

**Choosing a Career in
*International Development***

***A Practical Guide to Working in the
Professions of International Development***

Donovan Russell

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Manufactured in the United States of America.

To my wife, Carol A. Russell

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Foreword

This book discusses what it means to work in the various fields of International Development. It was written to help answer questions like: What exactly is International Development? What does one do when working in it? What skills and knowledge are required? What are the careers and positions in International Development and what are the responsibilities of those who hold them? What are the relationships of people who work in International Development to donor agencies and countries where projects are carried out? What are their relationships to international organizations, companies, NGO's, Universities, and other organizations that manage donor funded development projects? What are the rewards of working in International Development? What are the downsides to such work? How can one best prepare for it?

I have known the author for many years. His vast experience makes him highly qualified to write this book which provides practical down to earth information for students and people who are thinking about a change in career. It is also meant for those who teach or advise students and for international development specialists and administrators. While the book addresses specific sectors, it is written in such a way that it will be of use to those who have an interest in any of the fields of development. It addresses not only what International Development is but also the various ways that it is carried out. The views of

both development specialists and host countries are discussed and explained. A message that comes through in various sections speaks to how a career in development can affect one's professional and personal lives.

The book is written in normal expository style interspersed with descriptions of real life conditions and traditions, real life development stories, and the actual challenges of various development initiatives. It speaks to conditions that are favorable to development and discusses their interconnectedness. It discusses categories of development and expresses views on how it should be approached. Of special interest are the perspectives of local hosts on development initiatives together with thoughts as to why these views are held. Using voices from host countries, the book speaks about cultures, explaining how they affect the work of development specialists and host country partners.

The author provides views on why individuals, organizations, and governments are involved in development. There is discussion on how different approaches to development grow out of differing interests and motivations. Several of these approaches are described. The author lists strategies, steps, and exercises that readers may follow in order to decide what, within International Development, they are most interested in and suited for. This includes reflection on who one is and what they believe related to kinds of work and to approaches in their field of interest.

The author also explains the steps that are taken while a project is formulated. This should help students who have chosen development as a career to better prepare. Also, for the benefit of those preparing, the author describes various types of organization that engage in development work.

The book describes specific sectors, or fields, and discusses them in terms of available careers and positions. Parts of

the book indicate how initiatives in a sector may come together towards the solution of a major national problem. The book discusses how local conditions affect project work and notes the many kinds of action a development project may employ.

The chapter labeled “Working in Education” describes real life problems faced by a nation and challenges readers with exercise tasks whereby they conceptualize a development intervention, develop a strategy, determine steps that must be taken to operationalize a project, imagine working through approvals with stakeholders, organize staff and other resources that will be needed, coordinate with local institutions, design a project communications plan, develop an implementation plan, and manage supervision and monitoring. Each task is described in detail and readers are asked to relate these responsibilities to the experiential and academic background they would like to have. This section of the book also describes short to long term assignments one might be given, including everything from leading a major team to carrying out a one person research effort. True to life vignettes are used in the Education chapter (and in other chapters) to bring these challenges to life.

Each of the chapters that describe a sector are stylistically somewhat different. In their own way, the chapters provide information on a field, list examples of specific development positions, discuss coming face to face with one’s assignment, speak to attitudes that can be helpful, note approaches to work, discuss how various organizations proceed with their work, call attention to strides made in the field, and point out why development continues to be vital to our future. Some of this is presented through real life situations and heart to heart story dialogue. There is discussion throughout the book on special challenges for development professionals and development teams. There are also listings of organizations which are engaged in International Development. The final chapter brings one

back to the reason that Dr. Russell wrote the book and to the central question for readers. It is labeled “Character, Beliefs, Convictions and Practices, Is this Career for Me?”

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Introduction

The intent of this book is to provide a practical down to earth description of international development that is useful to people who are considering whether or not to make it a career.

There are many ways of looking at international development. One approach views it in the context of human development, i.e. the development of a better quality of life for individuals. The many initiatives in the field, e.g. in healthcare, education, gender equality, human rights, disaster preparedness, environmental care, agricultural improvement, community development, conflict mitigation, democratization, institution building, infrastructure development, shelter, water and sanitation, vocational training, improved conditions for small business, economic reform, structural adjustment etc., are seen from the point of view of improving the human condition. This kind of thinking will be a foundation for much of what is presented in the book.

“Human development, as an approach, is concerned with what I take to be the basic development idea: namely, advancing the richness of human life, rather than the richness of the economy in which human beings live, which is only a part of it.”¹

“The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people’s choices. People often value achievements that do not show up immediately, in income or growth figures, e.g. greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms, and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives.”²

Whatever your specialty, viewing development through the scope of human development is useful because that is what the enterprise is ultimately about. As development specialists take on new levels of responsibility over the course of a career, which remove them from the reward of interaction with local counterparts, communities, institutions, enterprises, and local colleagues, it is quite possible to lose sight of international development as basically human development.

If indeed you go into one of the fields of international development and have the opportunity of shoulder to shoulder work with your hosts under local conditions, you will be working on human development – be it research and planning together, teaching together, counseling together, performing health procedures together, advocating together, organizing together, building together, developing proposals together, evaluating together or budgeting and managing together. As well as the contributions you will make, life for you will be a great and fulfilling adventure. You will make close and valued friendships across rich cultural divides; friendships that will last always. And you will have the privilege of assisting people who desperately need help. But with all that you contribute through your work and through the friendships that you make, in the end you will find that you gained overwhelmingly more than you gave. Your life in

development work will give you an opportunity to see and understand the needs – but also the great strengths of people who have a very different background from you. In addition, having challenging responsibilities in a different culture will result in your gaining significant new social, psychological, managerial, and technical strengths.

Because development work is cross cultural, it will give you an opportunity to see yourself more accurately and assess you own character in terms of fundamentals like egocentrism, paternalism, trust, empathy, decision making, problem solving, and feelings about the inherent worth of others. It will give you an opportunity to receive the experiential benefits of the world's diversity and become truly engaged in critical issues, some of them having life and death importance. It will provide you with input that is critical to gaining a better understanding of interdependencies across the world's natural, social, cultural, economic, and political environments. You will have opportunities to absorb that you would not otherwise have, learning on matters of knowledge and sharing, on matters of respect, appreciation, communications, humility, and the place of mankind in programs and projects – either at the center of consideration – or secondary to the impersonal models, systems, plans, and bureaucracies that sometimes permeate our work. You will have opportunities to become one with other places and peoples, where you and they come to truly want the best for the other. And unlike other work, you will have the opportunity, if you so choose, to experience the vulnerability of those you serve; to be alive to shared humanity. Development work gives you a chance to truly get next to the world's challenges. It leads to striking insights on the sometimes jarring realities you come to know. It also promotes an identification with and love for other peoples and places. Read for example, the paragraph that follows by a development professional who is leaving a place and a people he has come to know, love, and respect:

“Look, look from this rooftop of Africa, look from this Cathedral like pinnacle in the Mountain Kingdom. Look down silent canyons, toward Transkei, toward Natal, toward the Eastern Cape. Listen, listen to the wind, listen to revered ancestors watching over their people and whispering of new arrivals. Listen in the wind for a place where people have time for each other and there is security in family and community. Where there is respect and courtesy between the generations and fundamental sharing is still a virtue. Where life is a spiritual thing and being is as important as doing or having. What does the wind say about a place such as this? What does it foretell?”³

1. Amaryta Sen, *Human Development Report*, New York, United Nations, 1990, p.1

2. Mahbub ul Haq, *Human Development Report*, New York, United Nations, 1990, p.1

3. Donovan Russell, *Right Before His Very Eyes*, New York, Writers Showcase, 2001, p.ix

Personal Statement

There are a great many reasons that individuals, organizations, nations, and international agencies work in international development. To illustrate the need and urgency, I will speak to some of the more dramatic and compelling reasons in the following section.

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you invited me in.”¹

Human Development

The UN Human Development Report² provides startling information on global undernourishment, e.g. Eritrea 73%, Republic of the Congo 71%, Burundi 68%, Tajikistan 61%, Sierra Leone 50%, and Zambia 49%. Hunger and poverty are not stand alone conditions. They exist where there is lack of opportunity and where there is social inequality. In turn, the debility of hunger and poverty keeps people from overcoming disadvantage and from accessing opportunity. Charitable relief is important but is a temporary palliative. If root causes are not addressed, hunger returns. Someone has said that when we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what belongs to them. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice.

The following points out major causes of abject poverty. Allow me to share an actual account. My local office mate was quiet that morning. When I asked what was wrong, he told me that a young boy who worked on his grandfather's farm had committed suicide the night before because he failed his grade seven leaving exam. That's how important education is as a possible escape from the disadvantages some families have experienced for generations. I have been in countries across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East over the past 35 years, working on projects to help people gain at least some education. One of those projects aims to enhance opportunities by constructing more schools and by improving teaching practices, instructional materials, supervision, parental participation, and funding. It works to ensure access for all and to upgrade the quality of instruction. The task is huge. This is a country of 135 million people packed into an area the size of Wisconsin. In the five primary grades, there are nearly 18 million students, 78,000 schools, and 300,000 teachers. Official enrollment has increased rapidly over the last ten years but conditions in the schools make parents wonder if their children would be better off at home. Only about half get to grade five. One of the more disadvantaged schools might be characterized by 80 to 100 children per teacher, no working toilets, running water, electricity, windows, heating or cooling, practically no instructional supplies, and unqualified teachers whose practices discourage students. Discrimination against certain ethnic groups and girls is common in some parts of the country. Children may have school for only two to three hours and classes often start late and close early because children have to walk great distances. Many teachers and students are absent – a function of the necessity for children to work at home and for teachers to have other jobs or small businesses.

One can describe equally unfortunate conditions in other parts of the lives of the poor in their housing, water and sanitation, air quality, food, etc. In the capital city, I regularly walked past a park. Women lived in the tall grass there with their children. They bathed, washed clothes, and drank from a polluted lake. A main source of their food was handouts. The air was deadly. Children from the park would follow me on crowded streets and across heavy traffic, crying for more than I had to give. Their weakened conditions left them susceptible to disease. One crippled young man would spot me and follow through the crowded blocks on hands and knees. These people spend every waking hour searching for food. They are trapped on the survival level of Maslow's hierarchy of human motivation. It's unfair that the extremely poor never have a chance at anything even approaching self-actualization and dignity. They are powerless and routinely suffer social and economic discrimination.

I vividly remember too, street women in another country who were so desperate they inflicted burns on their naked children, hoping to attract the sympathy of strangers who could help with food. Near starvation had stunted their children. No doubt they would not be just physically stunted. Psychological and cognitive stunting would happen and energy would be sapped. They would be easy prey for disease and many would eventually die from ordinary diarrhea. In much of Asia, one can witness an environment stressed to the breaking point by population, something which once led to the disappearance of civilizations in other parts of the world. For example, in Nepal, erosion has washed away the soil of many subsistence farmers, people who had only an acre or so to begin with. In Bangladesh, millions have no choice but to drink arsenic laden water because that is what is in their wells. Millions of children in much of the developing world should be wearing masks against eventual respiratory sickness. And in Africa, I recall the poor rural women of

Lesotho, Ethiopia, and Mali who carry water every day for hours, leaving little time or energy for anything else. Being so close to the edge of existence in these countries leaves them defenseless in times of drought, flood, malaria, or dengue fever.

The situation for the privileged in underdeveloped countries is dramatically different. There are millionaires in the poorest of them, while others live outside the formal economy, having virtually no cash at all. The privileged are not in the public schools. Like their parents before them, they are in good private schools at home or abroad. They will become the country's professional and business leaders. Poor education is just one factor associated with poverty and hunger. There are many others. Each is both cause and effect. For example, poverty is a major reason that schools are disadvantaged and lacking education is one reason that societies are poor. Poverty is responsible in large part for inadequate health care and poor health contributes to poverty. *Peace is necessary to a society being able to work toward development and development is an important condition for stability and peace.* "If you want peace, work for justice,"³ wrote Paul the VI.

The UN Human Development Report and other resources provide data containing clues to a peoples' condition. A study of the factors involved is a start in unraveling causes and identifying remedies. Solutions have to address systemic, structural, and even cultural matters. Being at the bottom for generations seems to make people think that is where they are supposed to be. Many interrelated factors contribute to hunger and poverty, e.g. culture, beliefs, traditions, the role and treatment of women, priorities in public spending, labor rights and practices, land tenure and use, natural resources and the environment, technology diffusion, the structure of trade and trade policies, corruption and crime, security, labor

productivity, political stability, bureaucratic efficiency, demographics, human rights, leadership, and governance. It is not because we are smarter or more virtuous that we live in privilege. The extremely poor I have known are intelligent, gracious, and good. In this interdependent world we are sometimes privileged because they are exploited. And we, not they, have the ability to change things.

1. *Matthew 25:35*

2. *UN Human Development Report, New York, United Nations, 2006*

3. *John P. Hogan, Credible Signs of Christ Alive, New York, Rowman and Littlefield, 2003, p. ix*

Chapter I

International Development

Separate and Complementary

T*he two most common divisions in development* are not set apart in the book's chapters. For the record though, they are (1) disaster relief and humanitarian aid and (2) international development. Disaster relief and humanitarian assistance are usually short term efforts related to immediate crisis events. They may well have elements of longer term and more sustainable development, especially as they are re-designed during an evolving crisis. International development, on the other hand, is usually thought of as dealing with longer term and deeply imbedded issues. It deals with issues of several related types. It is not crisis focused, although by comparison to areas of the world with less vexing problems, the problems it addresses are indeed sometimes crises. When reference is made to international development in this book, it may be to either disaster relief and humanitarian aid or to longer term and multi-faceted development. Often, a specific challenge in development will have elements of both immediate disaster and long term problems. A comprehensive development project may be designed to address all of the challenges of the situation whether they are closely interrelated or not and will therefore, have initiatives of both short term and long term duration.

Common Considerations

Sustainability is a key concept in this field and a truly sustainable development project is one which will be able to carry on, once international involvement has ceased. Sustainability can relate to efforts under both disaster relief and longer term international development projects, although it usually has a higher profile in the design of a regular development project. A sustainable project takes account of economic, environmental, and social factors in organizing initiatives which are not dependent on temporary resources. A sustainable initiative will not be dependent on more natural resources than the environment can provide, more financial resources than will be available from usual sources, more technical abilities than will be available when the project is finished, or more civic support than the community and stakeholders will generate on a continuous basis.

International development efforts may consist of a single project to address a fairly well-defined societal problem or a series of distinct projects that are targeted on separate but related problems in society. In the latter, the effort may be sequenced or folded into a single large and multifaceted program of coordinated projects.

Integrated development may employ involved problem solving initiatives that address a problem from various points of view, e.g. human behaviors and attitudes, habits, culture, politics, economic practices, management attitudes and practices, etc. Integrated development may be rolling and perhaps never ending as it becomes obvious that the solving of one problem in a society or institution is dependent on solving another. In a truly aspiring community, this may go on and on. Success may give rise to further initiatives that are inspired by accomplishment. It could be for example, that to address what at first is thought to be a straight economic policy problem, a project

might discover that it needs to become involved in the empowerment of local women, environmental management, issues of accountability, matters of class favoritism, or all of these.

Top down and bottom up – There is of course the concept that development is most successfully addressed from the top through adoption and internalization by host institutions of policy initiatives. Parallel to this is the long standing conviction that development is most successful when it is bottom up through, for example, interactive dialogue and instruction, organizational development, education for critical consciousness, cooperative work, community endeavors, etc. While development specialists may disagree on the relative importance of each, most projects employ both top down and bottom up initiatives during practical implementation, even if not in original design.

Equality has become one of the main goals of most development programs and projects. It has become accepted that inequality within an institution, organization, community, or nation can generate poverty and related conditions. Inequality of access for instance, can have a serious impact on level of education attained, skill acquisition, personal health, shelter, type of employment, income level, rights, and social or political participation in a community or nation.

Participation is a primary factor in international development because it is the key to a clear view of needs and realistic aspirations. It is also the key to reasonable project design, host ownership of project goals and activities, appropriate and meaningful execution of project actions, institutional, community, and government support, and local empowerment and sustainability.

Rights based development's main goal is the strengthening of those less than fully empowered and promotes the opening to fair opportunity for all groups. It stands for the development of individual, community, institutional, organizational, and governmental capacities in the interest of maximum achievement and full benefit. It works for removal of inhibitors to rights and opportunities and promotes movement toward full personal potential.

Capacity building accompanies most development project goals. It furthers the ability of individuals, leaders, institutions, organizations, businesses, and governments to manage effectively and efficiently. It attempts to enable. It may deal with the upgrading of legal or contract frameworks, address dozens of policies and functions within an institution, or, in contrast, with the behaviors of employees related to responsibilities and position descriptions. It may address strategies, budgeting, scheduling, motivation and rewards, evaluation, management styles, and any number of things in order that capacity to accomplish as desired is fulfilled.

Sectors are the common areas of development work and usually correspond with the major areas of endeavor by governments. Development projects often work within a subsector, e.g. Nursing Education within the Health Sector, Vocational Education within the Education Sector, or Aviation within the Transportation Sector. Sometimes a project will work in every subsector of a government sector. In some cases, a project may work in more than one sector at the same time, e.g. Transportation and Immigration. Some of the major sectors of work in international development are Education, Health, Environment, Agriculture, Urban Planning and Administration, Finance, Justice and Human Rights, Labor, Water and Sanitation, Shelter, Disaster Relief, and Refugee Assistance.

Strategy, Planning, and Assessment – Many good management tools are commonly used in international development, e.g. basic research, country assessments, goal development, sector assessments, country strategies, project identification, project assistance plans, thorough requests for proposals, detailed proposals on what is to be done, and how, and to what degree, logical frameworks to integrate, coordinate and guide actions, and work plans. There are also guides on suggested international standards. Many national development agencies have them as do other bodies such as Regional Development Banks, UN Agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, etc.

A widespread initiative – On September 18, 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 55/2: United Nations Millennium Declaration.¹ The declaration was broad and encompassing. Among the issues it addressed were world development goals. One-hundred eighty-nine nations made a promise to free people from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations. The pledge turned into eight Millennium Development Goals, some to be accomplished by 2015 and some to be completed by 2020. They are:

- (1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*
- (2) Achieve universal primary education*
- (3) Promote gender equality and empower women*
- (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.*

1. The Millennium Development Goals, New York, UNDP, 2000

Chapter II

A Complex and Worthy Profession

Factors that go beyond those usually considered when development projects are implemented can make a project worthwhile or if ignored, significantly reduce its potential. Much in overseas development is managed in western business-like ways. This is understandable and natural given the orientation of most donors. But it can blind us to subtle considerations that if overlooked, make our efforts less worthwhile than they would otherwise be.

A Host Country View

Let us imagine what a Deputy Minister of Education whose nation is a place of majestic river valleys, silent canyons, and stately mountains might have said when addressing host country and expatriate professionals early in a nationwide development project. His message might have been this:

“Improvement in education has to happen through my country’s social and political milieu and administrative culture. To be sustained, it has to be imbedded in our consciousness and in our institutions. It cannot be treated in isolation from our way of looking at things or the everyday concerns and interests of our communities. In our work together, we will have to look beyond the usual researched reasons for such things as inequity,

ineffectiveness, inadequacy, inefficiency, irrelevance, and poor quality.”¹ He might have gone on to say, “Development in this country cannot be done through technical interventions only. Project successes will not be sustained unless they have been cooperatively planted and nurtured long enough to have deep roots. Long and gentle nurturing will have to be done by credible helpers, both local and others, who know our people and their ways, and who know how to make things happen here. A donor’s need to pursue predetermined deliverables can cause implementers to take actions yielding only temporary success. Lasting impact will necessitate attention to deep non-technical matters. The cultural, social, political, and personal must be factored into our work together. A technically excellent intervention can fail without this. A technically less desirable intervention can succeed, given the right human approach.”²

What did the Deputy Minister mean? One could write a book on this but let us briefly reflect on it. Important and impressive things continue to be accomplished in overseas development. Of course there is always room for improvement. Doing things in ways that make them sustainable is high on our list of goals. It is by far best if interventions can be put into place in a way that gives people a chance to take them as their own. This is a complicated challenge and it is this to which the Deputy Minister was referring.

Implications

Development demands a lot from those involved. If we do not understand the country in which we are working and have not established trusting relationships, we will likely proceed in unproductive ignorance. Each development setting is unique. However, in the traditional setting being spoken of here, people are born into place and position, rules are inherited, things are done in very personal ways,

change can be threatening to the web of life, looking out for one's own is a duty, work, and even business sometimes takes second place to social process, decisions for the modern sector may be mysteriously made by someone outside of its formal structure, sharing goes beyond our concept of it, individualism may not be seen as we see it, communities strive for consensus – sometimes even at the expense of progress, materialism is not a significant value, productivity is governed in mysterious ways, and a distinctive sensory environment and history are revered and exert much influence.

It is important in this setting then, that development initiatives be given time to achieve legitimacy and credibility, that counterparts achieve relationships which can facilitate action, that verbal protocols and written agreements be understood, and that interventions are introduced in such a way that they can become accepted and ultimately valued.

It is important as well, that development partners know how to proceed in ways that strengthen rather than strain host institutions. In part, this demands that development specialists understand the cultural range of their counterpart's possible actions and decision making and know how to get things done through the country's traditional as well as modern factions.

It is important too, that development initiatives start at an appropriate size and scale up as understanding and institutions mature. Needless to say this requires considerable awareness of the situation. Just being sophisticated enough to recognize whether an agreement has been truly reached can be challenging. All of this needs to be done without abdicating the professional role and responsibility for which a development specialist has been employed.

Getting a true meeting of minds in a culturally alien setting can be misunderstood. With the possibility that the cultural divide between developed and developing societies may be growing, sensitivity based on true interest, close engagement, and caring can be the difference between success or failure. An expedient one sided approach may seemingly get things done but is not likely to facilitate sustainable progress.

In this setting too, it is critical to somehow match the stream of tradition and wisdom which supports a way of life with the river of inputs and initiatives that a modern development project can bring. It is too easy to overlook the reluctant voice of one's hosts and to be oblivious to local perspectives and motivations.

Also, it is important to understand the complexity of internalizing a cause or innovation. One needs to somehow learn what may be too alien or too far removed from what is allowed of his or her hosts.

Development managers do well to recognize that individuals and groups in every setting are at various places on a social continuum and are at different places in confidence. A development specialist's ability to perceive and understand this is dependent on sincere interaction with colleagues, interaction that achieves trust based on respect and that allows communication and exploration beyond cultural boundaries.

These are considerations for professionals who would make the development process come alive for local colleagues, institutions, and communities. It would be based on what is truly meaningful to those colleagues. Bringing about this sort of thing is fascinating and enormously rewarding. The Deputy Minister was making a case for this kind of thoughtful approach. Let us reflect a bit further on a thoughtful approach in the points below.

For a project to succeed and be sustained, host country people must become willing, able, and organized to eventually manage reforms themselves. Some development organizations overlook this. This removes the opportunity for a people to display initiative and to feel responsible. It can contribute to an unseen and long term psychological dependency and can inhibit development from actually happening. It is important that professionals in development understand this.

For the most part, development professionals believe in genuine host participation. However, some professionals can be overwhelmed by the momentum of the organization which employs them. Excessive momentum can be generated by themes of development that are in vogue in the profession, by the influence of outside policy research, new techniques and technologies, and new theories of management. There is also the situation where expected outcomes are unrealistic, making it difficult for a development specialist or manager to employ participatory methods. Regular forthright communications between a development specialist or manager and the home office can go a long way toward remedying this.

Host country people cannot work meaningfully toward a development unless they have time to cope with its complexity, understand the organization it will require, and perceive an outcome that is compatible with their values. This is a very important consideration at the time of project design. It also argues for field specialists who have the ability to painstakingly revise projects in concert with home offices, donors, and host country participants.

Changing agendas imposed from outside can promote vertical allegiances that divert local attention from the horizontal person to person, institution to institution, and community to community collaboration that is critical to local decision making, ownership, self-reliance,

and sustainability. Regular and forthright communications between a development specialist or manager and the home office can go a long way toward obviating excessive interference of this kind.

Laid on bought and paid for development as opposed to deep rooted, shoulder to shoulder development, can mislead donors about accomplishment, leading them to short cut the time that true development takes.

A cafeteria style of development can lead to a periodic taking up of new themes before participants are ready, unrealistically raising expectations only to demoralize participants when an effort is replaced with something else. This is contrary to the systematic laying of foundations and the accomplishment of conditions necessary to being able to take the next steps in appropriate measure and at the appropriate time. However, if used in an enlightened way, this kind of intervention does not have to be destructive.

People can only work productively in accordance with their readiness and preparation. As in anything, it is necessary to become fully accomplished at a level before being able to go further. Also, if an initiative employs techniques or resources that are not going to be available when a donor has finished, hosts will not be able to make it theirs and sustain it. Working outside the long term capability of one's hosts can create unreal expectations and set them up for failure.

Bringing about meaningful, appropriate, and sustained change requires credibility. Credibility in development is generated by true partnerships where the problems and dilemmas of a people are understood and taken on through close and longstanding association, as if they were problems and dilemmas of the assistance personnel.

It is critical in development that host country people gain belief in themselves and faith in the predictability and the possibility of accomplishment. That cannot be achieved from an expert's reports or preassembled donor funds.

1. *Comments on a Basic and Non-Formal Education Systems Project, Donovan Russell in a talk at Cornell Institute for Public Affairs, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 2010.*

2. *Ibid*