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Internship in Sociology

I. Introduction

As a part of my internship with the Q Fund, performed an evaluation of the ways other similar non-profit organizations whose focus is promoting sustainability in third world countries have acquired and maintained funding, and what sorts of programs they choose to invest in to achieve sustainability. This objective encompasses the way that the organizations themselves has ensured that they remain viable through their fundraising practices, as well as the way that they have ensured the sustainability of the programs for which they are responsible. To carry out these evaluations, I found organizations similar to the Q Fund, and looked at how they sustain their funding in comparison with the Q Fund's current primary fundraising initiative, One March. I examined the effectiveness of One March in light of the levels and forms of participation, and the guiding principles of their approach to their sustainability in all its forms.

II. Literature Review

Choudhury, M., Zaman, S., & Harahap, S. (2007). An Evolutionary Topological Theory of Participatory Socioeconomic Development. *World Futures: The Journal of General Evolution*, 63(8), 584-598. doi:10.1080/02604020701681219.

Faced with the increasing poverty of third world nations, industrialized nations are moving towards encouraging participatory development programs, which engage the local communities at a grassroots level to remedy cycles of poverty and achieve just, sustainable societies.

A theory of participatory development that I examined was one which seeks to discern the interplay of social, economic, political, ethical and environmental forces on

the development of impoverished nations. This theory emerges from the notion that true development “is a process which enables human beings to realize their potential, build self confidence and live lives of dignity and fulfillment” (2). The paper on participatory development theory that I focused on reviewed the presentation of sustainable development as it relates to environmental ethics at the World Commission for Environment and Development (1987). The theory that emerged from this conference, in relation to contemporary discussions of development encourages a movement away from what they refer to as classical, or economic based, development practices to move towards development which places social justice and ethics at the forefront.

The paper notes the words of the World Bank, which despite its focus on development for economic purposes has begun to address social development, saying, “The strategy [...] recognizes that poverty is more than inadequate income or human development—it is also vulnerability and a lack of voice, power, and representation. With this multidimensional view of poverty comes greater complexity in poverty reduction strategies, because more factors—such as social and cultural forces—need to be taken into account. The way to deal with this complexity is through empowerment and participation—local, national, and international.

The message continues, articulating the need for wide collaboration for the sake of local ecosystems and food chains, local culture and socio and political stability.

Scheunpflug, A., & Asbrand, B. (2006). Global education and education for sustainability. *Environmental Education Research*, 12(1), 33-46. doi:10.1080/13504620500526446.

This article discusses the idea of global education, and sustaining global education in third world countries specifically. It looks at the normative idea of justice and the way that this influences educational goals. The paper looks at two schools of thought for approaching the issue. The first is the action-theory, which is grounded in a holistic view of the world and human life. Within this approach, normative educational goals and focuses include solidarity, tolerance, empathy and a holistic world view. This approach assumes a linkage between information, awareness and acting. The other approach is system theory, which is shaped by constructivism and systems theory. This approach entails that the goal of education be to prepare learners with abilities adequate enough to make them a functioning member of society, especially with the competencies to deal with uncertainty and instability.

The article describes the emergence of a conceptual debate about the ideas of education being for sustainability or global education. According to the author, proponents of global education have been accused of traditionalism that is no longer viable in the current day. Towards those who support global education, “it was argued that topics would not being reflected in an integrative manner and that by emphasizing the Third World regional aspect and the prospect of justice, the key competencies in regard to the problems of sustainability would not be covered.” Critics also said that education that does not focus on sustainability would enable learners to be imbued with a false sense of global justice, and a misunderstanding of systemic problems.

On the other hand, those who do not support sustainability do so because they believe that local, ecological problems will usurp the place of global issues.

The article closes with a discussion of the importance in clearly discerning what is meant by the word, development. The author argues that the word has undergone transition in meaning, being particularly affected by the postwar notion of realizing justice through development. Also, it is difficult to define development in light of globalization, and the increasingly difficulty in discerning the origins of injustice.

Foster, J. (2001). Education as sustainability. *Environmental Education Research*, 7(2), 153-165. doi:10.1080/13504620120043162.

This article focuses on the necessity of cohesiveness and cooperation with the natural environment to produce sustainable remedies to injustice and poverty. Throughout the article, the author speaks of how to determine what constitutes environmental responsibility and respect. The author writes from the perspective of a person who is not only an advocate of environmental education, but a practitioner of it, as they are involved in a graduate program that integrates environmental, cultural and social study to achieve an understanding of the necessity of placing the environment at the center of social development endeavors. The author advocates the following objectives in their education program of environmental awareness, including: the way the planet's life-sustaining systems flourish, the importance of maintaining the delicate balance of these systems by living in harmony with them, and the skills which this will require; and the reasons why 'non-sustainable' activities come about, and the contribution which the individual makes to them. Pursuing an understanding of these topics also includes examining man's relationship with the environment historically, as well as relying on philosophy to examine the ethical dimensions of the environmental agenda. The author notes that the study of drama and literature encourages consideration of implicit motives.

The author articulates that the primary intention of this proposal is not to propose education for sustainability, rather that the subject be approached with an ongoing individual and collective habit of attention to time and change within the natural order.

The author cites a definition of environmentalism, and by association the movement towards global sustainability which states that both require internalizing a notion of limits. The author arrives at the thesis that “the basic sustainability model of human continuance through permanent living self-adjustment to systemic constraint grows naturally from the metaphorical root of environmental concern.”

Banae, M., & Yandell, D. (2006). DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES: THE CASE OF AFRICA. *Review of Human Factor Studies*, 12(1), 114-133. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier database.

This article examines the present aid and development practices in Sub-Saharan Africa, and why they have been largely unsuccessful. The author states that it is imperative that the western nations who give funds be willing to Examining current aid programs and their reasons for failure is a key to developing alternatives that have the potential for success. The author contends that a contributing factor to the lack of success in Africa has been the cultural differences between Africa and the western world. Direct foreign aid, natural resource development, and tourism-based development strategies are examined to evaluate how programs will effect future development.

The author compares the post war Marshall Plan for Europe to the situation in Africa, European leaders, after the describing how European leaders, used aid-resources that were available under the Marshall Plan to rebuild their ruined economies and to create new opportunities for growth.

The author states that the reason for the failure of aid dollars to elicit change in Africa has largely been due to money being misspent, or redirected into the hands of the powerful, corrupt elite. The author cites an example of corruption in Liberia, saying: In Liberia a new government was formed in 2003 after 15 years of war. Former militia members and warlords constitute a large portion of the new leadership. Despite the presence of a large U.N. peacekeeping mission, the regime is widely judged to have failed to reconcile the country, and repeatedly have chosen actions for personal gain at the expense of the country's future. This is a prime example of human factor decay; "attitudes, behaviors, and actions that are contrary to principle-centeredness, moral injunctions, and ethical standards".

In order to remedy these failings, the author contends that development must begin with a "positive human factor development to support the ideals of equality, honesty, and integrity."

The aid that Africa has received has been distinctly different than that of the Marshall plan. African governments have received aid in the form of humanitarian relief following natural disasters, and economic and military aid. Support for human factor development has not been prominent. The types of aid offered to Africa do have merit and are designed to accomplish specific goals.

The author states that the goal of education and spending should be to improve human capital and build institutional capacity that serves economic development. But that in Africa, the common result of educational aid is merely the production of local elites who run the state machinery and military institutions, with few benefits to poor rural communities.

While the backbone of most African economies is agriculture, intervention in agriculture markets to benefit urban consumers has ensured a lack of development.

III. Methods for Best Practices Evaluation

My best practices evaluation of the fundraising and program sustainability initiatives of the Q Fund included the following: First, I selected organizations with missions comparable to those of the Q-Fund, which focuses on education as a means of achieving stability and sustainability in impoverished countries. I evaluated an organization called Architecture for Humanity, which enables donors to participate in a day of sponsorship for their work of providing design, construction and development services to areas that lack necessary infrastructure. The second organization I examined was Mercy Corps, an organization with a program (the Phoenix Fund) that seeks to provide impoverished communities with sustainable options for growth and development. The third organization I looked at was Onexone, an organization that has acted on the need for sustainable education by building schools which engrain in students and communities the notion that education is essential to a just social order. I believe that the circumstances promoting lack of development in Africa are unique, so I chose organizations that had a focus and definite presence in Africa, but were also engaged in international work.

The primary fundraising initiative of the Q Fund is OneMarch. OneMarch is a program that was begun in 2004 by Chellie Kew in response to the outpouring of support she received from American students for their African peers at the Q Fund's school in Zambia. OneMarch consists of acquiring organizations to participate in "one day, one hour, for one dollar" of solidarity with the orphans of disease who are denied an

education because of the depth of their poverty. As it was originally conceived, the first half hour of the event is spent in contemplation of the true meaning of having half of the world's children denied an education. The second half hour is a sort of celebration of coming together to alleviate this affront to the whole human family. This initiative has been hugely successful in the past. Likely due to the economy, donations were down significantly in 2009, but this year's push for contributions will hopefully see a return to the original potency and devotedness that was encountered in the first years of the project. I believe that the philosophy of this project is one that bears great continuity with much of the literature I have read regarding the need for a holistic and humanistic approach to aid and development initiatives.

Speaking with Chellie and other organizers of One March, I investigated the schools that participated, and how much money was earned each year.

For Mercy Corps, I looked at the semi annual progress reports for their sustainability initiative the Phoenix Fund to discern how seed capital grants and loans were effectively parlayed into economically and socially sustainable programs. I chose Mercy Corps' Phoenix Fund because it approaches sustainability from a market or business perspective, and I was interested to see the how this compared to other sustainability initiatives.

Architecture for Humanity has a program that allows donors to sponsor a day, week, month or year of design. This is similar to the Q Fund in that it is a succinct effort. I chose this organization because it addresses the lack of infrastructure within developing countries – a very concrete deficiency, that affects lack of development in every sphere. I was also initially interested in this group because one of my tasks with the Q Fund was to

begin to facilitate conversations with a sustainable, philanthropic architecture company based in Kansas City to design a rainwater harvest system for the Q Fund's Chimoza School.

For Onexone, I focused on their sustainability in education initiatives, specifically those of the "Millennium Villages" in Mayange, Rwanda (40 km from Kigali, population 20,000) and Toya, Mali (30 km from Timbuktu, population 5,000). These schools and communities are comparable to those of the Q fund.

IV. Findings

Q Fund

Chellie informed me that with the participation of the following schools, One March raised the following funds 2005= \$60k, 2006=\$30k, 2007=15k. She also cited that the reason for the lack of participation in 2008 and 2009 was due to the economy's impact on the ability of students to participate and a lack of "get up and go" to get schools involved.

• CATE School, Carpentaria, CA • UC Berkeley, California (2009) • Bennington College, Vermont (2009) • Boston College, Boston, MA (2009) • Castilleja School, Palo Alto, CA • Chimoza Community School Ndola, Zambia • Dana Hall, Wellesley, MA • Columbia University, NYC, NY (Partnership for International Development) • Hamlin School, San Francisco, CA • Fairview High School, Boulder, CO • Julia Morgan School for Girls, Oakland, CA • Lexington School, Los Gatos Calif. (sister school of Chimoza) • Marlborough School, Los Angeles CA (sister school to Chimoza) • Menlo School, Atherton, CA • Oldfields School, Glencoe, MD • Northrise University, Ndola, Zambia • Ngererit School, Rift Valley, Kenya • Palo Alto High School, Palo Alto, CA • Ridgeview Elementary School, MO • Scripps College, Claremont, CA • St. Paul's Academy and Summit School, St Paul's, MN. • University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA • Vail Mountain School, Vale, CO

In spite of the program not taking place this year, the schools themselves have become integral to the communities of which they are a part. Chellie operates the Q Fund on the notion that creating sustainability is the only real instrument of change, and that charity alone fails. In the case of the Chimoza school, when the Q fund arrived in 2003, the school was mosquito infested, and attended by only 47 street children who did not have the money to attend government schools. Now, over 500 students receive free education in a building that has just received 13 new classrooms. The community has embraced the school, and families support their children's attendance. I believe that the reason for the success of the Q Fund's overall mission for sustainability through education has been the extensive monitoring of funds. One of my projects was to transpose the school headmaster's handwritten records of transactions from the past year into an excel spreadsheet. Transactions are accounted for down to the dollar, to every taxi trip and fee for internet use at a café in town.

I believe that the lesson to be learned here is that accountability is key to sustainability. With the initial guidance of the Q Fund, the local community has embraced the school and integrated it into their way of life to the extent that it no longer depends on outside support.

Architecture for Humanity

By allowing donors to contribute a day, week, month or year of design and construction for needed infrastructure in impoverished communities, Architecture for Humanity gives communities the material frame work they need to begin to stabilize their social, cultural and political lives.

The organization is involved in work throughout the world, especially in New Orleans following Katrina, but to evaluate their efforts I focused on work in Africa. Architecture for Humanity believes that design should inform the place where people live, work, learn, heal and gather. This being the case, they work hard to incorporate community members in achieving the objectives they have for their communities.

Each year 10,000 people directly benefit from structures designed by Architecture for Humanity. Various advocacy, training and outreach programs impact an additional 50,000 people annually. From conception to completion, the organization manages all aspects of the design and construction process.

Projects in Africa included building community football centers for children in South Africa, Namibia, Mali, Kenya, Rwanda and Ghana. These centers are meant to promote best practices in the fields of health promotion, peace building, children's rights and education, anti-discrimination and social integration and the environment by strengthening social well being and human development through soccer.

In Uganda, Architecture for Humanity has designed and built the facilities for the Kutamba AIDS Orphans School. This community organization seeks to educate students who have been orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Rukungiri district of Southern Uganda. With the help of Architecture for Humanity, they have been provided with the necessary facilities to continue their work, including the design and construction of a school facility with classrooms, offices, kitchen/dining spaces, library, infirmary/nurse's space, and play space. The design takes advantage of renewable energy systems, local materials and building methods, and context-sensitive systems solutions.

The construction took place on-site as a means to educate the community on the building and maintenance processes.

The fundraising practice that I focused on was Sponsor a Day of Design, in which individual participants are able to contribute \$100 for a day, during which a designer can create a schematic drawing, establish a site, resolve a design detail or troubleshoot a code issue, sponsor a week for \$500 in which a designer can hold a community workshop, start planning for construction, design a site-specific structural solution or do a post-occupancy analysis, \$1,500 for a month during which a designer can hold community workshops, plan, develop, and construct a small community building or a house, or \$15,000 for a year during which a designer can build multiple projects, taking them from rough sketches, to architectural plans, to full realization.

Mercy Corps – The Phoenix Fund

I chose to look into Mercy's Corp's Phoenix Fund because I wanted the perspective of an organization that promotes sustainability from a market perspective, with an emphasis on the development of business opportunity, believing that businesses and open markets are at the core of successful and sustainable communities.

As with previous organizations with an international scope, I chose to focus on programs in Africa specifically, as I believe that the lack of development in Africa is unique.

A tremendous struggle for Africa today is the reliance on subsistence farming. Thus, The Phoenix Fund has become involved in the Murehwa District of Zimbabwe.

The Murehwa District is approximately 60 miles from the capital Harare. Residents of this district rely primarily on small scale subsistence farming and have been unable to access the commercial market due to a lack of irrigation facilities, limited market knowledge, and no access to credit facilities. With the help of seed capital from the Phoenix Fund, the introduction of the treadle pump, appropriate piping, and training of farmers in both best agronomic practices and use of treadle pump will increase yields, income, and the nutrition diet of the households and the community at large.

The specific objectives of the program were to:

1. Increase the capacity of 250 farmers to produce and successfully market cash crops through new equipment and thereby increasing incomes by 30% and indirectly benefitting 1,500 household members.
2. Improve market competitiveness by linking 100 of the farmers to credit opportunities to purchase equipment that will help increase their capacity to produce cash crops. More than 50% of them will have loans approved.

From July to December 2009, a total of 250 farmers have been trained on best agronomic practices and use of the treadle pump. About 159 males and 91 females have been trained. Associates will periodically verify that farmers are still using the new techniques, and it is expected that the training will go a long way in enhancing quantity of produce. One hundred farmers applied for loans in order to buy pumps and piping. Loan representatives visited the gardens and homesteads of the applicants to evaluate their collateral security and their potential to produce and repay the loan. Twenty-five

farmers had their loan applications approved (17 males and 8 females) and installed the pump and piping systems.

Loan repayment has started after a two-month grace period. To date farmers have repaid \$1,700 towards the treadle pumps. One training site was established and it was being used whenever farmers were being trained by staff, before it was handed off to the community, where it will continue to act as demonstration and learning place for school children as well as area farmers. The farmers are using the pumps to irrigate crops during the dry season. Yield has generally gone up at these sites. Incomes are being affected by market gluts which have forced prices down. In ongoing agricultural programs, Mercy Corps is working closely to ensure crops grown take advantage of market dynamics. A training curriculum has been developed and it is going to be used whenever farmers are being trained. This is a general guide to crop production and use and maintenance of the treadle pump. Additional topics can be incorporated into the curriculum as needed.

Onexone – Millennium Villages

Like many of the other organizations, Onexone has programs which work to sustainably alleviate hunger, provide water and health care and education. Because of its relevance to the Q Fund, I examined the Millennium Villages, communities and schools in Rwanda and Mali that have been founded on the principle that education is the most sustainable means of development. The Millennium Villages, part of the Millennium promise commissioned by the UN to meet the development goals set for 2015, agree with the belief of the Q Fund that help in the form of a handout creates dependency and short-lived results. But in contrast, the educational approach of providing teaching and training creates an ultimately self-sustainable community that can stand on its own and continue

to thrive and flourish by providing teaching tools for comprehensive health care, crop diversification, school meal program, electricity grids, water and road networks, and business development opportunities.

Like the Q Fund, the organization seeks to approach the issue of sustainability with a holistic, and people oriented perspective. Through a holistic and community-managed approach, the Millennium Villages support integrated and targeted investments through education and technical training in agriculture, academics, health, water and sanitation, infrastructure and business development to empower the poorest and most remote communities to lift themselves out of extreme poverty and become fully self-sustainable. They state that “this work is premised on the belief that, for the first time in history, our generation has the opportunity to end extreme poverty, hunger, and disease.”

The sustainability of the schools in these villages comes from their being a part of a whole social and economic network. The organization has aimed to provide the people with the necessary skills to understand their interdependence, and sustain each other. Assurances of sustainable agriculture have been made in collaborating with the government to fix the price to the prices of fertilizers.

Conclusion:

Through this investigation, I have found that the most effective means of assuring sustainability is by actively integrating development initiatives into the communities of which they are a part; allowing those in need to use their cultural understanding and local

traditions to participate in their own development. There is the definite risk of furthering what has come to be referred to as the dependency syndrome among impoverished nations – especially in Africa. Development should spring from a movement away from subsistence farming and living with a holistic approach to integrating sustainable agriculture practices with communities that recognize the imperativeness of education. As seen in multiple cases I examined, placing education at the center of any sustainability or development initiative enables the community to unite with a common purpose and see the school as a product of their own community, coming to be defended and strengthened by all other economic, social and political influences. Schools bring about a very immediate mindfulness of the future, and united behind providing children with an education the community at large is able to work towards that realization. It is crucial for work to come from the community itself and not only from outside sources, as part of the crisis in Africa has been due to a lack of identity, and an imperialist enforced inferiority complex among native Africans. Development initiative should be based on environmentally appropriate measures to improve quality of life and education rather than attempt to make small communities competitive in the global market. To be truly sustainable, development must find its foothold in local culture and tradition.