicators of development used by the international organizations and that they were on track to solving major problems in world). The United Nations especially, in his opinion, is good at analyzing situations on a case by case strategy so that needs and strengths of the individual are emphasized. He thinks that as the world gets smaller by international interaction, development money is more available and modernisation is picking up, also that northern culture has infiltrated the whole world because Americans enjoy luxury in infrastructure and rule of law and people in other cultures want to copy this. Nevertheless, he feels that Americans give aid to those who need it.

“There doesn’t always have to be a string attached. Development is not trying to push people away from tribalism in Africa. Rather assessments such as the Human Development Index are built to regard development across 175 countries of the world. It is natural for a country to want to get itself out of the low and into the high.
It would also be nice to go to Cameroon and not worry about the next time you might be exposed to Ebola, worms, malaria, parasites, and amoebas. These are not things you get sitting on your front porch in California.”

D. Analysis

Although Mary, Romeo, and Steven stand separate on their personal views concerning development, as a process they feel that it deals with assessing good and bad projects in each country. For Mary, the World Bank is a partner in waging development projects, some of which are successful, some not. Although both economic and social factors are important for development, the focus is more heavily on economics to foster sustainable growth. Romeo has praised the World Bank’s initiatives, and too believes that having enough money to eat is a very basic and essential need. His job as a UNDP Volunteer is to assess the development of projects with his work in the field. He sees that the execution and education process of programming is very important. Steven in his Avian Flu project, has admitted to the fact that if there is no clear direction to where funds are used, then projects can slip into a downward cycle. It is important to honour follow-up and education as essential factors to waging successful projects. They have all mentioned that in order for development to be progressive, that the North and South (West and Third World) must work together. It takes an end of corruption for one thing, but more so, the understanding of both sides to respect cultural differences in tradition. Something interesting that I remember in speaking with all of them is they each referred to the Millennium Goals as indicators for development, rather than goals per say. Mary addressed that in the end, the eight goals were the vision, yet now while in assessing their process, the goals provide indicators for where countries lie in their state of society. Rather than saying that a country will not meet its goals by a certain date, Mary looks at which countries have been unsuccessful in getting there and in which areas. At this point, she can go back and improve what needs to be built upon. Romeo spoke to the same understanding where even if achieving the millennium goals were impossible that they should be more indicators for development. Steven simply trusts that the Millennium Goals and programs such as the UN, UNDP, and the World Bank are forefront in their positive understanding of development. The goals should be motives to work for, so that all aspects of society are focused on.

In tying Mary, Romeo, and Steven to classical development theorists I see them overlapping with several different thinkers. On the Smithian side, each understands that social and economic factors are important for development to thrive, that human beings naturally strive for economic sustainability to increase their state of happiness. There is a general admiration of those who have more wealth, so to look up to wealthy nations as an example for increasing development is worthwhile. Albert Hirschmann first suggested that countries should be
analyzed for development perspective based on their different local populations. All three shared a sense of understanding need on a case by case basis, although Romeo was in support of this for individuals, Mary for domestic regions, and Steven for ethnic affiliations. Lastly, the stage aspect of Rostow’s theory upholds the ways of which Mary and Romeo see societies on different levels. The fact that they use the Millennium Development Goals for instance to evaluate where societies lay in states of progress suggests that societies and economies evolve and we can see this based on social indicators.

II. Development as a Process from Within

Kim Ahanda and Gabriel Kwenthieu of the Peace Corps, Tad Brown of the Political Economic Department of the United States Embassy, and David Tchuinou, Senior Economist of the World Bank see development as a process of building capacity between individuals within a country. They feel that although money can help to sustain development projects supported by resources, that development itself is more durable when individuals are educated properly enough so that they are able to pass their skills on to others. As a group, they notice corruption in Cameroon hinders development on a national scale and certain networks are difficult to improve without a stable government. Yet more than foreign aid being a factor, development for these thinkers is a seed that must be planted and nurtured to grow by those who share its space.

A. Kim Ahanda, Associate Peace Corps Director Community Health, Peace Corps, American

Kim Ahanda, Peace Corps Cameroon Country Representative has been involved in African countries for nearly twenty years. She began her work in Africa with a three year Peace Corps assignment in Cameroon. She directed the SIT Study Abroad Program in both Zimbabwe and Cameroon, and was an employee of Johns Hopkin University where she focused on public health in Haiti and Africa. Kim received her Master’s degree in Public Health from Tulane University. We spoke extensively on her views of development and how her work in the Peace Corps has led her to where she is today.

Kim understands development as having different layers based on perspective. Growing up American she supported the view of bringing development to a place. After working with Peace Corps, she understands that it more or less includes building development from within. From her thinking, the problem with development from a Western perspective is that the West assumes basic infrastructure and human indicators for development already exist in the Third World. She made the point that in the United States people have a stable foundation available for health, roads, water, and overall infrastructure, and in Cameroon these indicators are
still in the process of being successfully implemented and are in many ways unsustainable. The most important aspect of successful development for Kim is seeing that there are future indicators for follow up of projects. For example she used the USAID AIDS program that gave money to Cameroon to improve the AIDS crisis in the country. The project gave money to people without conditions for how to use it and without education for why it was being given. Thus the project was not based on results and received zero follow-up procedures to evaluate success. She feels that in a sense, it created a dynamic where many people think AIDS is a joke and as a result of no one teaching them how to understand it in any other way. Kim believes that the people of Cameroon are not to be blamed in a situation such as this, because people involved in the project were asked to form committees without being properly trained on how to do so or for what. Thus, they did with the money what they saw fit, and who knows if this contributed to solving the AIDS crisis.

In terms of economics and development, Kim believes that money is needed to ensure development success. It does not matter necessarily where the money goes (either to the government or grassroots level), more so it matters that the money be matched with local implementers and/or overseers. Kim feels that money unaccompanied by education of where and how it should be used is wasted. For example, she explained the Scanwater project brought to Cameroon by the Scandinavians. For two years, foreign Scandinavian companies managed water towers in the country that sent water to and from cleaner and more reliable sources. They developed a strong project implementation which managed the towers on a schedule. At the end of two years, the Scandinavians left the project to the Cameroonian peoples to keep running. The locals were given neither education nor instruction on how to manage the water towers and the project deteriorated. Almost all of the Scanwater towers today are standing as unworkable masses in the middle of the landscape.

Aside from how development can be successful from country to country, Kim says that the level of poverty is simply different in Cameroon than it is in the United States. Even for the poorest in America, there is a strong infrastructure of resource and establishment. There is a certain amount of possibility that is always available due to the nature of the society and its progress. She feels that people in Cameroon do not have the same possibilities and are living in a completely different situation of poverty. This is where financial limitations can create huge barriers for those trying to survive. “Unless you have the basic monetary means, you cannot have development.” Business and monetary resources are important in development, yet they are only one piece to the whole process.

Kim believes that development needs to evolve with time. Normally, initiatives of projects are good, but implementations are bad. She believes that the West has infiltrated its culture into the Third World, and America
especially is looked up to because it is a vision of wealth and prosperity. Kim thinks that in some ways, Cameroon is even more developed than the United States because of its familial support system and self-sufficient peoples, qualities of which she feels have been lost in American culture.

Generally, she feels Cameroon is developing because it lacks sufficient approaches from big investors to combine projects of local visions. The cornerstone of this she knows is better governance and political strategy. Kim says that there needs to be a structure where the West and Cameroon benefit from one another, where they’re not trying to take from each other. She believes that Africa needs to stop being referred to as one country and ethnic groups cannot be overlooked or ignored when it comes to foreign aid packages. She feels that it was colonialism that first put chiefs into place where they did not exist, and the Western superpowers that changed the Third World’s social procedures to meet the standards of their own.

B. Tad Brown, Political Economic Section, United States Embassy of Cameroon, American

Tad Brown is a Political Officer at the American Embassy in Cameroon for the U.S. State Department. We had a short time to speak about his views of development and how the U.S. Embassy in Cameroon aids this process.

Personally, development for Tad is “the maturation of a country in its economic, political, cultural, and societal norms.” For the U.S. Embassy, he feels that development is based on concrete indicators that seek to enhance one’s role in society as a citizen. According to Tad, The Human Development Index created by the UNDP is also a common factor used to assess development for the Embassy in Cameroon. He sees that for the West, development is charity work. It means giving food and resources. Yet he also sees that this doesn’t work essentially in bringing development. He feels that you have to teach someone how to make their own money to buy resources to call it development. In Cameroon, Tad thinks that people see development as work opportunities and money making, but concerning a lack of societal opportunities, they unfortunately have no other choice but to see it that way.

Tad believes that the West is generally successful in bringing development to the Third World. He spoke of American programs sponsored by the Embassy that are especially monumental at the local levels of society. The International Visitor’s Program, hosted by the Embassy sends Cameroonian professionals to the United States on subject based projects. For one year, they are exposed to other ideas of how to use their skills and education. To Tad, a program such as this emphasizes students’ roles in society so that when they return to Cameroon they can teach others about what they have learned.
He spoke of the Trans-National Auto Group (TAUG), a California-based American project that brought the blue city and inter city buses to Cameroon. He believes a program such as this represents a successful American project that helps people on the local level without putting money into the government. He mentioned a few unsuccessful American projects started by the United States Embassy. In one case, money had been given to sponsor an agricultural factory. Due to heavy political influence and a poor hand-over technique on the donor side, the project failed. Another example was when the Embassy gave resources to a Female Genital Mutilation support group in the North. Due to an inability to recognize Cameroonian cultural differences, the project was unsuccessful and failed to reach the small local communities in the Extreme North where the project had intended to target.

In terms of successful Cameroonian projects, Tad mentioned that banks and credit unions have been successful. Generally, small local projects are unsuccessful due to a lack of organization, but a few he accredited were the LAKKAN, a group that provides education initiatives for local Bamiléké, the Catholic Church of Cameroon and the support of its people, the Cameroonian Community for Justice and Peace, an election monitoring group, and the Dynamique Citoyen, a group of NGOs designed to help empower civil society initiatives. He gave me the example of the Yaoundé airport as an unsuccessful project, due to its vision of which when put into place lacked a sense of reality. The project drained the country of its resources and still the Douala airport is more commonly used. Also, he mentioned that IRAD, a national agricultural organization has not adapted to the economic realities of Cameroon. They continue to place money and resources in to aid technological development in the agricultural sector, but initiatives often fail, as Cameroon does not have the basic functions to be able to take on the funding. A last example he gave was the government’s decision in 2006 to make AIDS drugs free to the public. Whereas he believes this was a huge step in some ways, there was no infrastructure available to get the drugs to major areas of infected peoples.

Overall to Tad, development cannot be brought, not by the West, not by anyone. It is a process that should be birthed from within and then nurtured to harness growth. The United States in his opinion has a strong role in this sense of development in Cameroon, as the country receives less than $10 million from America for aid each year. He feels that this little amount allows for the Embassy to focus more on crucial issues at the local level and supports a process where energy is focused on educating Cameroonian on how to develop themselves. He sees that the solution to overall development in Cameroon can only come from the citizens themselves.
C. David Tchuinou, Senior Economist, World Bank Group, Cameroonian

David Tchuinou is the Senior Economist of the World Bank Group in Cameroon. He works directly with the West and Cameroon to ensure sufficient development is encouraged in all aspects of policy. David’s focus is in the poverty reduction sector. It was fortunate that I had the chance to meet with David as he had just returned to the office on a day I was visiting the Bank.

David understands development as a process or a dynamic that is changing all the time. As all people have a vision for what they need, the goal for development should be to find things that are less costly to achieve this vision. He feels that development is different based on culture and one’s level in society. He spoke of when the World Bank was created its mission was to be an international donor for reconstruction. Today he says its mission has become too heavily focused on reducing poverty all over the world. David tried to define how he felt people living in the West pictured development, but again he mentioned that it would be different for those working and living in different facets of society. For the common person, he believes Westerners think of development as helping those in the world to be more like the West. He feels that when a society thinks its value is something to be shared by others then it tries to implement this thinking into other parts of the world. In Cameroon, David feels that average people are just looking for a way to meet their basic needs whether this means engaging in corruption, finding a way to get the most money, or participating in social programs.

Evaluating the success of development projects takes years to do because for David, development is a generational subject. “If I look back ten years from now, I cannot give you any success stories, but if I look 60 years back, we can start to talk about what has changed.” He feels that the disappointing side of development is that it takes years, time, and energy and this is why many people are let down and get frustrated that it’s not working how they want it to. David mentioned a few success stories in Cameroon. For example, CELLUCAM was a Western company that was successful in improving the process of taking cellulose from trees to produce paper. He spoke of the fact that because Cameroon lacks proper enterprises, projects have little support and often fail. A major problem for people in the South is that people wait around to be supported by the government which has promised time and time again that it will work to fix the problems in the country. “You cannot wait for someone different than you to build your development,” David drilled. There needs to be a way that locals try to help themselves.

David thinks that it is impossible for all Western aid projects to work, because no matter how much money goes into a country, if there is no benefit or action on the ground, success will go unseen. I asked David if he felt that the World Bank’s contribution had helped or hindered Cameroon, and he replied that it was hard to
explain. He said that the World Bank as a partner is given the mandate to reduce poverty in the world. He feels that in order to fix poverty, the government of Cameroon must first be reformed. However, without being given the mandate to fix the government or work on election fraud for example, the World Bank must stick to its procedures in focusing on the millennium goals and poverty reduction. It is a very frustrating thing for David, knowing that organizations such as the World Bank, IMF, and USAID can only do so much being outside donors, because development as he knows must come from within each country.

**D. Gabriel Kwenthieu, Associate Peace Corps Director for Education, Peace Corps, Cameroonian**

Gabriel or Gaby as he would prefer, came to the Peace Corps after university studies at Leeds University in Britain. We were able to speak two times on his views of development and how his work at the Peace Corps has helped to shape his experiences in the field.

When Gaby was younger, he believed the West was a dream. It was a model for what you should become; a world where you interacted with a high class of citizens, had a white collar job, would live in contentment, and would attain overall physical wealth. To the students at Gaby’s school when he was a boy, the model of the West came from France and Great Britain, the colonial powers. He did not at that point think of the United States as the West, because Cameroon had not yet been greatly affected by the country. Gaby attended the first bilingual school in Cameroon, where only French and British teachers taught. He was not introduced to Cameroonian teachers until university. His view on development changed very early after his second year at Leeds University in Britain. He saw in Britain that people were suffering a plight similar to that of Cameroon, but the physical structure of Britain was different with a larger distinction from the wealthy to the poor. He pitied those of the lower classes, because no one cared for their condition. In Cameroon, he feels it is harder to see the class distinctions between the rich and the poor because all people interact. After he returned from university, he began to view his schoolteachers differently, realizing that they came from a world that was not necessarily a vision or perfect in any sense.

The term *development* for Gaby signifies a thought or a process for which people can build skills on individual bases so that they may be able to think for themselves. In order to have good development, one must have good living conditions, access to a house and a good school, medical care, and enough resources to sustain the family. Gaby sees that people cannot create overall development. It has to be a global movement. Yet, this does not mean giving money to Africa. He used the example of President Ahidjo’s plan, “Développement Autocentre” (Self-Centered Development) which sought to empower a few in each community by giving them
money. The hope was that the wealthy individuals would help others to become rich through skills. Yet Gaby believes that the plan only widened the gap between the rich and the poor. He feels that the idea in theory was fine, but executed, the process was horrible. “You cannot reinvent the wheel. Copy from what has already been learned.”

For Gaby, there are two very fundamental aspects of development. Physical development is for building infrastructure, which enables people to interact, commercialize industries, and increase exchange between goods and moral development is the process for which people must open up to the world and learn about what others are doing. He feels that people are at the center of development. He feels that people in Cameroon must learn to wage development on their own so that they become self-sufficient for the future. This is why Peace Corps is so valuable for Gaby because he sees that volunteers change the mentalities of those who believe the West owes them monetary gratuity. Volunteers show individuals ways in which they can build skills to one day make themselves domestically efficient.

Gaby feels that you cannot talk about development without talking about economic growth, but there are problems in the way money for economic improvement is used. He believes that the aim of happiness is to increase one’s quality of life and often money makes this happen. For example, if you have a skill for something, but no money to finance further education for building the skill, you must seek out the money to reach your goal. Yet he also believes that money is not the only thing necessary for development and this is why organizations such as the World Bank and IMF fail at their jobs. They ignore social aspects of development. Gaby explains their process as a “Rolling Stone, La Pierre de Sysife.” The same people, namely the World Bank, are putting the same funds into the country year after year. The country, namely the government, does with these funds what they will, and then corruption further hinders the process. By Gaby’s view, the money stops at the politicians and helps them before it gets translated into society. Half of the money disappears and the citizens of Cameroon never see it.

Gaby feels that the difference between the United States and Cameroon is that there is motivation to succeed in America, to carry on the American Dream that was created by the founding fathers. He feels that people there work day and night as the belief is “what you get is the effort you put in.” He explained that this sort of thinking was translated onto the African continent during colonization, but certain groups had different ways of understanding social processes. In Gaby’s tribe for example, the people were hard working and they worked day and night. Each person had a different role in the community. When there was a thief, everyone knew who it was, and they had their own ways of catching them. The young knew they had to work hard in order
to be married in the future. There was no space for laziness. Gaby says that when the colonial powers came in and tried to group certain ethnicities together who had each adapted their own style of living or placed certain leaders at the top of different sects of people, the whole system dissembled from the traditional life and each culture was overturned. Gaby is sure that without colonization Africa would have found other ways to communicate and develop. At the same time, bringing in several different schools of thought to one activity increases a global connection that isn’t forced, but educational in analyzing many different systems of the world. “There are always ways to improve what we do. No matter where you are and what you know, you could know more and improve your skills for the better. The West is built upon this notion as we can see by continuous evolution in culture and technology. The Third World is static and evolves only little bits at a time.”

E. Analysis

I chose to place Kim, Tad, David, and Gaby together because of their understanding of capacity building as a sure process to development. Capacity building means enhancing individuals skills in certain specializations. From there, they will use the skills they’ve learned to teach others. They will also sustain a more durable lifestyle, as they will not have to rely on others to work for them. As Kim and Gaby both work in the Peace Corps, this process of development comes heavily from their policy as an organization which emphasizes skill transfer between individuals. Likewise, Tad, a representative of the U.S. Embassy understands that before money, education must improve to show people in developing countries how to sustain themselves. I was surprised and impressed to hear this from someone who I had previously thought would have represented a more economic vision for success. David spoke during our interview to the ways of which vocational training for example was highly flawed in Cameroon. As students in technical schools were given decent education on how to perform services, there isn’t any equipment in the schools for them to practice their skills on. When graduates move to cities in search of technician positions, they show up without experience and are turned away from work. This places stress on both the rural areas from which they came, that are now missing out on their labour, and the cities to which they moved, which are suffering from increased underemployment.

What I found very interesting was that essentially I would not have thought to place workers such as Gaby, Kim, Tad, and David, who come from very different organizational models, together in one group of thought. Yet Kim and Tad for example both mentioned the government’s decision to make ARV AIDS drugs free as an example for how the government had seemingly succeeded in bringing resources to the people, and yet the infrastructure available to get the drugs was highly flawed making it difficult for many to benefit. I think it is
important to note that they all understand that before development is to be successful that basic infrastructure be supported Cameroon. They also understand that the United States in terms of structure is on a different wavelength of comparison; that development becomes easier in a place where basic functions of society are already in place. All four of them believe that corruption has serious effects on how easy development projects are to implement. I feel this provides a solid example for how corruption can be found at all levels in Cameroon. Tad and David work for organizations that deal directly with the government on many levels, and Gaby and Kim see how local programs are barred by low-level corruption in field work.

Dr. Hawi’s Alternative Theory fits very well into how these four see development. Hawi’s method has focused on increasing the education of citizens within a country to contribute to overall success. He also believes that as the West tends to infiltrate the Third World, that its lessons be used as an example for how people can become more secular in their thinking, which in turn will augment their abilities to complete tasks in a more efficient manner. This group of interviewees also fit in well with aspects of Hirschmann’s theory again where the process of colonialism created not “underdeveloped” countries, but “badly developed” nations. Gaby and David touched on colonialism especially, realizing that its original faults created the stage for modern problems to occur.

III. Western Development as Neo-Colonialist

Petergo from the International CARE program and Aristide Donald Nguendjio Yomi of the University of Yaoundé both feel that the West as a model should be respected, but that throughout history, the intervention of the West in Cameroon has been a process where the West benefits at the expense of the Third World. They share an interesting dichotomy between honouring the West today for its influence and stability, at the same time mistrusting its influence in their country to wage successful and non-corrupt development projects.

A. Petergo, Executive, CARE Cameroonian

Monsieur Petergo of the CARE program received his Master’s Degree in Public Health from the University of Yaoundé. As CARE works internationally with programs in France, the United States, Britain, and China (to name a few), Petergo was busy working on financial projects between groups and was generous enough to meet with me for a few hours during my three weeks of research.

Petergo defines development as “finding a solution to build the capacity of people where they can fix their economic, social, and cultural problems.” For CARE, development means finding a solution to ending
poverty and suffering in Cameroon. According to Petergo, there are three factors that contribute to why this is not possible in the country. Number one, Petergo sees that the security of Cameroon is weak. Two, the continent of Africa and its countries are not capable on their own. Three, Cameroon is still a slave to colonialism and it cannot move forward. Petergo believes that to bring successful development to Cameroon that governments must copy better motives of development from wealthier and more developed nations. At the same time, Cameroon must find its own solution to progress because it has a different history than other countries.

To ensure that development works, Petergo sees that the process must be analyzed throughout the ages. He says that some may argue development was created by the Egyptians, but really he feels it has been created by everyone. Cameroon has its own sense of development as do the United States and Europe. What is more important to Petergo than the differences between peoples’ perspectives is how development itself evolves. He thinks it is important to think about what was the state of Europe during the Marshall Plan that created a need for development, and what is the state of Cameroon now that they need foreign aid. CARE, according to Petergo, only looks at the future and ignores history. He feels there is a standard of development now that comes from the West and this is what should be followed. Because CARE was started in the West, even in Cameroon, he says the program is a Western organization, funded by Western nations. Because he works for CARE’s goal to abolish poverty and suffering, he looks to the West as a supporter in this cause.

Although Petergo supports the West as a donor, he feels strongly that there is western driven neo-colonialism in Cameroon. He compares the European immigrants’ maltreatment of Native Americans in America to the United States’ neo-colonialist tactics against Cameroonians today. He believes that the only reason the United States wants part in Cameroon is because it needs human and natural resources. He explained that Africa itself was deconstructed, its culture was overturned, and its resources were exported for the benefits of others. Then the United States formed its concept of development where they sought only one way to give aid to African countries. He brought up the Marshall Plan and how it gave money to Europe to aid in costs of destruction as caused by the War. The same plan was aimed at the Third World, which was a mistake, because Africa wasn’t the same case. Cameroon wants to augment equal development perspectives where they benefit from the West as much as the West benefits from them. Petergo sees that this will only happen if global education is enhanced so that those in local areas understand better ways of improving life and the West changes its policies to fit the needs of many different kinds of people.

The solution to improving further projects of development would come from the people of Cameroon progressing to accept development and the people of the United States agreeing to find a way to help the
developing world, not just to benefit itself. He feels that democracy and liberty are practices that must be borrowed from the West, as are the creation of large enterprises and better investment practices. Petergo compared an American and Cameroonian of 21 years old. He said that the Cameroonian was more naïve in understanding how they would succeed in the world because of what their education had allowed them see as available. The American on the other hand had a strong and secular education and was able to see the world from a variety of perspectives which would increase his or her overall beliefs of success. That, he said, is the difference between our realities on development.

B. Aristide Donald Nguendjio Yomi, University of Yaoundé, Cameroonian

Aristide Donald Nguendjio Yomi is a student at the University of Yaoundé where he is currently working on his post-master’s studies. Aristide received his Master’s in Economics and recently spent the past six years in France and Côte d’Ivoire studying development economics. As my host brother in Yaoundé, Aristide has contributed greatly to my understanding of development throughout the course of this project.

“If you really want to develop a country, you can come and train individuals so people can teach themselves. This is development. This is a market, but the price isn’t obvious.” To Aristide Yomi, development is a process of which each country finds a way to ameliorate the social, financial, and economic living situation of its citizens. For people living in Cameroon, the idea of development comes with a focus on the eight Millennium Goals as models for what the society should work for to improve the quality of life. To Aristide, foreign countries have not developed well in Cameroon. He feels that they rely too heavily on economics and “economics is not about philanthropy.” He sees that the foreign influence in Cameroon has a legacy of draining resources from the country so that the wealthy nations benefit. The TAUG blue buses for example are not a sign of development to Aristide because he thinks the profit of what the company makes goes back in some part to the company in California. He cannot imagine that an American company would not try to gain profit at Cameroon’s expense.

According to Aristide, in order for foreign aid to work, the West must do more in collaborating with Third World countries. Policies cannot be exported to places that don’t have the same political and social structure. He said for example that IMF and World Bank workers find solutions for crises on paper which may work in macro-economic theory, but on the ground reality takes over and their programs fail because there is always a difference between the donor country and the receiving country. Aristide feels that plans like Structural Adjustment used problematic techniques of financial assistance, which in most cases did not recognize social
and economic realities of people working and living in Cameroon. For Aristide, Cameroon itself is a special case as well, due to corruption, which has barred a lot of development processes in general. He feels that the only way development can work in Cameroon is if corruption on both sides ends. He pointed out that issues of fraud have destroyed the success of many grassroots projects because people take money for granted, use it for menial expenses, and then beg for more as if it is to be deserved.

For Aristide, colonialism is vital in understanding development in history. He feels that development began with a comparison between the West and the Third World. The aim of colonialization was to impose the world of the colonizer onto the colonies. The Africans were divided and used on their own land. He says today, that neo-colonialism appears in the market where resources such as petrol are exported to the rich. Aristide brought up the debt crisis of Africa and how it has been paid off six times. Yet the fact that exchange rates continue to fluctuate and national currency is ignored for payback (official currency is the dollar amount), the debt increases over and over. Aristide believes that this is a way for the West to gain more money at the expense of the poorer nations. Spending much time in France, he feels that the West and its citizens are raised under a notion of superiority over others. In France, he says that no one knows about slavery. Voltaire himself was a slave owner, but this fact is ignored in education. He spoke of Raúl Prebisch who was one of the first thinkers to recognize that colonizers were taking from the poor and agrees completely that this process is still in effect today.

Aristide finds that to fix the problem of development, one cannot just sit and wait for others to help. It takes both sides with a connection between governments and people to ensure that the knowledge of what is needed on the ground is circulated throughout all parties. He feels that the West is a valuable source of aid to the Third World, but it can only be completely successful if it cooperates with governments and stops focusing on taking from the less fortunate. Aristide knows that for Cameroon especially, corruption must end and citizens should put more effort into challenging their own government’s wrongdoings.

C. Analysis

Petergo and Aristide share very intense views on how Western influence has not only dominated aspects of Cameroonian society, but how colonialism and neo-colonialism are sources for underdevelopment today. Both value the West for its strong socio-political structure, but see that it tends to take more than it gives; Aristide with his distrust in American corporations such as TAUG and Petergo with his comparison between the Native Americans and Europeans and the West and Cameroon as imperialistic examples. Petergo works for a Western
organization which is funded by Western governments. Aristide has family in the United States now and plans to travel there for further schooling in the future. They both uphold my original hypothesis and represent what I would have characterized as general Cameroonian thought, yet look to America for hope and support.

They represent thinking borrowed from the Dependency theory of which speaks to modern imperialism and the West benefiting at the expense of the Third World. Poverty did not just appear in the Third World, rather it was created there by wealthy nations who were looking to find human resources and exploit native custom. Raúl Prebisch, as Aristide expressed in his interview, was one of the first theorists to address that Northerners were benefiting at the expense of the South. Both Aristide and Petergo distrust the West as an honest donor, yet understand more importantly that its overall success is barred by corruption in the government of Cameroon.

IV. Development as Motivated by the People

Lindsay Madson, Peace Corps Volunteer, and Nathalie Lell, Local Programs Director of the United States Embassy, see that legacies of colonialism have created a somewhat tired Cameroonian society, where people expect aid from the West and push little to field development on their own. As both women have worked with projects in the local sector, tangible experience has led to them to understand how passing education and skills through individuals and communities builds a more sustainable kind of development that carries on throughout the future. Although money can be useful, they see that without direction, it does little to bring about overall developmental success.

A. Lindsay Madson, Volunteer, Peace Corps, American

Meet Lindsay Madson, a Peace Corps Volunteer health sector worker in Ebolowa, South Province, Cameroon. We had the fortunate advantage of meeting together in Yaoundé while Lindsay was in her last days of Peace Corps service. We spoke of her development perspectives before and after coming to Cameroon and how the Peace Corps helped to her to define development more clearly as a process.

Lindsay came into the Peace Corps after having received a master’s degree in Public Health. It was in the Peace Corps that she received her first development lessons. Before then, she hadn’t considered development on a large scale, as many Americans are not taught to think or ask about it, having confidence that large scale organizations and the United States’ foreign affairs budget are doing their part to help save the world. Most American people are unaware of what goes on with foreign aid money, and hardly anyone is taught to ask. Beyond that, Lindsay feels that the United States fails to understand need and development on a local scale.
Especially in Cameroon where you have over 250 ethnicities, rural areas, urban sprawls, the Sahel, and the rainforest, it is impossible to know how money should be used to help all of those in need because it differs from place to place. After two years of service, Lindsay feels that Peace Corps Volunteers come to understand development as by getting to know need on an individual basis. Large scale foreign aid does little to create that personal connection that permeates sustainable development. Lindsay feels that she was naïve before she joined the Peace Corps because she didn’t understand how education through people on the ground could grow to create a broader sense of change. In general, she sees that the international community is moving towards an evaluation of development projects, but it is hard to find people who would be willingly in charge of checking up on each and every foreign aid project, past and present. A follow through such as this would also take years and lots of energy.

For Lindsay, a huge problem in Cameroon that bars overall development is “corruption [which] is blatant and effects the whole population.” She says that foreign aid dies with corruption. An experience she had to shape her views on corruption in Cameroon came from the organization of an HIV support group that she put together in Ebolowa. The group sought legalization so it could receive state funding and the government would only give money if the group was taught by a government protocol. The protocol entailed the government entering the group and training officials to their standards. The group itself would have to pay for the training and abide by all restrictions of the training in order to receive support. Lindsay’s group denied the assistance of the government, but invited ministers of the region to view the group and its workings. No one showed up to the meetings, and rumours were spread by officials that the group was a fraud.

To Lindsay, the Peace Corps technique is unique to development and it works the best. It is hard to see the impact of many Peace Corps Volunteers, yet she feels now that this isn’t the point of the work. She spoke of an older Volunteer she had met who was a Volunteer in Peace Corps Cameroon in 1963. This man reflected on how Peace Corps work started in the Western Province in Cameroon and then moved on throughout the North and South and East provinces. He can see now the progress in the West is more prevalent as opposed to other areas, because people there were educated by Volunteers and passed on their knowledge to others. Lindsay knows that you cannot change a whole community or region in two years, but “what [she] did was something that could be carried on. Education stays with people; forever.”

According to Lindsay, the push for development must come from the top. Without the help of a country’s own government, those within its borders will not survive. Smaller rural communities are especially lacking of aid from the government. Using the example of a small rural village on the border of Cameroon near
Gabon, she said that the town is not easily accessible from the main road so little know of its location. The farmers within the village suffer from low income and have difficulties travelling long distances to where those even in the next village will be able to buy their products. If only the government would widen the dirt trail leading off from the main road so that people in the small village could get to the village nearby, Lindsay feels that their lives would significantly improve. The people of the village should not be forced to widen the road themselves. It is the obligation of the government to do such things for its citizens in the natural environment provided by the country. In Cameroon, Lindsay relented that there is a lack of strong civil society. With examples such as the one above, she does not find it surprising that people have no motivation to rally. The government does so little to help its citizens that many find it unworth the trouble and energy. Often Lindsay wants to say, “Can’t you guys just push a little harder?” yet what’s the point to most when they know it will bring nothing but more corruption, more pay-offs, and little development for the future? She believes that Cameroonians have developed a “fatalistic” view towards civil solidarity (She used On va faire comment? a common expression as an example). And because American establishments such as missionaries came to the country in the past and gave a lot of aid to Cameroon, she feels that citizens believe it is the West’s obligation to give aid. She sees that Cameroonians in many cases misunderstand ways to competently wage projects on their own.

B. Nathalie Lell, Director of Local Programs, United States Embassy of Cameroon, American-Cameroonian

Nathalie Lell is the director of the Self Help and Democracy for Human Rights programs hosted by the United States Embassy in Cameroon. Funded by the U.S. government, Nathalie gives money to Cameroonian projects in local areas throughout the country. Each year she receives over 600 applications of people looking to find funding for their work. After several reviews, a board narrows the pool to 15-20 different groups whom are funded and monitored for follow-up. Self Help and Democracy for Human Rights are the most successful Embassy run projects in Cameroon with an 85-90 percent success rate, measured by a three-year follow up process that works to ensure that all goals and policies set forth by the group are completed. If goals are not met by the end of the three years, education and follow-up is given to groups to ensure that they may become sustainable on their own without the help of the Embassy. Nathalie was born in the United States in the Boston area. She received her graduate degree in finance and marketing and worked for Chevron and Texaco for six
years before coming to the Embassy in 2003. Since being in Cameroon, I have had the advantage of speaking with Nathalie twice. Her views on development are extremely valuable.

To define development, Nathalie says it is “what you can do on a human level to increase knowledge so that financial independence and the standards of living will improve.” She feels that money is important in building infrastructure, but that the evaluation of a culture and its needs are more valuable in ensuring development meets the ground. At the embassy, Nathalie feels that development is currently focused on the reduction of poverty following the Millennium Goals, however most programs aim at putting skills into the hands of the people. As a person coming from the West, she believes those in the U.S. think of development as assistance and support provided to the Third World so that people will be able to move on and raise their own living standards. As a Cameroonian, she feels that the Third World wants the United States to be an assistant of development. She feels that those in Cameroon have an expectation that rich countries should help the poor. In this way, she also sees some Cameroonians as lazy because they wait for assistance. She knows this mode of thinking comes directly from the era colonialism where wealthy nations stripped Cameroon of its resources and people were exploited. Now she sees that Cameroonians are waiting for the West to give money back as compensation.

Nathalie likes programs such as Self Help because they give Cameroonians incentives to gain knowledge on how to develop without assistance. Self Help used to be a program focused on money lending for projects but Nathalie realized a few years ago that money was not helping the process as much as other things. The focus was revised to a stronger community building approach where individuals were valued over funds. She mentioned that some improvements of Self Help programs in the past have included buying meals and helping with traditional production techniques for rural women who normally spend all day cooking and working in the field. This way with assistance, women will have more free time to be with their families and take care of their personal well-being. Nathalie spoke then about Embassy projects. An unsuccessful project was when the U.S. Embassy funded the construction of a health center. The building itself was beautiful, but the local population did not have the means to stock the facility with medical supplies and equipment. Workers at the Embassy now realize that putting extensions on existing hospitals and providing more supplies to buildings that are lacking, is what really augments success. We spoke about the success of local Cameroonian projects, and she mentioned that many fail because they do not have enough monetary support or capacity to keep themselves running.
“There are always good programs, but what Washington DC decides is not always needed in the field.” Nathalie is frustrated by the recent decision of Washington to restrict the way she uses her money in the Self Help program. Whereas she used to monitor monetary need from case to case, last year, the government put a restriction of where she can place her funds. Although it is frustrating, Nathalie sees that the money in Self Help is not making the biggest impact, but rather the education being spread between individuals. For Nathalie, the solution for development in Cameroon should focus more on capacity building and education and not monetary resource. She feels that matching local communities with national leaders could enforce better education to improve development everywhere. There must also be a push and more force from civil society so that the government receives pressure to change. She sees that development is a package of indicators, that economics cannot be excluded or relied upon. More importantly, she feels that it takes work from everyone on all sides.

C. Analysis

Lindsay and Nathalie’s views represent a very social approach to development. Lindsay, being a Peace Corps Volunteer feels corruption on the ground and understands after working for two years in the field that you do not have to see development to know that it has infiltrated the system. She values education between individuals as the way to create a more valuable global connection that will really do its part in bringing change to a society. Nathalie from the donor side of things feels that even though economics is an important part to helping individuals succeed, it is not what makes the greatest impact. With The Self-Help program, local communities benefit and she knows this by the very high success rate. Even after her funds were cut and restricted, Nathalie understood that the money wasn’t what was bringing change, but the education of the individuals themselves who were working to sustain projects that would carry out through the future. Both notice a sense of weakness in Cameroon’s civil society and they see that this hinders the public’s ability to promote a smooth process of change. They believe that empowerment and force from the grassroots is what could be the push to increase development’s success.

Lindsay and Nathalie’s viewpoints and approaches sit well with the Appropriate Development Theory, which seeks to leave economic aspects of development at the outskirts, focusing more on social leverage as a point for success. They see that need is based on local differences in tradition and honour the fact that with in the transfer of educational skills from person to person, total development can enhance a population a little at a time. It is important to realize that both Lindsay and Nathalie honoured time and energy as a major factor in
development. They understand it cannot happen overnight and will not occur without the connection and energy of all citizens, both in and out of the society.

Conclusion

In summarizing what we have learned from the old and new thinkers, the Westerners and Cameroon nationals, development in essence is a structure, a thought, a process, a vision, and a belief. It builds upon a notion that there are those in different parts of the world thinking of ways for which new plans of aid can be brought to regions in need. Whether this includes corruption, misunderstood objectives, or egocentric ideas on one side or the other, development as an idea is coming from a place of what one thinks would benefit his or herself or another.

Before conducting this research, I thought development was something felt and seen differently depending on one’s region of origin. I learned very quickly in speaking with different subjects, that although early theorists categorized Western beliefs and Third World thought, development perspective itself depends more on one’s position in society, how educated one is on the development process, and what experiences one has had to build an understanding of this process. For Americans who trust the presented achievements of their government, it is not a surprise that they would believe in economics as formidable development aid. Likewise with Cameroonians living in poor rural conditions, even if they work hard, if foreign aid projects remain unseen in society, they are going to learn to resent the Western system. I know now that these stereotypical views are present for some in both societies, but the United States as a donor and Cameroon as a Third World nation have equal parts in the process of workable development. It was people like Kim Ahanda from the Peace Corps and David Tchuinou at the World Bank who made me see that although the United States focuses heavily on economic support to drive development projects in Cameroon, it holds a stable social and political foundation that should model successful development for the Third World. Kim especially through the example of poverty showed me that although people in both Cameroon and the United States are impoverished, the idea of poverty in each country is very different. Those in Cameroon lack simple opportunities that are available in the social infrastructure of America.

Similarly, corruption in Cameroon blocks successful development that could be had on a local scale. People such as Peace Corps Volunteer Lindsay Madson, and UNDP Avian Flu Project Director Steven Nakashima, feel that corruption is blatant throughout society. Lindsay saw this with the failure of the Cameroonian government to respect her AIDS education program after she refused subsidy because the
government was giving her a protocol of what to teach in the program. Steven feels in his line of work that one must be subconsciously aware of corruption when handling economic and political dealings with Cameroonians. Others pointed out that even if the West was more successful in its development work, that money often stops at the government of Cameroon. For the past thirty years, the same officials have cycled money back and forth between foreign donors and public investors so that it fails to touch the ground. It is problems such as these that create mistrust in the World Bank for example and overall Western foreign aid (Gaby of the Peace Corps example of the “Rolling Stone”).

Economic policies of development tend to idealize nations under one school of thought where people benefit from one kind of system, namely that of the West. There is a strong division between the rich and the poor, the fortunate and the miserable, the strong economies and the weak. One the one hand, theorists such as Rostow point out that stable and thriving societies in the West are ones that should be modelled after, yet modern critics like Dr. Hawi and Ted Trainer have pointed out Rostow’s failure in realizing that economic sustainability does not address local custom. By the example of Romeo Fugainj of the UNDP, development projects suited for America cannot work in Cameroon because Cameroon and its people live on a different land built upon separate social and political virtues. Even though economic support is needed to ensure that one can eat and sustain his or her own lifestyle, money used to build projects of suitable Western development do little when people on the ground misunderstand how money should be used. In the United States, people have a sustainable structure that provides a certain amount of opportunities and privileges. Western donors often forget that Cameroon lacks this kind of stability. Projects like the Embassy’s where hospitals were built without recognizing the fact that Cameroonians lacked the supplies and equipment necessary to make the hospitals sufficient, show that without direction or evaluation of how money should be used, development based on sole economics does little and goes no where.

Alternative Development Theories are more liberal in their views and address societal factors more heavily than monetary consumption. However they rely on bitter neo-colonial perspectives to emphasize the ways in which wealthier nations have been benefiting at the expense of the poor for years. Although this is often a painful truth, Alternative Development Theories ignore monetary funds as factors for development. I’ve learned from people like Gaby Kwenthieu of the Peace Corps and Mary Barton-Dock of the World Bank that although Western donors could definitely do a better job in evaluating local cultures, if you do not have at least a valuable source of income, the education you have is lost when you are focusing harder on having to survive. This is valid because every person wants to feel this kind of security. Alternative theorists should be respected
because they understand that cooperation between all parties and levels is necessary to induce successful
development, but equally weak civil societies such as in Cameroon also contribute to unsuccessful development.

I am reminded of Nathalie Lell of the United States Embassy expressing that Cameroonian are lazy. The
unfortunate legacies of colonialism are present and difficult to let go of, but if people continue to let this
resentment drive their inability to act, the push for development will never come out. This is where thinkers
such as Raúl Prebisch with Dependency Theory use modern imperialism as a justification for why nations are
“underdeveloped.” It is very important to realize that development cannot just come from the West. It has to
come from within Cameroon, from the people.

This project has shown that a discussion of development must look into all aspects of society, the
economic and social. The example of the Peace Corps workers demonstrates that increasing capacity and
education between individuals circulates knowledge throughout a culture and builds development on a
community level. It is impressive that those like Tad Brown of the U.S. Embassy who one would have thought
because of his representation of the U.S. government would have believed heavily in economic policy,
understands that just money or just social programs do little without the aid of one another. Even though World
Bank employees only have the viewpoint of a banker on the donor side of things, and Peace Corps Volunteers
only see the grassroots field aspect of development, without one or the other, the process of development is
ineffective. If people waste time arguing about how unsuccessful purely economic or purely social programs are
in a country, then they too lose sight of development as a whole process. It is more important to take the
strengths of each side of thought and come to a solution where ministries are matched with local programs,
international development organizations are paired with field based project workers, and development from the
individual to the community to the city to the region to the government is recognized.

In bringing the discussion back to Truman, I believe that development as a modern concept started with
his Inaugural Address. As most of the interview subjects defined Western development perspectives as charity
giving, it is evident to me that many still regard Truman’s views on the “underdeveloped” even if it is
subconscious. Truman came from a time where foreign assistance was a young concept and the Marshall Plan
had been the only other workable example of foreign aid success, yet his ideas for reaching out, where the West
was a strong example of what a sufficient society should look like, is still evident in many opinions today. I
asked the Cameroonian subjects of my project what they thought of the West as a child, and most of them told
me that it was a vision and a dream. Even now where they have a more enhanced and less naïve viewpoint on the
West as model nation, they still understand that its example is strong. I am reminded of Adam Smith’s original
idea where humanity itself was based upon the less fortunate looking up to the wealthy on both an individual basis and national perception. This was Truman’s point also, that the United States should be a vision for success. Even though America politically and socially has many problems that still need to be addressed, the fundamental stability of its society provides a strong example for places who struggle in the Third World.

I cannot offer one solution to the issue of workable development or not, but can say that it comes from every mode of society pushing towards an equal goal. A global connection is important but must start from the lowest parts of society of which bridge together the networks that move up to complete our total world structure. Not only must our world learn to work through peaceful networks of communication, but understand that there are flaws in all modes of the system and as separate pieces, success will forever be compromised. The evolution of time is continuous, and as some nations and concepts seem to remain halted in their understandings of policy and production, it is through small amounts of education such as looking into the question of what is development that creates the global movement that sufficiently reconstructs the world. By the words of President Harry Truman in 1949,

“We are aided by all who wish to live in freedom from fear—even by those who live today in fear under their own governments. We are aided by all who want relief from the lies of propaganda—who desire truth and sincerity. We are aided by all who desire self-government and a voice in deciding their own affairs. We are aided by all who long for economic security—for the security and abundance that men in free societies can enjoy. We are aided by all who desire freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom to live their own lives for useful ends. The initiative is ours. It must be a worldwide effort. I ask for your encouragement and your support. The tasks we face are difficult, and we can accomplish them only if we work together.”

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A former county judge, Senator and Vice President, Harry S. Truman had taken the oath of office first on April 12, 1945, upon the death of President Roosevelt. Mr. Truman's victory in the 1948 election was so unexpected that many newspapers had declared the Republican candidate, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, the winner. The President went to the East Portico of the Capitol to take the oath of office on two Bibles—the personal one he had used for the first oath, and a Gutenberg Bible donated by the citizens of Independence, Missouri. The ceremony was televised as well as broadcast on the radio.

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Chief Justice, and fellow citizens, I accept with humility the honor which the American people have conferred upon me. I accept it with a deep resolve to do all that I can for the welfare of this Nation and for the peace of the world.

In performing the duties of my office, I need the help and prayers of every one of you. I ask for your encouragement and your support. The tasks we face are difficult, and we can accomplish them only if we work together.

Each period of our national history has had its special challenges. Those that confront us now are as momentous as any in the past. Today marks the beginning not only of a new administration, but of a period that will be eventful, perhaps decisive, for us and for the world.

It may be our lot to experience, and in large measure to bring about, a major turning point in the long history of the human race. The first half of this century has been marked by unprecedented and brutal attacks on the rights of man, and by the two most frightful wars in history. The supreme need of our time is for men to learn to live together in peace and harmony.

The peoples of the earth face the future with grave uncertainty, composed almost equally of great hopes and great fears. In this time of doubt, they look to the United States as never before for good will, strength, and wise leadership.

It is fitting, therefore, that we take this occasion to proclaim to the world the essential principles of the faith by which we live, and to declare our aims to all peoples. The American people stand firm in the faith which has inspired this Nation from the beginning. We believe that all men have the right to freedom of thought and expression. We believe that all men are created equal because they are created in the image of God.

From this faith we will not be moved.

The American people desire, and are determined to work for, a world in which all nations and all peoples are free to govern themselves as they see fit, and to achieve a decent and satisfying life. Above all else, our people desire, and are determined to work for, peace on earth—a just and lasting peace—based on genuine agreement freely arrived at by equals.

In the pursuit of these aims, the United States and other like-minded nations find themselves directly opposed by a regime with contrary aims and a totally different concept of life.

That regime adheres to a false philosophy which purports to offer freedom, security, and greater opportunity to mankind. Misled by this philosophy, many peoples have sacrificed their liberties only to learn to their sorrow that deceit and mockery, poverty and tyranny, are their reward.

That false philosophy is communism.

Communism is based on the belief that man is so weak and inadequate that he is unable to govern himself, and therefore requires the rule of strong masters.

Democracy is based on the conviction that man has the moral and intellectual capacity, as well as the inalienable right, to govern himself with reason and justice.

Communism subjects the individual to arrest without lawful cause, punishment without trial, and forced labor as the chattel of the state. It decrees what information he shall receive, what art he shall produce, what leaders he shall follow, and what thoughts he shall think. Democracy maintains that government is established for the benefit of the individual, and is charged with the responsibility of
In the coming years, our program for peace and freedom will emphasize four major courses of action.

First, we will continue to give unflinching support to the United Nations and related agencies, and we will continue to search for ways to strengthen their authority and increase their effectiveness. We believe that the United Nations will be strengthened by the new nations which are being formed in lands now advancing toward self-government under democratic principles.

Second, we will continue our programs for world economic recovery.

This means, first of all, that we must keep our full weight behind the European recovery program. We are confident of the success of this major venture in world recovery. We believe that our partners in this effort will achieve the status of self-supporting nations once again.

In addition, we must carry out our plans for reducing the barriers to world trade and increasing its volume. Economic recovery and peace itself depend on increased world trade.

Third, we will strengthen freedom-loving nations against the dangers of aggression.

We are now working out with a number of countries a joint agreement designed to strengthen the security of the North Atlantic area. Such an agreement would take the form of a collective defense arrangement within the terms of the United Nations Charter.

We have already established such a defense pact for the Western Hemisphere by the treaty of Rio de Janeiro.

The primary purpose of these agreements is to provide unmistakable proof of the joint determination of the free countries to resist armed attack from any quarter. Each country participating in these arrangements must contribute all it can to the common defense.

If we can make it sufficiently clear, in advance, that any armed attack affecting our national security would be met with overwhelming force, the armed attack might never occur.

I hope soon to send to the Senate a treaty respecting the North Atlantic security plan.

In addition, we will provide military advice and equipment to free nations which will cooperate with us in the maintenance of peace and security.

Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.

For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people.

The United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques. The material resources which we can afford to use for the assistance of other peoples are limited. But our imponderable resources in technical knowledge are constantly growing and are inexhaustible.

I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.

Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens.
We invite other countries to pool their technological resources in this undertaking. Their contributions will be warmly welcomed. This should be a cooperative enterprise in which all nations work together through the United Nations and its specialized agencies wherever practicable. It must be a worldwide effort for the achievement of peace, plenty, and freedom.

With the cooperation of business, private capital, agriculture, and labor in this country, this program can greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations and can raise substantially their standards of living.

Such new economic developments must be devised and controlled to benefit the peoples of the areas in which they are established. Guarantees to the investor must be balanced by guarantees in the interest of the people whose resources and whose labor go into these developments.

The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing.

All countries, including our own, will greatly benefit from a constructive program for the better use of the world's human and natural resources. Experience shows that our commerce with other countries expands as they progress industrially and economically.

Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge.

Only by helping the least fortunate of its members to help themselves can the human family achieve the decent, satisfying life that is the right of all people.

Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies—hunger, misery, and despair.

On the basis of these four major courses of action we hope to help create the conditions that will lead eventually to personal freedom and happiness for all mankind.

If we are to be successful in carrying out these policies, it is clear that we must have continued prosperity in this country and we must keep ourselves strong.

Slowly but surely we are weaving a world fabric of international security and growing prosperity.

We are aided by all who wish to live in freedom from fear—even by those who live today in fear under their own governments.

We are aided by all who want relief from the lies of propaganda—who desire truth and sincerity.

We are aided by all who desire self-government and a voice in deciding their own affairs.

We are aided by all who long for economic security—for the security and abundance that men in free societies can enjoy.

We are aided by all who desire freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom to live their own lives for useful ends.

Our allies are the millions who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In due time, as our stability becomes manifest, as more and more nations come to know the benefits of democracy and to participate in growing abundance, I believe that those countries which now oppose us will abandon their delusions and join with the free nations of the world in a just settlement of international differences.

Events have brought our American democracy to new influence and new responsibilities. They will test our courage, our devotion to duty, and our concept of liberty.

But I say to all men, what we have achieved in liberty, we will surpass in greater liberty.

Steadfast in our faith in the Almighty, we will advance toward a world where man's freedom is secure.

To that end we will devote our strength, our resources, and our firmness of resolve. With God's help, the future of mankind will be assured in a world of justice, harmony, and peace.
Appendix B

Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower woman
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—which range from halving poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015—form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest.

“We will have time to reach the Millennium Development Goals—worldwide and in most, or even all, individual countries—but only if we break with business as usual. We cannot win overnight. Success will require sustained action across the entire decade between now and the deadline. It takes time to train the teachers, nurses and engineers; to build the roads, schools and hospitals; to grow the small and large businesses able to create the jobs and income needed. So we must start now. And we must more than double global development assistance over the next few years. Nothing less will help to achieve the Goals.”

United Nations Secretary-General
Appendix C

United States Foreign Aid Chart

**Net ODA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>Change 2004/05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current (USD m)</td>
<td>19,705</td>
<td>27,622</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant (2004 USD m)</td>
<td>19,705</td>
<td>26,688</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC/GNI</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral share</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
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</tr>
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**Top Ten Recipients of gross ODA (USD million)**

1. Iraq 6,925
2. Afghanistan 1,060
3. Egypt 750
4. Sudan 575
5. Ethiopia 552
6. Jordan 363
7. Colombia 363
8. Palestinian Admin. Areas 227
9. Uganda 225
10. Pakistan 224

**By Region (USD m)**

- Sub-Saharan Africa
- South and Central Asia
- Other Asia and Oceania
- Middle East and North Africa
- Latin America and Caribbean
- Europe
- Unspecified

**By Sector**

- Education, Health & Population
- Other Social Infrastructure
- Economic Infrastructure
- Production
- Multisector
- Programme Assistance
- Debt Relief
- Emergency Aid
- Unspecified

Source: OECD, DAC.

http://www.oecd.org/dac
Appendix D

Survey conducted by: Frieda Arenos, Students for International Training (SIT)
Email: farenos@uvm.edu
Telephone: 74604973

This project is being conducted by Frieda Arenos, an American student with Students for International Training, an international study program based out of Dschang, Cameroon. The project concerns an analysis of different perspectives of development, surveying the differences between the West and the Third World in waging successful development projects in Cameroon. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability and feel free to contact Frieda Arenos at the above information should you have any questions. Remember, no answer is a wrong answer!

Name                       Date
Organization Affiliation
Role in Organization
Number of Years worked for Organization
Nationality                Age (Optional)

1. Define development in your OWN words.

2. Define development by your organization’s standards.

3. Define development as you THINK it applies to those living and working for development projects in the West, specifically America.

4. Define development as you THINK it applies to those living and working for development projects in the Third World, specifically Cameroon.

5. Can you think of examples of successful Western development projects in Cameroon; present or past? Why were they successful?

6. Can you think of examples of unsuccessful Western development projects in Cameroon; present or past? Why were they unsuccessful?

7. Can you think of examples of successful Cameroonian development projects in Cameroon; present or past? Why were they successful?

8. Can you think of examples of unsuccessful Cameroonian development projects in Cameroon; present or past? Why were they unsuccessful?

9. In YOUR opinion, is the West, specifically America, successful in bringing development to the Third World? Why or why not?

10. What do you believe is the solution to improving overall development in Cameroon?
Appendix E

Le questionnaire a mené par : Frieda Arenos, Students for International Training (SIT)
Email : farenos@uvm.edu
Téléphone : 74 64 90 73

Ce projet est mené par Frieda Arenos, une étudiante Américaine avec le "Programme Students for International Training (SIT)". C'est un programme international avec son centre à Dschang, Cameroun. Le projet est une analyse des différentes perspectives de développement. Il essaie de dégager les succès et les échecs entre les projets de l'Ouest dans les États-Unis et ceux du Sud notamment le Cameroun.

S'il vous plaît, répondez aux questions qui suit, et si vous avez des questions pour Frieda Arenos, écrivez ou téléphonez à l'adresse en haut de page.
Si vous plaît, il n'y a pas des mauvaises réponses !

Nom___________________________________________________ Date________________

Organisation_________________________________________________________________

Votre rôle dans l'Organisation___________________________________________________

Nombre des années que vous avez travaillées pour l'Organisation ______________________

Nationalité______________________________________ Age (facultatif) _______________

1. Définir développement avec vos termes.

2. Définir développement suivant votre organisation.

3. Définir développement d'après votre avis suivant qu’il s'applique dans le contexte occidental, particulièrement aux États-Unis.
   (Les avis du développement pour les personnes occidentales).

4. Définir développement d'après votre avis suivant qu’il s'applique dans le contexte dans le Sud, particulièrement au Cameroun.
   (Les avis du développement pour les personnes Camerounaises).

5. Est-ce que vous pouvez donner des exemples de projets de développements occidentaux, qui ont réussi au Cameroun ? Pourquoi est-ce qu’ils ont réussi ?

6. Est-ce que vous pouvez donner des exemples de projets des développements occidentaux, qui ont été des échecs au Cameroun ? Pourquoi n'ont-ils été des succès?

7. Est-ce que vous pouvez donner des exemples de projets des développements Camerounais au Cameroun qui ont été des succès ? Pourquoi est-ce qu’ils ont réussi?

8. Est-ce que vous pouvez donner des exemples de projets des développements Camerounais au Cameroun qui sont soldé par des échecs ? Pourquoi n'ont-ils été des succès ?

9. A votre avis, est-ce que les actions de développement de l’Ouest, particulièrement les États-Unis, peut-il contribuer au développement des pays du Sud, notamment la Cameroun ? Pourquoi ?

10. A votre avis, quelles sont les solutions pour accroître le développement au Cameroun ?
Appendix F

Formal Interview Questions

1. What did you think about the topic of development before coming to Cameroon/as a child/before you started working for your organization?

2. Can you give me an example of some of your organization’s development projects currently in Cameroon?

3. Do you believe your organization is successful in bringing development to Cameroon?

4. How do you see economics fitting in with the discussion of development?

5. Do you believe economics increases overall happiness/quality of life?

6. How do you define poverty?

7. It is believed that when President Harry S. Truman of the United States made his Inaugural Address in 1949, development as an aid concept was created. In your opinion, what are the origins of development and do you agree with Truman’s use of the definition?

8. What do you think about neo-colonialism? Do you believe that the West has infiltrated Cameroon/caused a lack of diversity of culture and custom?

9. Would the South/Third World have created its own sense of development if the West had not intervened throughout history?

10. Do you believe Cameroon is developed? Why or why not?

11. Based on whether you believe the West is successful in bringing development to Cameroon, why or why is it not successful?

12. Do you find working in the office gives you a different perspective on development than if you worked in the field?
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