DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

School for New Learning

International NGOs Projects/Programs Design,

Implementation and Evaluation Processes in Central Africa

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

MY EXPERIENCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

My introduction to NGOs' work dates back to when I was in college in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo where I pursued an undergraduate degree in rural development with a specialization in project planning. It was then that I began developing an interest in NGOs as they were being referred to as vehicles for development. However, as a young rural development technician, the chance of being hired by an international NGO was very limited, although that was my primary interest. I decided to look into local NGOs, but never shifted my interest completely. I was still interested in international NGOs for two reasons: they had more resources and the work conditions were not as difficult as in local NGOs that were always in the field with local communities.

Upon completion of my undergraduate degree (Diplome de graduat), I was offered a job in a local NGO called PACT (Partenaires en Action), a French denomination that means "Partners in Action." The organization was one of hundreds like other local NGOs that were struggling for funding. From scratch, I participated in an agricultural project design that the organization submitted to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for funding. The project was pre-approved but had to go through what I would call a "screening process." After months of negotiations, revisions, and readjustments, the project finally obtained UNDP funding.

I believe more money was spent in this project pre-approval process than what actually went to the project beneficiary, as "experts" from the funding agency organized countless visits to the project site to re-assess the project budget. Furthermore, every one of these visits resulted in an exclusion of a number of the original project activities to the extent that by the time the project got approved, it had been depleted from most of what represented local beneficiary

communities' expressed needs. PACT had a team of five workers including myself. I was in charge of the project as a project administrator, but only the technical aspect. I never knew how much money the project was funded with, and my boss never revealed this information to me despite my inquiries. The project assisted approximately 400 rural farming families both materially and through training in improved farming techniques. Was that what these communities really needed? It is hard to say, but I must admit that this is what the funds were available for and that drove the project design.

A year later, I left PACT and took on a position in another local NGO called Bureau pour le Volontariat au Service de l'Enfance et de la Santé (BVES) (Bureau for Volunteer at the Service of Children and Health), in which I worked respectively as Managing Director for a Center for Street Children and other Displaced/Non-accompanied Minors and as Manager of a Community Reinsertion Program in a Transit and Orientation Center for Former Child Soldiers. In this second position, I worked extensively with military and government officials, local communities, and other local and international NGOs involved in child protection, to ensure a successful community reinsertion of these young adults. For over four years, both my academic and my professional journey gave me some exposure to NGO's work and the realities behind it beyond the scope of my previous perception. It was then that I started developing a particular interest in international NGO projects and began questioning their work as I witnessed money being uselessly invested or wasted by certain international NGOs. To take a case in point, let me name a few useless projects that I had the opportunity to witness either through my academics or professional experience. There was a project to build public latrines in the rural Democratic Republic of Congo that were left unused by the local people and a project to build a flour mill in the rural D.R. Congo to improve the living conditions of rural women but the intended

beneficiary did not show any enthusiasm in utilizing the machine.

There are countless needless projects in central Africa, projects that were created whether by ignorance or for fund-raising purposes; as NGOs have excelled in publicizing images and reports of projects that are not benefiting local communities only to fuel the fund-raising machine, not to stimulate long term development. This is not to say that all international NGO projects are not helping the central African people; in my own view, there are reputable international organizations that support community development-level central African initiatives and that make an effort to respond to local communities' needs. However, broadly speaking, international NGOs have not fully adopted the need based approach. Based on my experience, they still have a long way to go to ensure proper and appropriate spending that benefits the local people.

Although the focus of this Advanced Project is not bilateral aid donors, given the structure through which most aid donor countries operate, as well as how international aid institutions channel their aid to recipient countries, it is important to review major aid donor country's trends and priorities in terms of their aid allocation and attempt to answer the question of why development aid has failed to develop central Africa.

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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

BVES   Bureau pour le Volontariat au service de l'Enfance et de la Santé (Bureau for

Volunteer at the Service of Children and Health) a national NGO in Bukavu DRC.

Works to defend, protect, and promote children's rights.

CAR   Central Africa Republic

CDR   Community Driven Reconstruction

CIDA   The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is Canada's lead

agency for development assistance. CIDA's aim is to: manage Canada's support

and resources effectively and accountably to achieve meaningful, sustainable

results and; engage in policy development in Canada and internationally, enabling

Canada's effort to realize its development objectives.

DRC   Democratic Republic of Congo

GB   Great Britain

IDP   Internally Displaced Person

IMF   The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 186 countries,

working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate

international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth,

and reduce poverty around the world.

IRC   International Rescue Committee, founded in 1933, the IRC is a global leader in

emergency relief, rehabilitation, protection of human rights, post-conflict

development, resettlement services and advocacy for those uprooted or affected

by violent conflict and oppression.

MDGs   Millennium Development Goals

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

OCHA   Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is an entity within the United Nations Secretariat that supports mobilization, funding, and coordination of humanitarian action in response to complex emergencies and natural disasters.

OXFAM
QUEBEC   An international non-governmental organization, a branch of OXFAM international that is dedicated to implementing sustainable solutions to poverty and injustice.

PACT   Partenaires en Action (Partners in Action), a local NGO in Bukavu DRC that promotes local agriculture.

PM   Program Manager

SMART   Simple, Measurable, Realizable, and Timing

SSA   Sub-Saharan Africa

UNDP   United Nations Development Program is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. It is on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As countries develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and its wide range of partners.

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established on 14 December, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly. The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of

refugees. It strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. It also has a mandate to help stateless people.

UNICEF   United Nations Children Fund - works for children's rights, their survival, development and protection, guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

USAID   United States Agency for International Development is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. It supports long-term and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting: economic growth, agriculture and trade; global health; and, democracy, conflict prevention, and humanitarian assistance.

WFP   World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, is part of the United Nations system and is voluntarily funded. Began in 1962, WFP pursues a vision of the world in which every man, woman, and child has access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life.

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH STRUCTURE

Section one: Advanced Project description

Rationale

International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been referred to as "development machines," suitable for the corrupt and geographically less accessible developing world. According to Riddel Roger, NGOs are considered as "One preferred and increasingly popular way of reaching the poor, supporting their projects and programmes" (Riddel 320). However, although NGOs seem to have improved in targeting the poor, concerns remain about their limited efforts to reach down to the poorer, and allegations that NGOs impose their projects and programmes on the intended beneficiaries still persist. Although proper targeting is as important in development projects/programs as proper project design, the focus of this Advanced Project is not the targeting issue. This aspect is not being discussed not because it is no longer a concern in the aid industry but because major progress has been noticed in this area.

The core issue that I am going to analyze throughout this Advanced Project is the role the beneficiary population plays in NGO development programs/projects. I will try to find out why there seems to be a vast disconnection between beneficiary population needs and the processes by which international NGOs design and implement development projects and programs. This disparity has the potential to lead to a waste of resources, as an important portion of International NGOs' funds may be uselessly invested in projects and programs that do not represent the beneficiary population's real priority development needs, and thus understanding this disparity justifies the pertinence of this Advanced Project.

In this Advanced Project, I am going to investigate the process through which international NGOs design, implement, execute, and evaluate their development projects and

programs. Throughout this project, I will analyze and investigate whether prospective beneficiary population priority development needs are taken into account and to what extent. I will attempt to provide insights on the aspects that shape the intervention policies of international NGOs working in central Africa and the role that donors play in identifying a potential field of intervention. The key issue that I want to explore in this Advanced Project is how international NGOs can overcome potential obstacles in designing and implementing development projects/programs so that these projects and programs are based on beneficiary populations' priority development needs.

Limitation of the study

This Advanced Project focuses on Sub-Saharan African countries, specifically on central African countries and their relationship with the aid industry. Other sub-Saharan African countries are left out not because they are not poor like central African countries but mainly for logistical reasons. Furthermore, geographic reasons are taken into account in this Advanced Project because central African countries share more of the same characteristics and economic issues than southernmost countries or northern and western African countries.

To give a geographic picture of central Africa, central Africa is a core region of the African continent often considered to include Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. I am not intending to assume or conclude that the findings of this research will be applicable to the African continent in general; certain conclusions may be more widely applicable, but this would require further research and analysis.

Research methodology and methods

This study is based on data collected through three major research methods.

The first body of information was collected through a literature review, which consisted of reviewing existing contemporary international literature on international NGOs' projects and programs and the foreign aid industry in general.

The second source of information was collected through face-to-face interviews with international aid practitioners. Respondents were three international NGO workers with extensive experience in central Africa. A questionnaire was developed prior to field interviews that I conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo with employees of two international NGOs based in the city of Bukavu/south Kivu province, The International Rescue Committee (IRC) and OXFAM Québec where I interviewed the Provincial Director and Provincial Head of Projects, respectively, on the 28th and 30th of October 2009. After my interviews abroad, I also interviewed a former IRC employee in Chicago who worked as Child and Youth Protection and Development Program Manager in Central African Republic on the 11th of November 2009.

My original goal was to interview a sample of at least five international NGO senior staff working in Central Africa, but obtaining the interviews in the DRC proved to be difficult. International NGO workers are considered in a high social and economic class in DRC and there is a clear line between expatriates and local people. I personally went to different NGOs' offices to request interviews with their representatives, but this process was quite complicated.   Being a native of the DRC did not make this process any easier, instead, it made it more difficult because staff members were reluctant to grant access to expatriates, thinking I was looking for a job and questioning my student research credentials. I had to pass through multiple layers of personnel, including doorpersons, receptionists, and office administrators who were not always willing to give me access to senior staff. They also were very demanding regarding proof of my student status, insisting that I present paperwork with a DePaul seal or a signature from a DePaul

academic authority, which I was obligated to obtain while in the field. As a result of these complications, multiple office visits were necessary before I was granted the opportunity to conduct an interview.

However, once I reached the targeted NGO representative, the experience seemed very different. All the interview respondents and participants generously shared with me their experiences and insights, and they willingly surpassed the 30 minute time limit that I had requested for the interview; each interview lasted over two hours. They showed a strong enthusiasm for the topic and spoke at length about their work and experience. Due to the short duration of my stay in the DRC and the lengthy process to obtain interviews, I was unable to arrange the number of interviews I had originally hoped for. However, I did gain a great deal of information from those interviews I conducted given the openness of participants and their willingness to take the time to give very detailed responses.

The third source of information drew on personal experience and self-reflection connected to the larger conceptual theoretical and practical groundwork. Specifically, this data is based on my professional and educational experience in central African development and international NGOs' work and efforts in trying to address development issues in this region (See Foreword: My experience in the DRC).

Advanced Project goals

In this Advanced Project, I will:

- review existing contemporary literature on international NGOs' projects and programs and the foreign aid industry in general;

- investigate the processes through which foreign NGOs operating in central Africa design, implement, and evaluate their development projects/programs;

- identify the obstacles that NGOs encounter in designing, implementing, and evaluating their development projects/programs based on central Africa populations' priority needs;

- explore international NGO workers' perspective on the potential disconnection between central African populations' development needs and international NGOs development projects/programs, if so why?; and,

- design *Development Aid Guidelines* that list suggestions describing how to overcome potential obstacles encountered by international NGOs in designing, implementing, and evaluating projects that actually benefit the community.

These *Guidelines* constitutes the final objective of this Advanced Project that I hope will equip NGOs with a set of tools that will help them improve the delivery of their services, help them avoid useless projects, minimize useless investments, and enable them to actually invest in projects/programs that meet the real development needs of the central African local communities that they are trying to serve. In the end, I believe that my *Development Aid Guidelines* will improve each NGO's efficiency and effectiveness in central Africa and help to create true economic development for the people in need.

Foreign aid: Classification

Even though foreign aid as a whole is not analyzed in this study, to better understand the dynamic of NGOs and their place in the aid industry, it is important to differentiate the different types of foreign aid as well as their characteristics. There does not seem to be a universally accepted classification system for foreign aid. However, broadly speaking, there are five different types of foreign aid that support different objectives according to Curt Tarnoff and Larry Nowels' 2004 classification: bilateral aid, economic aid, humanitarian assistance,

multilateral assistance, and military assistance. However, this classification is not clear cut; there is a considerable overlap between categories of aid. Multilateral aid serves many of the same objectives as bilateral development assistance, although through different channels (Tarnoff and Nowels 8). Foreign aid is also referred to as overseas aid, international aid, and development aid and can be understood as aid given by governments or other agencies to support the economic, social, and/or political development of developing countries. It is distinguished from humanitarian aid in that it is aimed at alleviating poverty in the long term rather than alleviating suffering in the short term.

For this Advanced Project, I am going to categorize foreign aid into three groups:

- bilateral aid, which is aid given from a country directly to another country;
- multilateral aid, which is a contribution from donor nations to finance multilateral development projects and activities that are implemented by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, or United Nations Agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNAIDS, etc); and,
- charity aid or international NGOs, a relatively new actor in the aid industry and the main focus of this Advanced Project.

However, like I said in the paragraph above, the difference between these types of aid can be confusing since NGOs have diversified funders. This argument is shared with Bolt as he writes "the distinction between aids is far from clear; NGOs are both funded by their governments, bilateral aid, and big international aid institutions such as the World Bank known as multilateral aid" (Bolt 77).

Section two: Problem statement

Sub-Saharan Africa is believed to be the only region in the world where poverty keeps getting worse, yet, international non-governmental organizations with an aim to stimulate economic development, are disseminated throughout the region. Economist Jeffrey Sachs, in his strategic book on how to reduce extreme poverty in the world, *The End of Poverty,* states "By the start of the twenty-first century Africa was poorer than during the late 1960s when the IMF and the World Bank had first arrived on the African scene" (Sachs 189). In other terms, for more than three decades, central African countries in particular and Sub-Saharan Africa in general, with an exception of a few countries, have not been able to provide the necessities to their populations. To function, these states have mainly relied on foreign assistance, to both feed their populations and to fund development initiatives.

To put it another way, for over a quarter of a century, a key feature of Sub-Saharan Africa and Sub-Saharan African relations with the rest of the world, has been the aid relationship. What is most disturbing and disappointing regarding this relationship, however, is its result. Writing in his 2005 commentary, Percy Mistry, chairman of Oxford International, offers harsh critiques on Sub-Saharan African development as he reaffirms that "despite a substantial amount of aid (much larger in per capita terms than provided to any other region), Sub-Saharan countries, with very few exceptions, have regressed since their independence." The same author complains that "the general history of Africa since achieving independence has been that of a development failure" (Mistry 665).

From this perspective of Africa's economic and development failure, it became clear to development actors that solutions were more than needed to help Africa help itself to redress its economic development. Furthermore, with an increasing number of collapsing central African

states and their economies, more and more aid became extremely important. Moreover, with the absence of a strong economic infrastructure as well as public assistance, an increasing number of international NGOs were being called upon to rescue central African populations in particular and the Sub-Saharan African region in general. This argument is shared by Nancy and Yontcheva as they write "In the last 20 years, new actors have emerged on the development scene. Private, nongovernmental organizations, NGOs are channeling an increasing share of development assistance" (Nancy and Yontcheva 3).

According to a 2003 study by the London School of Economics, there were approximately 39,729 branches of international NGOs working in Africa (qtd in Bolton 92). However, concerns have been raised by both scholars and international NGO workers about the contribution of international NGOs to central Africa's development. The question at the center of this debate has been whether international NGOs working in central Africa are really benefiting local populations in term of bringing about and supporting local development projects that represent the real local beneficiary population's development needs or are they benefiting themselves? International NGOs have been accused of imposing their projects on local communities in central Africa without preliminary need assessment to identify and determine real development priority needs. As a result, funds are uselessly invested in projects that do not benefit local communities which the project was intended to uplift. As Bolton, a well known African development actor and aid worker, complains, "the aid industry has long been full of well-meaning foreigners who think they know just what the poor community needs and set about providing it, only to find their efforts ignored, or their nice piece of equipment unrepaired and unused" (Bolton 84).

Section three: Hypotheses

This Advanced Project is based on the following hypotheses:

1. There is a vast disconnect between international NGO programs/projects' design and implementation processes and the beneficiary populations' priority development needs in the central African context.

2. Most international NGOs do not conduct in depth, careful analysis of the community's needs prior to the design of their development program and projects.

3. Donors' influence on NGOs is one of the main reasons for the disparity between beneficiary populations' needs and NGOs projects and programs design processes.

4. Most international NGOs seem to consider the beneficiary population as a second class stakeholder in their projects/programs design, implementation, and evaluation processes.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Section one: Views on the criteria for aid to Africa

Nancy and Nontcheva argue the question of aid dynamics which can be approached from two different and yet related viewpoints. On the one hand, some scholars and development actors have raised concerns about the disincentive effects produced by aid in recipient countries as well as the partial waste of aid by recipient governments. On the other hand, the allocation of aid by donors has also raised uncertainty whether country donors allocate aid based on their personal interests or to respond to beneficiary development needs. If the second proved to be true, should

we expect poverty reduction in recipient countries as a result of aid allocation aimed at the personal interests of the aid-giving countries (Nancy and Yontcheva 3)?

Along these same lines, Alesina and Dollar (2000) conclude that "most of the empirical aid analyses of aid patterns conducted in the last 30 years has concluded that bilateral aid donors distribute aid mainly to former colonies, to countries with which they have economic ties or political partners" (cited in Nancy and Yontcheva 3). To put it in other words, aid should not take the blame of failing to reduce poverty in central African recipient countries because in many cases it was never assigned for that mission. There is an apparent gap between the practical aid objectives from country donors' stand point with the overall central African communities real development need. Moreover, there seem to be disagreements among aid donor countries about aid mission. Riddel argues that if some aid donor countries such as the British have adopted a poverty-focus orientation in their aid programs, for other aid donor countries with the example of France, poverty reduction in SSA in general and middle Africa in particular, is not a priority in their aid agenda. Even for country donors that have expressed their commitment to poverty alleviation as their aid allocation objective, less has been done on the ground in this regard (Riddel). I believe this difference in approaches regarding the objective of aid among donor countries has a potential to negatively impact aid coordination, and consequently, lead to poor aid coordination and spending that is not really benefiting the targeted population.

In this ongoing debate over aid, we cannot afford to overlook the quality of the foreign aid, because although the amount of aid donated to a given region matters in terms of economic development as aid has the potential to stimulate economic development in recipient countries, our attention should be given to the quality of this aid, meaning its proper management because if aid is not properly managed, not only recipient governments may waste funds as has been the

case in the past, or funds may be uselessly invested by both recipient governments or international NGOs channeling the aid depending on the nature of aid; but also it can harm the recipient by creating disincentive effects in the recipient country as well as in recipient communities as it creates dependency on foreign assistance.

A beginning agenda to help central Africa move in the direction of sustainable development which is a real need in the region is a comprehensive and communal understanding of the region's development needs among all the primary stakeholders, and more importantly, a willingness to respond exclusively to those needs. Unfortunately, as it stands now, there is a lack of thoroughly shared understanding of the dynamics of central African development solutions. Judson, a prominent African development actor, writes "the key to African's condition is 'development,' a term that means distinctly different things to those beings developed and those doing the development" (Judson 2). In other terms, Judson believes that African countries are not being offered what they need in terms of solutions for their development problems because central Africans' understanding of their development needs differ widely with the understanding of those helping them to fix their development problems.

In the same context, international aid institutions and international aid development projects that are designed for central African populations by international development actors such as international NGOs, since they have became one of the major development actors in central Africa, cannot be considered as credible and realistic prescriptions for the future development of central Africa unless central African populations are involved in all of the projects/programs phases. In simple terms, international NGOs that design development projects for central African populations without the central African's inputs may be considered as doctors prescribing medications to a patient without consulting the person being treated. According to

Judson "the first step to development is to realize that development is something done by people not to them—as it stands now, development policies are designed by 'experts' who sit in capital cities of the North" (Judson 4).

The popular way of thinking about international NGOs has been that they care more about poor populations, listen to their voices, and that their projects/programs are mainly based on the beneficiary populations' real development priority needs. While NGOs have been somehow successful in delivering their services to those who need them the most, they still have a long way to go in design and implementation of development projects/programs that respond to real development needs of the beneficiary populations in middle Africa in particular and Sub-Saharan Africa in general.

Judson offers a harsh criticism on useless investment of NGO funds in SSA:

While activists in the South have been somehow successful in insisting on "appropriate" development-small-scale projects oriented toward local conditions and needs- the bigger is better" mystique still persists in many cases. The tomato-paste processing plant built in an area of Sudan where no tomatoes were grown and the milk powder factory in an area where cows could not survive are classic examples (Judson 3).

In other words, although some development activists have understood the concept "need oriented" and have been working to encourage the implementation of projects that respond to the beneficiary's particular situation and needs, useless projects are still visible in many parts of Africa.

Looking at the economic situation of central African countries, a topic that is developed further in the next section, it is no mistake to acknowledge that central Africa's development needs are great and real and that solutions are urgently needed. Furthermore, anyone familiar

with central African countries would tell you that they are so poor that a little money, well spent can go a long way as far as stimulating local development and benefiting local communities, however, I believe this is only possible if "development machines" such as NGOs learn how to listen to local people because development like any real and profound change can only come from within a local initiative. In this perspective, aid money would serve as a tool to support local communities' project initiatives. If it is that easy, why have central African countries failed to develop? This question is very critical and complex. Attempting to provide its full answer from an individual and unique perspective without analyzing all the stakes in play would be a crime against central Africa. However, without claiming to have found an answer to the above question, I believe the failure of the central African region to develop is partially a result of years of wrong diagnoses of central African's needs.

In addition, NGOs by themselves no matter how good they are cannot develop central Africa. Other actors such as governments and local people have to get deeply involved and commit to their development. This argument is shared by Bolton as he argues "aid is never going to solve African problems as a whole—charity may be able to do little to address the underlying causes of poverty. But they can take big strides in targeting specific symptoms in localized areas, making a real difference in the lives of individuals, families, and communities" (Bolton 92).

The international aid community, international development actors, and scholars have largely redefined Sub-Saharan African poverty and illnesses as not just obstacles to development but as emergencies in and of themselves, social developmental and economic issues that require quick interventions. For instance, The Earth Institute at Colombia University, a program directed by the eminent scholar of economic development, Jeff Sachs, refers to extreme poverty as "global emergencies" (The Earth Institute Colombia University). Others have referred to extreme

poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa as a "development emergency." Foreign aid and international organizations in this perspective have been operating for the most part with an emergency mind set in their quick fixes of Sub-Saharan development issues. NGOs have to come to a realization like Judson suggested in his article "The Hunger" that, they do not have the solution to Africa's development problems; they have to listen to the people closely and understand that development comes from within the local community (Judson 4).

To bring about the change and to stimulate the long needed economic development in central Africa, international NGOs have to incorporate in their policy a need based approach, and to go further, not to stop at their commitments but translate them into practice on the ground. In other terms, to promote real development in central Africa, international NGOs committed to that cause have to respond first and foremost to development needs as expressed by central African communities; NGOs have got to stop second guessing central Africa's development needs. How are they going to do that? The best way to find out what central Africa populations need is to ask. This sounds obvious of course but it is a challenge and key to success for any development project/program because it promotes "ownership, capacity and sustainability," the three major keys to the success of development projects (Bolton 84).

Section two: Overview of central Africa's economic situation

Central African economic development conditions are unique in their genre, unique because instead of moving forward, the region's economy seems to have taken a backward direction. As Dambisa Moyo, a well known African economist observes "Africa's real per capita income today is lower than in the 1970s, leaving many African countries at least as poor as they were forty years ago" (Moyo 5). However, like any failure, there are some explanations, but not exclusive reasons, for this awkward development. To be sure, Africa is a survivor, a continent

that for decades has been at the service of powerful western nations, from the continent's labor force as millions of African men and women were shipped overseas as slaves, to raw materials and minerals for Western factories. In all means, African economies have been at the service of foreign countries, after all, that has been its main mission since it was designed. As Judson put it simply, "the structure of African economies which had been 'developed' not to feed the Africans, but to meet the needs of Europe, has remained intact" (Judson 2).

However, this is no excuse for central Africa's poor economic conditions because not all of the central African economic failure began or ended with slavery and colonialism. Local struggles for power, misgoverning, corruption, geographic limitations, and inter-regional wars have played a significant role in central African economic regression, although, to some extent, the North has some implications in these political conflicts. Since their independences, almost every central African country has experienced some type of civil unrest, and to a large extent, some countries with the example of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo have experienced massive massacres and internal and external displacement of entire villages, leaving the agricultural sector weak if not destroyed. The consequence of these conflicts on overall central African countries' economic development, economies that had already been weakened by African colonial heritage, cannot be oversimplified. In 2009 over 79% of the population of SSA relied on farming as their main source of income (Bread for the World).

The economy of central African countries consists of farming, investments, foreign trade, and natural resources as the region is known for its rich soil and under-soil. However, despite their natural resources, central Africa's economy has stagnated and even regressed in terms of economic development. According to Dambisa Moyo, more than half of SSA population lives on less than US $1 per day. The region is home to some 50% of the world's poor and the number of

Africans living in poverty has increased by nearly 50% between 1980 and 2000. According to the 2007 *United Nations Human Development* projection, SSA poverty will augment to nearly one third of world poverty by 2015. Furthermore, Africa has the lowest life expectancy in the world, less than 60 years; and today it is floating around 50 years. Child mortality is at an alarming rate, one of seven children die before age one across the continent and adult literacy has decreased across most African countries (Moyo 5).

Foreign aid is a key feature of the central African economy. For decades, aid has been one of the main sources of most central African countries' national budgets. According to Rwandan president Paul Kagame, "more than US$300 billion of aid has gone to Africa since 1970" (qtd in Moyo 27). However, not all this money was donated as grants; a consistent amount was given in the form of concessional loans with terms and conditions. In other words, a considerable amount of central African foreign aid is allocated in the form of loans that have to be repaid with interest. Debt has become a burden with negative impacts on the region's economic development. As Judson (1991) writes "Africa's total debt is equal to the annual value of all its products, each African child, woman, and man owes foreign banks US$437" (Judson 6).

What is even more worrying about central African economies is the fact that the region pays more in debt and interest than it receives in aid and new loans combined. Africa owes over 200 billion dollars to foreign institutions (Africa Action). Furthermore, Sub-Saharan Africa alone pays 14 billion dollars in debt annually in comparison to 10 billion dollars aid that the region receives per year (Africa Action). The structures of central Africa region's economy and its characteristics have not allowed the region to get its feet on the economic ladder, and so cannot begin the move out of poverty. To help central Africa, development actors committed to this cause have to shift their way of thinking about Africa, stop working for Africans and start

working with them because as a famous quote from Mahatma Ghandi used in development says, "whatever you do for me without me is against me" (Qtd. in Keita). In other words, any "development action" for central Africans without central African populations input is more likely to cause harm to central Africans in some way.

CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING INTERNATIONAL NGOS PROJECTS/PROGRAMS DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUTATION PROCESSES

Section one: NGOs practices: Views of international NGOs workers from the field

The aim of this study is to understand how international organizations working in central Africa design, implement, execute, and evaluate their development projects/programs. Specifically, this research studies the claimed and confessed theory of the need oriented approach in NGO interventions in central Africa by interviewing selected international NGO workers from the field in order to explore their perspectives and experiences on whether there seems to be a vast disconnection between central African's development needs and international NGO development projects/programs.

To collect this data, I conducted two personal interviews with workers in large international NGOs currently working in the D.R. Congo and one person who worked in Central Africa Republic in the past. The NGO staff I interviewed worked in:

- The International Rescue Committee (IRC) and OXFAM QUEBEC, both in the D.R. Congo, in the city of Bukavu, Sud-Kivu province. My interviews were conducted on 28 and 30 October 2009, respectively.
- IRC Central Africa Republic in the past as a Program Manager. My interview was conducted on 11 November 2009.

See Appendix A to read the full text of the interviews.

Section two: Summary and review of NGO procedures in designing and implementing

development projects/programs

This study focuses on the role played by the beneficiary population in international

NGOs' development efforts and investigates the reasons for the disconnection between

international NGO development projects/programs and the beneficiary population's real

development needs. The study examines international NGO project and program design and

implementation and evaluation processes based on two broad sets of data, with the first body of

information being a review of contemporary literature enriched with self-reflection incorporating

personal experience.

The second and most crucial data set draws on direct research in the Democratic Republic

of Congo and the United States of America where I conducted face to face interviews with

international NGO workers to get their perspectives on the subject. The interviews explore

NGOs' practices in designing development projects/programs, the obstacles that they encounter

in their efforts to design need-based projects/programs, and their suggestions on how to

overcome those obstacles; NGO collaborations/partnerships; NGOs funding sources and

procedures to acquire funds as well as donor influence; NGO practices in evaluating their

projects; NGOs marketing and information distribution; and other related issues.

To develop a thorough understanding of international NGOs procedures in designing and

implementing development projects in central Africa, the interview posed two general questions:

1. Can you please tell me about the last project/program that you developed walking

   me through the process from the initial idea (design) through its development and

   evaluation?

2. How do you design your development projects/programs?

Considering the crucial role of the beneficiary population's needs and participation for effective design, planning and implementation; and without passing judgments onto NGOs or accusing them of not consulting the beneficiary population, the above questions were followed by specific questions with the aim to investigate the place of the beneficiary community in this design process.

Topic one: Project design model

In general, during this research I learned that international NGOs' procedures in designing their development projects is a process that begins with the identification of the beneficiary population need. However, the ways by which these needs are identified is a topic of interest in this section that is further discussed below. Once the beneficiary population needs are identified, they undergo a series of internal and external treatments with the aim to translate them into a marketable project proposal that will be submitted to donors for funding. In specifics, one of the main findings of this research that I found interesting is that there does not seem to be a universally accepted and followed standardized design model for development projects and programs. Different international NGOs follow different procedures in designing their projects/programs depending on the project, donor policy, project location, government host, development model and priorities, NGO policy and mission, etc. In other words, design, planning, implementation, and evaluation methodologies vary from one NGO to another. Even within the same NGO, the procedure seems to differ from one location to another, one project to another and one donor to another. For example, IRC Bukavu seems to follow a different project design procedure from Oxfam Quebec Bukavu in a sense that according to IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC," to design a development project/program, IRC staff follow the

policy and attitude of IRC and things that are suggested to them by the host government" (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 28 October 2009). Oxfam Quebec on the contrary, "waits on a community to express their needs to them through its local leaders. In addition, each project proposed or submitted to Oxfam must fit within Oxfam strategic objectives" (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 30 October 2009). As for IRC CAR, they rely mainly on their field staff in identifying the community needs. All of the above aspects are important ingredients that have the potential to influence a project/program design process.

Topic two: Beneficiary population needs identification methods

During this research, I was struck with the difference in NGOs' practices in designing need-based development projects/programs, specifically, the process through which beneficiary population's needs are identified. NGOs seem to have mastered the vocabulary of need-driven projects and are working toward adopting a need-based philosophy. This is a positive aspect in their efforts to build upon expressed community development needs; however, there are visible gaps in the methods utilized to determine the actual needs in the sense that the beneficiary populations are not being contacted directly. NGOs are not surveying the large community to ask them what they want or need. It is almost as if the beneficiaries are being deprived of their right and freedom to express their needs directly. NGOs seem to be content with the input from a small group of the community, a group so -called "beneficiary representative" such as local leaders, government officials, or local staff who provide input. This practice was acknowledged by a former IRC Program manager in CAR as she stated "The design process starts by identifying what the needs of the targeted population are, not necessarily by asking the population about what they need by discussing that among the IRC filed staff " (IRC former staff

member, personal interview, 11 November 2009); and by Oxfam-Quebec Chief of Project in

South-Kivu DRC, as he puts forward "Oxfam projects are initiated by local authorities or local

leaders" (personal interview, 30 October 2009). Although, in a way, this is a step forward toward

incorporating or adopting a needs-based approach in NGO policies, this approach is still subject

to questions. It is much better than having outsiders decide in place of the community about what

their development needs are, as it has been a common practice among development actors who

for decades seemed to function blindly with "the expert mentality." This practice was

acknowledged by the IRC provincial director in south-Kivu DRC, " What happens sometimes is

that donor and NGO will come in a place thinking that they know what is best for the

population" (personal interview, 28 October 2009). NGOs need to understand that local leaders,

the government, or NGO local staff's ideas of community needs may largely differ from real

community needs. Therefore, relying on their local staff who most of the time are as foreign to

local realities as expatriates because they are not from the area in which a project is being

conducted, may negatively impact the NGO project's effectiveness in addressing development

problems in a community.

On the other hand, relying on government representatives or local leaders has adverse

consequences on the project's effectiveness because, although hypothetically they are well-

placed to represent the community, they may not be fully aware of the community needs, or they

may express their own needs not the community's, or manipulate the NGO for their political

agenda. This issue was raised by a former IRC program manager as she complained

"Government officials and local leaders make it hard for IRC to execute projects that don't

represent their personal agendas" (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November

2009). Also, trying to tap into the host government development priorities can be misleading in

terms of real community need because central African countries are mostly badly governed and irresponsibly managed. All these factors explained in this paragraph sufficiently illustrate why there may be a disconnection between international NGOs development projects/programs and beneficiary development as a consequence of the way in which they are designed. But, as stated, there is hope because NGOs are starting to shift their way of thinking and almost all the NGO representatives that I spoke with either directly or indirectly pointed out the disparity between their projects and the community needs, as well as the obstacles encountered in implementing need-based projects and their efforts to overcome those difficulties.

Topic three: Obstacles encountered by NGOs in designing need-based projects

Need-based projects in themselves face a series of obstacles, internal and external. The first category can also be referred to as NGO technical and strategic problems that are a result of poor planning. And the second, external obstacles are mainly the sum of the project funder and the NGO's host government expectations and politics. Specifically, these obstacles can be classified into five illustrative categories:

1. *Logistical obstacles*: Getting money to people or technical assistance in a timely fashion is a problem faced by NGOs in central Africa (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 28 October 2009).

2. *Political obstacles:* A community may express a need, but since NGOs function by abiding with a contract signed with the government host, a project must first be approved by the government before a NGO executes or implements it. This problem is greater when a project that emanates from the population does not fit within the government development program of the host country. Connected to this is political manipulation. In the course of the execution of their mission, NGOs face political manipulations as

politicians often want to use NGOs for their political agendas. In other words,

government officials and local politicians may have their own agenda that is not

necessarily the same as the community's expressed needs. So they make it hard for IRC

to execute projects that do not represent their agendas (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of

Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC and a former IRC program manager,

personal interviews, 30 October and 11 November 2009).

3. *Donor obstacles*: These obstacles are related to the rules of donors and funding

availability as well as donor agenda. Most donors have five-year programs and specific

preferences and priorities, and so it may happen that the need of the population does not

coincide with the donor's priorities or program during a given period. Often, donors have

hidden agendas, as the example of Canada and the USA that were present in Guinea

because of Al Qaida but were operating under a development mission umbrella (OXFAM

QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC, personal

interview, 30 October 2009). In other words, a NGO maybe be receiving funding from a

donor whose primary goal is neither development nor humanitarian work but purely

political. The donor funding in this situation is a way to get their hands or eyes onto

things that are going on in that specific area. In this case, donors are more likely to

impose projects that fit within their mission and pay little attention to real community

needs.

4. *Community obstacles:* This is often expressed as resistance from local people who refuse

to participate in a project. Another obstacle that NGOs encounter is tensions that arise

during the selection of the beneficiary population if the project is servicing individual

people. This situation makes it difficult for NGOs to execute a project in such an

environment. There is also an obstacle related to the community wanting to get paid for their benevolent participation in the project (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC and a former IRC program manager, personal interviews, 30 October and 11 November 2009).

5. *Technical and strategic obstacles:* This category includes all difficulties that arise due to poor planning and all other problems related to NGO staff incompetency. Some but not all of the above obstacles can be successfully avoided with skilled and experienced personnel.

These obstacles suggest that a "need-based development project mentality" still has a long way to go before it becomes a reality on the ground. There is a need for NGOs to understand that any innovation encounters a series of obstacles and difficulties, some of which may be a result of ineffective procedures or inappropriate planning, but with proper planning, creativity, and consistency, NGOs will surely overcome these difficulties. A beginning step in this journey is the strong need for NGOs and their partners to understand that to accurately identify community needs, in the future, they should consult the larger community, surveying the community prior to the project going through its design stage as opposed to relying on a group of leaders or government officials or building a project based on out-of-date studies. A project that is based on studies done a year or two ago may not faithfully represent or respond to current needs because local realities evolve and change with time. What can be expected in the case of building a project based on out-of-date information is that by the time the project gets funded, another organization may have implemented a similar project in the same area due to urgency or lack of coordination among NGOs, or the need may no longer represent a community priority.

Topic four: NGO's collaborations and partnerships

Another important finding of this research that struck me was NGO's partnership and collaboration dynamics. There is a strong need in the international NGO industry to reinforce their collaboration and partnership with other stakeholders. In other words, NGOs have to understand that successful development projects and programs demand team work. During this research, I came to realize that NGOs' drive to collaborate and partner with other international NGOs does not seem to be that of achieving durable development goals since working as a team can speed up this process, but their main reason to partner with other international NGOs seems to be driven mainly by their effort to avoid duplication, to stay out of each other's way. In this perspective, NGOs tend to function more like lucrative businesses that are competing for both customers and funds. In the words of IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, "It is difficult for international NGOs to be partners and competitors at the same time" (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 28 October 2009), The same argument is shared with a former IRC program manager in CAR as she states "IRC minimally collaborates with other international NGOs, although they meet for coordination meetings to try to coordinate their activities to avoid overlapping services" (IRC former staff, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

NGOs do not seem to be building their projects and programs upon what has been done in the past by preceding NGOs, they do not seem to associate the other NGOs in their design and implementation stages, and they seem to partner more in the project execution phase. In other words, there does not seem to be complementarity in NGOs work. This argument is shared by Oxfam staff as he elaborates "Oxfam is working with other international NGOs more in the intervention phase in the sense that if Oxfam wants to execute a project in a community where another NGO is involved, they share roles" (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project,

ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 30 October 2009). Although

NGOs talk about open partnership policies, in reality their partnerships seem to have a more

vertical direction, with the NGO in the middle and the government host and donor at the top.

They tend to direct their partnership efforts more towards donor and government hosts than

anything or anywhere else. IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, says it all when he points

out that "NGOs talk a lot about partnering with others but in reality they are primarily

responsible to the donor and to the government host" (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu

DRC, personal interview, 28 October 2009). This brings the discussion to another very

interesting set of data and which is the object of the following paragraph.

Topic five: NGO's funding sources and donor influences

This topic explores the influence that donors have on international NGOs' choice of

projects/programs and on overall NGO behavior. However, this question is neither specific nor

straightforward because it implies a number of parameters in the way that different donors have

different policies and different NGOs have different fund acquisition procedures. In addition,

NGOs have different attitudes towards funding agencies depending on the actual NGO's size and

beliefs, since small NGOs are more likely to be easily influenced by donors. To understand

donor influence, let us analyze the procedures by which international NGOs, and more

specifically, the selected NGOs that were interviewed, acquire funds for their development

projects. These practices can be divided into five simplified and different but inter-related

procedures.

First, a donor may approach a NGO and ask them to develop a project proposal based on

donor priorities. They are asked to develop a concept paper with a rough budget attached. If the

donor likes the paper, it may ask for a full project proposal with a developed budget. This puts

pressure on NGOs to design projects that fit within donor priorities, not necessarily the beneficiary population's priorities, with the consequence of implementing projects that do not respond to beneficiary populations' real development needs. In this case, the donor is acting as an expert who claims to know what the people need.

Second, a donor may make public projects that they want to fund. NGOs in this case will get together and form a consortium and select a lead NGO. They will then submit a proposal to the donor. Donors may come back and select specific NGO projects according to the donors' priorities and criteria. Some NGOs may be selected, others may not. NGOs may have to hire consultants to write a proposal. In this case, personal relationships play a very critical role as they may influence a donor's decision to select and fund NGOs with which they have relationships or ties. In this case again, donor priorities are put ahead of beneficiary population needs.

Third, a donor makes public projects that they want to fund and asks NGOs to compete in order to get the best deal possible and the best design proposal. This procedure is very similar to the second with the only difference that in this case, NGOs act individually and independently. This sounds like a more democratic and transparent process, however, it may be somewhat naïve to assume that the donor's decision to fund a specific NGO is exclusively based on the quality of the project proposal. In the IRC Provincial Director's view, "An NGO may have a beautiful proposal; they may throw their beautiful strategy and go after the donor priority, although it is more of a dialogue between donors with the NGO because the donor needs implementing partners and NGOs need money so at the end of the day, it is the donor who wins out because NGOs need money" (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 28 October

2009). Even in this case, there is a lot of competition between NGOs, and donor priorities still seem to have more importance than prospective beneficiary population needs.

Fourth, an international NGO may gather the population needs and submit them to a potential donor in the form of a project proposal. If a donor is interested in the project, the NGO is contacted and given the execution of the project.

The Fifth and last procedure, is to see what the priorities of the different donor institutions are and knowing when they have funds that they want to disperse and writing a proposal that falls in those categories. The fourth and fifth cases can be overlapping because a proposal can be written to correspond to donor priorities based on identified population need. Admittedly, even in this circumstance, donor priority is the most dominant factor in the project design process. A former IRC PM in CAR agrees with this argument as she states "the organization has to implement what the donor wants, not what people really need" (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

One way or another, the donors' influence on NGOs seems to be undisputable. As much as NGOs may not like to admit it, the findings of this study show that donors have an important influence on both NGO projects/programs' design and implementation processes. The findings corroborate that donors mostly have the latitude to choose a project to fund as well as the region in which the project will be executed with little or no regard to the beneficiary communities' development priorities or NGOs' project/program design policies regardless of the fund acquisition procedure that is ultimately followed by the NGO. In other words, the donors' priorities seem to over-ride the community and the NGO decisions in all of the five fund acquisition procedures described above. This view is shared by OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC, as he states: "The donor has a great influence

on the choice of a project and the community where the project will be executed" (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 30 October 2009).

Along these same lines, a former IRC program manager agrees that donors have an influence on NGOs' choice and the design of projects and programs as she explains "NGO projects are written according to the priorities of the donor, so, projects are chosen and oriented according to those priorities. It is really the project choice in terms of what the donor wants to serve but in terms of community, I think the NGO can choose who to serve, I mean a specific community" (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

The relationship between NGOs and their funding agencies or countries is often theoretically referred to as independent and those NGOs are self-governed. Hence it is frequently assumed by NGOs that donors do not have any influence on their philosophy and overall behavior. Conversely, from this research, it is evident that donors have, considerable influence on NGOs' project design, although this varies depending on the donor and their funding policy, as IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, confirms, "Some donors are hands off, some are hands on—USAID who is IRC's major donor are hands off, with UNICEF on the contrary, the experience is different. UNICEF is hands on to the point that they are co-implementing with IRC—a lot of USA based NGOs are more of the implementing partner because more of their money comes from the USA government" (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 28 October 2009). When a donor is co-implementing with a certain NGO, there is an increased likelihood that the donor will influence the NGO's behavior and practices. This argument is shared with a former IRC program manager in CAR as she states "NGOs really try to have donor's input in the design of their projects as much as possible. But because there is a

lot of competition for funds, it almost seems like the donor has more influence on the design of the projects than the beneficiary communities" (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009)

It sounds as if it is almost unrealistic for NGOs to function independently because receiving aid to carry out a project/program is dependent upon donor review and approval, and, as a French proverb confirms "the hand that gives is always above the hand that receives." Still, I am optimistic that there are always ways to work around donor influence in an informal way and implement projects that respond to the beneficiary population's needs. This maneuver, however, requires skilled and determined workers who are committed to the well being of the targeted community.

Topic six: NGO's projects/programs evaluation processes

When examining how beneficiary population needs are incorporated into development projects/programs carried out by international NGOs, it is important to consider the project/program evaluation, a very critical phase of any development project or program. Evaluation is often periodic, mostly done in the middle and at the end of a project. It is different from monitoring in a way that the latter is on-going. Evaluation consists of a series of activities that aim to assess the project outcome, to see what has been done, what objectives have been achieved, what still remains to be done, analyzes the difficulties and strategies to overcome them; and figures out ways those strategies can be integrated into the current project to improve its performance or in future projects to ensure sustainability. To be successful and useful, the evaluation, like any project phase, must include all the stakeholders—the donor, government host, beneficiary populations, and the NGO implementing the project. The key aspect in any

evaluation study is really to see how the outcome data and suggestions can be optimized to help the NGO improve the delivery of their services.

To draw on findings from this study, there seems to be little evidence to suggest that NGOs are willing to share their evaluation studies with beneficiaries or even with other NGOs. Also, there appears to be little evidence that NGOs are making full use of their project outcome reports. In fact, there is really little evidence to suggest that NGOs' evaluations are primarily used as a tool to improve their performance or to assess the real impact of their projects on the beneficiary populations. This argument is shared by a former IRC staff member as she explains:

> The project was funded for one year, so the evaluation was done after six months but the result was not very helpful because it was a little too late to be integrated in the project. In theory I would say that IRC includes the previous outcome reports when designing new projects/programs if it is the same person who implemented the same project, they bring in their experience but practically, a lot of time, IRC design a project way before they know the result of the previous project to avoid funds being cut (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

The truth is NGOs need money and they are always looking for funds; therefore, it is in their interest to seek to maintain the in-flow of donor funds for as long as funders are willing to provide them. In this context, it is risky and almost conflicting for international NGOs to commission in-depth evaluation studies pinpointing their weaknesses and share such evaluation reports with all the stakeholders. Therefore, evaluations focus on the positive aspects and positive results rather than undertaking a more thorough analysis, wishing to show that the aid provided is effective. While no one would argue for funding a project that will bring negative results, the problem of positive result-oriented evaluations is that such reports do not benefit

NGOs in terms of improving the delivery of their services, thus plugging both donors and NGOs into a cycle of uselessly investing in projects that are not benefiting the targeted beneficiaries. This observation is shared by a former IRC staff member as she elaborates:

> A lot of time IRC staff design a project before they know the result of the previous project to avoid that funds are not cut. NGO does not really care much about the long term impact of their projects. The evaluation is usually done for donors not for the sustainability of the project. IRC was more concerned about the number of beneficiaries because it would impact the quality of the project; the numbers were more of what the donor would like to see not the real impact of the program on beneficiary populations (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

Linked to this and particularly compelling evidence is the finding explaining NGO assessment reports' destinations. All of the NGO representatives interviewed in this study attest that their project assessed outcome reports are sent to donors and the host government. Not a single NGO representative brought up the beneficiary population as a stakeholder entitled to the outcome report. This is enough evidence to support the hypothesis that NGOs are primarily responsible to their funders and government hosts. The beneficiaries seem to be left out, and their participation seems to be reduced to providing opinions and input on how the project is going. No evidence was found to suggest that the beneficiaries input is incorporated in the project for better orientation, and thus the impact of their participation is minimal because it is not taken into account. Some people may disagree with this assertion that NGOs are responsible for reporting or distributing their reports to the beneficiary populations and say that the government should disseminate down that chain, and while this may be true, it is not realistic knowing the dynamics of central African governments. In fact, NGOs should not forget that they

are present in central Africa for the very reason that central African governments have proven themselves unable to deliver the much needed development due to bad governing and corruption. This leads the debate to another important area of analysis which is NGOs and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Topic seven: NGOs and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The aim of collecting data relating to the MDGs was to verify if NGOs are factoring the MDGs into their projects/programs' design and implementation processes and whether they are reporting their project outcomes to any MDGs monitoring body. Drawing on responses from the field, NGOs did not give the impression that their projects/programs were designed to respond specifically to MDGs or that they were reporting their project outcomes to a specific MDGs reporting body. The only occasion in which NGOs are reporting their projects' assessed outcomes is when a project is funded by a UN agency; the assumption is that if a project is funded by a UN agency, reporting to the funder is simultaneously reporting to the MDGs reporting body. The information relating to MDGs is particularly important to my analysis of the responsiveness of NGO interventions to beneficiary population needs in the sense that the MDGs respond to the world's main development challenges expressed in a set of eight goals that can only be achieved if all partners work together: "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AID, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development" (UNDP/MDGs).

In addition, the MDGs align behind the belief of local participatory development, meaning that the conviction that "Achieving the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* can

only happen through action at the local level—in villages and towns, provinces and regions. Local actors—community leaders, local government officials, civil society activists, farmers, and entrepreneurs—know best what does and does not work within their communities and they should have the voice and support they need to work their way towards a better quality of life" (United Nations Development Programme).

CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPMENT AID GUIDELINES

To help those NGOs that have undertaken the road toward adopting a need-based approach but are still facing difficulties, and to stimulate those that have not yet started this journey, the following *Development Aid Guidelines* is a tool that aims to support international development actors in their development efforts. The *Guidelines* draw on field research, incorporating suggestions from NGO workers on how to overcome obstacles encountered in designing and implementing projects that emanate from the local community, as well as my own suggestions based upon personal NGO fieldwork experience. To better appreciate and utilize this tool, one needs to understand the obstacles encountered by NGOs in their efforts to design and implement projects/programs that represent the community's real development needs, as discussed in the previous section (although the obstacles discussed are not exhaustive).

These *Guidelines* offer important steps and principles indispensable to overcoming these obstacles and achieving and fostering "ownership, capacity and sustainability," three key factors necessary for the success of any development project, as suggested by Bolton. Ultimately, to be successful, a development project must build on existent local resources and expressed development needs stated by the community. For that reason, NGOs dedicated to promoting need-based approaches in their development projects/programs' design, planning,

implementation, and evaluation processes should take into consideration the following principles in order to achieve successful development outcomes.

Development Aid Guidelines

Section one: General principles to design, implement, and evaluate need-based

development projects/programs

1. To help central African countries address their development issues, any development project/program must respond to a real development need as expressed by the intended beneficiary population.

2. The best way to find out what the development needs are for a targeted community is for NGOs to ask the larger community, avoid short-cuts, and understand that not all community leaders have the community welfare at heart. It is important to survey the community to find out what they need and build upon that.

3. NGOs have to understand that central African governments with very few exceptions do not have solutions for their development problems or may not be aware of what is best for their people. They are often fragile, corrupt, and irresponsible; therefore, relying exclusively on government representatives to identify the population's needs can be very misleading.

4. NGOs should adopt the principle "a man at the center of his development," meaning, that the beneficiary population should be at the center of any NGO intervention and should participate in all the projects phases, from the design to the evaluation.

5. NGOs have to understand that development is something you do with people not to people or for people. In other terms, development actors have to work with beneficiary populations to accompany them in their development efforts, in their journey toward self

reliance. They should not under any circumstances impose their projects upon the project intended beneficiaries.

6. NGOs and funders should invest more in development projects not emergency projects/programs in post conflict situations. And also when engaged in both humanitarian and development projects, NGOs should make sure their programming approaches are suitable for emergency situations or procedures that are appropriate to humanitarian contexts are not carried over to development projects.

7. NGOs have to understand that their efforts to integrate a needs-based approach in their programming can only be successful if there is a shift in perceiving how development ought to be delivered from donor to the beneficiary. They have to understand that donors need them as much as they need donors and therefore cannot allow the direction of their programming to be dictated by those who finance it.

8. NGOs should inform the community as early as possible what is going to be expected of them in terms of their participation in the project and what the NGO is committing to do for the population so that there is transparency between the NGO and its beneficiaries. Make sure to work with a variety of local leaders in the community not only the chiefs so that the population does not get the idea that only a few people are benefiting from the project (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

9. NGOs should object to implementing a project that does not tackle a specific development need expressed as a priority by the beneficiary community. This may sound unrealistic as skeptics may argue that NGOs need money to function and that there is a lot of competition among NGOs for funds. While this is true, donors need implementing partners, and if NGOs come together as a block and say no to imposed projects, donors

would certainly be forced to change their policies and be more flexible and receptive to NGO requests.

10. It is important to understand the myth of expatriates. As suggested by IRC staff, expatriates often think they know African problems better than Africans when in truth Africans know their needs better than foreigners and are in a better position to serve their people. NGOs should work with local associations to facilitate capacity building and capacity transfer so that local associations can take it to scale. NGOs have to empower local associations to take charge of their own development destiny (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC, personal interview, 28 October 2009).

11. In terms of government actors, NGOs should try to include them in the project from the very beginning at the design stage so that they do not feel like they were being imposed upon but included in the project. It is important to approach the government with respect and regard because the way government officials are approached by NGOs matters in terms of establishing that partnership. It is not only about when they are approached but also how they are approached (IRC former staff member, personal interview, 11 November 2009).

12. To avoid tension that may result from selecting individual project beneficiaries, it is critical that the process is as transparent as possible. The communities, not NGO staff should be responsible for selecting individual beneficiaries because they are best placed to identify the neediest members of their communities.

13. NGOs should avoid evaluations that focus exclusively on the positive results. They should assess all the aspects of their projects and share the evaluation report with all the stakeholders including the beneficiaries.

Development Aid Guidelines

Section two: Specific steps to design sustainable development projects/programs

In sum, to design a sustainable development project that is based on community needs, NGOs should adhere to the following processes developed with the input from the Center for Sustainable Development. At each stage of this process, project objectives and strategies should be revised to incorporate input from the various actors and sources consulted.

a. **Listen**: Begin the design of a development project by listening to the community that you intend to work with. The field staff is very important in this phase of the project design. Make sure you engage in discussions with diverse groups of the population, including women and youth, not simply the community leaders. However, this approach may vary depending on a specific project as some projects may not require surveying diverse community groups but focusing on the specific beneficiary group. The NGO should take the time to develop relationships and facilitate participatory needs assessments that can uncover the causes behind the challenges faced by the community members. Focusing on resolving the causes behind the problems will create a long-lasting impact. In addition, incorporating community-identified needs into the design of the project allows the community members to develop ownership of the project that will more likely sustain the program after the organization is gone.

b. **Consult with the government host:** Meet with the government host representatives at several levels, both the local level where you will be working as well as coordinating at the national level with various ministries that may be implicated to discuss the community's needs, share your preliminary plan, gather their input and make sure that the project you are intending to carry out fits within the government's development plan.

It is better to find out any possible incompatibility between your preliminary plan and the government host's development plan before the project undergoes its planning and phase because at this stage, there may be room for negotiations with the government since the intended project emanate from the community.

c. **Know your limits and stay within your limits:** The needs voiced by the community will give direction and scope to your project design, but after identifying these needs, NGOs should ask themselves: is our organization best equipped to address the needs expressed by the community? Does addressing them fit within our organizational mission and areas of technical competence? If, for example, your organization is focused on agriculture and the community wants a health initiative. What do you do? Do not try to do everything; especially, not try to design projects that do not fit within your mission and for which you do not have expertise. Partnering with another NGO with substantive expertise in that field will broaden your skill sets, can lead to future collaborations and will give the project a high chance to succeed. But also keep in mind that you should not simply try to design projects that are a 'good fit' for your organization but those that respond to the true needs of the community in which you will work.

d. **Research the project area of intervention:** In addition to the information that NGOs gain from community consultation, they should also conduct a review of scientific studies about their project's area of intervention and proposed activities. This will help your NGO define a series of activities that are based upon results-based evidence. This research is likely to help your NGO find a selection of sound interventions that can be combined into a family of activities to fulfill your project outcomes. On the other hand, you may uncover studies indicating that one of your potential project activities has not

shown evidence of working to solve the community-identified problem; best to find out at the design stage. This research is often done by a technical department at the organization's headquarters. An organization must be sure to take in to consideration the particular context in which they are working. Activities carried out under different political, security, geographic or cultural conditions may need to be modified in order to be effective. After this step, you are ready to write your concept paper.

e. **Consensus building and ownership promotion:** After you have a project concept, and before you do any more work, share your concept, activities, and objectives, with the community as well as the government host. Ask them how they are willing to contribute to the project. Their input and local knowledge can be very useful at this stage, and you will continue the process of building their ownership into the program. But also, it can help reorient the project as some previously identified needs and community problems may have found solutions or circumstances may have changed.

f. **Working paper:** The next step is for field staff, and project management to begin collaborating on the design. Draft a working paper that is no longer than two pages. Give short description of the community needs discovered and highlight the process of working with the community on this assessment. Also highlight how the community will participate in the implementation of this project. You may include one or two photos that illustrate the community needs and a photo of one of your recent community meetings. Describe the proposed project, how the activities you have chosen have worked effectively in other projects, and the expected outcomes. Introduce the community and write a paragraph about your organization and its mission. This is not a project proposal; this is a simple, quick-to-read fact sheet.

g. **Donor mission and input:** Interested donors may be glad to have an introductory meeting with your organization, but it is essential to identify the community needs first and then go after donors that have similar missions to yours. This will help your NGO avoid donor fund-driven projects. In the meeting with the potential donor, share your working paper with the donor. Donors have goals and missions that they are trying to accomplish, and if your project concept will help them do that, then there is room for discussion. If your project is not a good fit for them, ask them if they can help you better understand the types of projects they like to invest in, or if they can recommend a donor where your project might be a better fit. If they express positive interest, ask them if they have any suggestions for solidifying your project so it best fits their funding guidelines. However, make sure to stay within your limits and respect the community's expressed needs. There should not be any compromising to accommodate donor preferences at the price of community expressed needs. In other words, the community needs are not to be modified or replaced. Donors give excellent feedback because they have seen so many projects and because they have a clear understanding of their mission. Also, a marriage between the community needs, donor's mission, the government host development plan and the project-implementing NGO's mission gives the project a better chance to succeed because it promote partnership and ownership of the project by the community. At this stage, the donor will probably give you the forms and the guidelines they require for the proposal submission.

h. **Project proposal:** Now it is time to write a final project proposal that incorporates the community needs, the project goals and objectives, a list of activities to address those needs, a budget, an action plan, project indicators that will help measure the degree to

which the project has attained the intended results and any documents required by the donor. At this stage, the NGO's project is ready for submission.

CONCLUSION

NGOs may have the best of intentions to help central African communities escape from poverty, but if they have poor project/program design and planning processes, their efforts cannot achieve the desired results. Proper design, planning, implementation, execution, and evaluation are important phases of every development project. Therefore, to ensure success, the development project must strategically and successfully respect each and every one of these phases. With the design and planning phase being the foundation of a project, it requires feasibility studies, starting with whether there is a need expressed by the intended project target. Only when there is such a need would development actors carry out the actual project design and planning, including the technical design, the necessary economic and financial studies as well as the social and environmental studies as appropriate. "Imposed projects" or "funding availability driven projects" are bound to fail. Similarly, proper implementation, execution, and evaluation need to follow a methodology that requires not only a respect of the project funder's policy and that of the project's implementing organization, but also and most importantly, consideration of all the stakeholders with a particular attention to the beneficiary population whose support and participation are needed for the success of the project. In other words, the beneficiaries must be at the center of the project; they must fully participate in all phases of the project from the design to the evaluation.

To draw on findings from this study, there is hope as "development machines" have started shifting their way of thinking on how development ought to be delivered. NGOs are

slowly incorporating a needs-based approach in their development agenda. However, although needs-oriented development projects/programs have been referred to by many observers as the solution to Africa's development problems, they in themselves face internal and external obstacles. I am not saying that needs-based projects are part of the problem—rather they are a solution that faces difficulties—but with determination, consistency, proper planning and design, NGOs can overcome these challenges and implement successful development projects that reflect the true needs of the population they are intended to serve.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

I. Procedures in designing development projects/programs

Q: How do you design your development projects/programs? What procedures do you follow in designing your development projects/programs?

IRC/DRC: To design a development project/program, IRC staff follow the policy and attitude of IRC and things that are suggested to them by the host government because NGOs are an invited guest of the government; they cannot work without the government approval. The most important rule is to say that (the policy is that), a given project must fit within the development program of the host government. The NGO can lobby the government to change the government policy and practices pertaining to development but at the end of the day, it is up to the government to change these policies. It is hard for developing countries to turn down NGO because they need a lot; the government is under pressure given the many needs of the country. The Rwandan government's attitude toward NGO development projects is exceptional because the government is very sure of what they want to accomplish in terms of development. So, what happens in this case is that if an NGO has their own agenda that does not fit the government's development plan, the government will not allow them to work; however, if an NGO is willing to

collaborate, the government will work with them. Because aid comes with strings attached, some countries with an example of Rwanda are trying to attract foreign investments. The Rwandan government is a government that works hard, they want to accomplish what other countries want to accomplish but not through aid. Their goal is to cut aid in five years. They want to cooperate more with the Chinese (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC.)

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Oxfam projects are always based on expressed needs of the population, as most Oxfam projects are initiated by local authorities or local leaders. For example a member a local parliament may come to Oxfam to express the needs of his constituency. It means that the needs of the population are expressed from the bottom. If Oxfam considers this project acceptable, they deploy their technicians on site to assess the needs and the budget of the project (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/ Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

Q: Can you please tell me about the last project/program that you developed walking through the initial idea, (design) though its development and evaluation? Or How do you design your development projects/programs?

IRC/CAR: The process starts by identifying what the needs of the targeted population are, not necessarily by asking the population about what they need but discussing that among the IRC field staff. This is the process that I was instructed to go through by my technical coordinator at IRC, to start discussing with the field staff what they think the need was for the youth, and then to come together with all the field staff from my site and other IRC sites in the country and determine what the needs would be for the youths according to the field staff. We also invited to this planning session the youth minister, social affairs from the government ministries and

UNICEF. The information that the field staff had provided about youth's needs was to be discussed and the government's representatives such as the youth ministries were to talk about their priorities to see how they could be integrated in the project. UNICEF was also to talk about their priorities and to see how they could be integrated in IRC strategies. We took the information that the field staff had provided and listened to priorities of government representatives and UNICEF and considered them as youth needs and then we tried to identify specific objectives of the program after analyzing the root causes.

In reality, it seems like an exercise because the objectives had already been identified by the IRC technical coordinator even before they met with these people. Thus the strategic process was more like a planning formality.

The project did not take into account the input of UNICEF or the government. In this planning session, we discussed the strengths of IRC in comparison with what other NGOs were doing and discussed how IRC could design a project that is based on its strengths.
In other terms, the objectives of the project were suggested by the staff in the field, IRC technical coordinator, local staff and the program manager. After that planning stage, what had been identified as objectives and strategies, the result of this planning session was given to the headquarters for review so that they could provide their technical input based on their experience and expertise regarding IRC livelihood programs.

Then after the design and the technical review that project would be submitted to different donors based on their funding priorities but the direction of the project or its orientation could be changed based on donor preferences to kind of highlight the specific aspects of the project based on what the donor was looking for. Meaning the project orientation was flexible in order to fit within the donor funding criteria and priority because the donor had for sure pre-

identified their fields of interventions way before our project. I think the area where I was working was pretty much chosen because it was near with other IRC programs in a sense that we could customize on logistics and also factors such as where other NGOs were working so we don't overlap.

After the project was funded, then the community was informed about the project. As the project was funded, it was announced to the community, to invite them to get involved. They were told of the project objectives and what the project was going to do for the community as well as what IRC was hoping the community would contribute. At this point, the communities were invited to ask questions and give feedback about how the project could be oriented but there were limitations, as there was no room for modification. The project had objectives and activities, a format that had been funded and it could not be changed. It has results that were anticipated by the donor; therefore, it was not easy to change its format.
Going along with the execution of the project, the community would participate in the project by providing a building for the project but it was really just like participation in the execution not the design stage.

For the evaluation, the people were asked their opinions about how the project was going but it was more the community leaders who were asked not the people. The project was funded for one year, so the evaluation was done after six months but the result was not very helpful because it was a little too late to be integrated in the project. Most of the evaluation was more qualitative, getting opinions of the community about whether or not the project was meeting its goals. The project had two evaluations, internal and external. However, attention was given to the external evaluation that went to the donor and this was in terms of numbers of beneficiaries. As the program evolved even before the final evaluation, IRC was more concerned about the

number of beneficiary because it would impact the quality of the projects; the numbers were more of what the donor would like to see not the real impact of the program on beneficiary populations (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: What are the major factors that you take into account in designing and implementing your development projects in central Africa?

Q: How does your organization determine to whom to give aid, what community to support, the project choice? (What are the variables that help your organization in making those decisions)?

IRC/RDC: Government priorities (follow those priorities), they can be large but the NGO has to adapt to them. And we also have to gather the input of the beneficiary population; identify the priorities of the people not necessarily the government priorities because what happens sometimes is that donor and NGO will come in a place thinking that they know what is best for the population. Example: Like build a bell but the village needs a health center. IRC consults with the beneficiary to find out what they need and adapt to that. If the government priorities differ from the priorities of the people which is a rare case, IRC will follow and adapt to the government priorities because if you don't follow the government priority, the government can kick you out.

The variables that help IRC determine to whom to give aid, the community to support or the project choice are: Studies done ahead of time/needs analysis, geography, accessibility, and the community needs. However, in countries like DRC where the need is so great everywhere especially in South-Kivu, it is hard to determine based on the need. Even the factors listed above are not always the determinant factors. An illustrative example, are Minembwe and Itombwe,

two remote areas in South-Kivu, places that are not easily accessible but IRC has health centers project there. I (the interviewee) question the IRC decision to work in such remote places. If it were me, I would have advocated against that project not because there is no need but because the cost, the time, the challenges invested in those communities could have been helping more people somewhere else (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The expression of needs from the people and by the people. Oxfam always waits on the community to express their needs through either the local or political leaders. So, the crucial element in Oxfam project design is the expression of needs from the people through community leaders who initiate the project to Oxfam. Oxfam focuses much on projects that come from the local people. It's a bit unusual that Oxfam executes a project that does not come from the beneficiary population. A formula favored by Oxfam is that "Oxfam does not impose but accompanies local communities." However, each project proposed or submitted to Oxfam must fit within Oxfam strategic objectives (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: The organization as a whole decides based on the program that they already have in the field. Also it is based on trying to establish themselves in a heavily populated area and also looking at how the community is ready to participate in the project. Security and logistical concerns are definitely important. It is also based on the mission of the organization because IRC's mission always affects the choice of the beneficiary. Typically, we are trying to serve the most vulnerable population but if it is impossible to work with a certain population due to security and logistical reasons, IRC would choose not to work or invest resources in that community. Specifically, IRC looks at minority groups; it's one of the factors that influence their projects/community choice. It also depends on the government representatives who sometimes

may refuse or deny NGO the permission to work in a certain territory. Also looking at the strengths of IRC and the technical expertise of IRC that can be built upon and looking at what other NGOs in the same area are doing. Looking at the priorities of donors in the area and looking at the way IRC could partner with the government (It is a secondary factor but it is considered). Also looking at the input of local staff and how they can be taken into account (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: Do you survey the community to ask them what they want in terms of development?

IRC/DRC: Yes, especially with the CDR (Community Driven Reconstruction) project. (An illustrative example of projects that are community oriented). A project identified by the community. IRC approaches the community; asks them what they want, ask them to decide through a democratic process that ends up with a vote. In this project, money is managed on a community level. The community can hold accountable the people who made those decisions (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC)

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Survey yes, it's very critical, but I would rather say that with Oxfam it is verification because the community expresses their own needs to Oxfam and Oxfam goes in the field to ensure that the expressed needs are real (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: When I was in CAR, I did survey the people but it was only after the project had already gone through its design process, (had already been developed). So yes, I surveyed the people in the implementation stage as opposed to the design stage (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic)

Q: What role does your projects/programs beneficiary community play in the project?

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The community plays a very important role in our projects. They participate during, before and even after the project. The community participation is characterized by their support for the sustainability of Oxfam actions because for Oxfam, the after project is very important. The participation is often moral and even physical. Ex. Transportation of sand or other material to build a water fountain, building roads and bridges to facilitate local transportation so that Oxfam vehicles could access the targeted area. (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: Orienting how the project is implemented, suggesting ways to improve the results. In addition to participating in project activities; actually assisting the organization to serve the project beneficiaries and to assisting the organization to identify the most vulnerable population within the community. Also in term of sensitization, the community played a role of passing along the information as well as the training that they've received (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

II. NGO perspectives on obstacles encountered in designing and implementing need oriented development projects/programs

Q: Does your organization encounter any obstacles in the design and implementation of projects/programs that are the wish of local communities? If yes, can you name some?

IRC/DRC: The biggest obstacle that IRC encounters in designing and implementing projects/programs that are the wish of local communities is smallish projects displayed in large areas. Meaning staffing issues since the project belongs to the community. Getting money to the

people or technical assistance in a timely fashion is a problem. Overall, it is a really good approach to design and implement projects that emanate from the community because it empowers the community to take charge of their own development despite all the difficulties in the execution phase (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The problem encountered by Oxfam in the realization of a project that emanates from the people is often a resistance from a group of local people that refuses to participate in the project. There are also obstacles that come from the governmental body in the sense that a community may express a need, but since Oxfam has a Memorandum of Agreement with the host government, a project must first be approved by the government before Oxfam executes it. The problem is greater when a project does not fit within the government's development program of the host country. There is also of course political manipulations as there are politicians who often want to use NGOs for their political agenda. Another obstacle is related to the rules of donors and funding availability. Most donors have five-year programs, they have preferences and priorities, and so it may happen that the need of the population does not coincide with the donor priorities or program during a given period. Often, donors have hidden agendas, as the example of Canada and the USA that were present in Guinea because of Al Qaida but were operating under a development mission umbrella (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: Government officials and local politicians that may have their own agenda that is not   necessarily the same as the community's development expressed needs. So they make it hard for IRC to execute projects that don't represent their agendas. In terms of selection of individual beneficiary populations, there are always tensions within the community or if a certain neighborhood benefits from a project. In term of contribution, it is hard to determine what is

reasonable in terms of community contribution, for example. IRC suggested volunteering as community participation and contribution in IRC projects but as the project progressed, the community wanted to get paid for volunteering in the project (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

III. NGO suggestions on how to overcome obstacles associated with the design and implementation of development projects that are based on the needs central African populations.

Q: Do you have any suggestion on how to overcome those obstacles?

IRC/DRC: As suggestions on how to overcome these obstacles, IRC needs more staff because IRC does not want to be in a given community or region forever. More and more, IRC is working with local associations, capacity building and capacity transfer so that they can take it to scale, build the capacity of local associations to spread over. For me, the idea of expatriate, yes but I think local Congolese know their development needs better than foreigners and are in a better position to serve their people. Not in agreement with expatriates who think they know African problems better than Africans. IRC is working to empower locals to take their own development destiny (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Advocacy on several levels: Educate the public on international aid, international solidarity, launch information campaigns in donor countries (For Example in Quebec Canada) to educate the population, the taxpayers on international aid, international solidarity because people in donor countries can influence the destination of aid. Oxfam works in partnership with OCHA, a UN agency that coordinates humanitarian aid, below OCHA, there are clusters. There is also the Pooled Fund managed by UNDP on a national level (a meeting or

gathering of funds that donor countries make available for the development of a country). The pool fund determines the development priorities and makes annual budgets available. NGO candidates are then asked to submit their project proposals to the Pooled Fund for financing. And so we must also advocate on UNDP and cluster levels for proper spending and investment. In development priorities as defined by the Pooled Fund, stabilization comes in fifth position in terms of priorities and therefore often there is little money left for the fifth and sixth priorities which is the development category. A lot more money and emphasis is put on emergencies than development and so what happens most of the time is that a population may propose a development project in a zone where there is no fund available for the development category. So to respond to the need of this community, a development project can either be adapted and readjusted or re-oriented so that it fits the emergency category which disposes funds. For this to happen there has to be advocacy for readjustments on the implementing NGO's part.

In case, Oxfam does not have funds available for a project that emanates from the community, Oxfam would work in partnership with another organization that has funds or refer the project to another organization for implementation and execution.

There is a need for strong advocacy at UNDP level (Program Office) for a little flexibility and more investment in development rather than emergency programs, advocacy for a shift from emergency projects to development projects. I believe that the internally displaced persons' situation is poorly managed in Bukavu because there are IDPs who are registered multiple times, thus inflating the actual number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and if NGOs continue to support these people, it will create a sort of dependence and compromise development effort especially since UN agencies are more involved in emergencies than development (OXFAM

QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: In terms of government actors: trying to implicate them in the project from the very beginning at the design stage so that they don't feel left out but feel as full participants, not feel like they were being imposed upon but included in the project. It is important to note that it is important to approach the government with respect and regard because the way government officials are approached by NGO matters in term establishing that partnership. It is not only about when they are approached but also how they are approached. They may feel as minimized by NGO members, because often in the field an organization that is coming in with much more resources treats local politicians and local leaders with less respect.

NGO should inform the community as early as possible what is going to be expected of them in terms of their participation in the project. Make sure to work with a variety of local leaders in the community not only the chiefs so that the population does not get the idea that only few a people are benefiting from the project and that they are not sharing with the rest of the community.

In terms of tension created when selecting the beneficiary, it is critical that the process is as transparent as possible and NGO should not rely on one person to provide information about a project. Also it should be that, people, the members of the community are the one who selects the beneficiary when the beneficiaries for a project are individual people; not rely exclusively on specific people or individuals in the community for that task (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

IV. NGO collaborations/partnership

Q: Do you collaborate/partner with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) or any other United Nations organization? Please describe.

IRC/DRC: IRC collaborates with UNDP and UNICEF; they are also IRC donor in some cases. The relationship is not like partners with another NGO but the dynamic is that of the donor relationship. Some donors are hands off, some are hands on. USAID who is IRC's major donor is strange, they are hands off; with UNICEF on the contrary, the experience is different. UNICEF is hands on to the point that they are co-implementing with IRC. But even with UNICEF, the partnership is not always rigid; it sometimes changes with the people (UNICEF representative). The partnership is not set in stone (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUBEC/DRC: Oxfam Quebec works in partnership with UNDP/ pool fund, with UNICEF, UNHCR and with WFP in food aid distribution to refugees and IDPs. Oxfam International is comprised of Oxfam Belgium, Oxfam GB, Oxfam Netherlands, and Oxfam Quebec, and therefore there is collaboration between different Oxfam branches (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: IRC partners with UNICEF which funds IRC activities and helps organize training for local staff. They also try to bring to the attention of IRC, beneficiary population that they feel are particularly vulnerable and would like to see IRC serve. Outside of UNICEF, there is FAO which provides agricultural inputs (seeds and tools) to be used in development programming. Also, IRC partners with WFP which provides food to youth participating in training programs and also cooperatives to prevent seeds from being sold or eaten. Through cooperatives, they donate food to people so they won't eat the seed (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: Do you collaborate/partner with other international NGOs? Please describe.

IRC/DRC: As for the partnership with other international organizations, NGOs talk a lot about partnering with others but in reality they are primarily responsible to donors and to the government host. They do try to partner in order to stay out of each other's way when they are working in the same area, not to step on each other's feet, understand who is doing what and where and make sure there is no duplication. It is difficult for international NGOs to be partners and competitors at the same time. The primary relationship is with donors and the government, but there are cluster meetings coordinated by OCHA to make sure there is no conflict and there are complementarities in the field (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/RDC: Oxfam is working with other international NGOs more in the intervention phase in the sense that if Oxfam wants to execute a project in a community where another NGO is involved, they share roles. International NGOs are often open (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: IRC minimally collaborates with other international NGOs. Although they meet for coordination meeting to try to coordinate their activities to avoid overlapping services, they also meet to coordinate when there is a new urgent need identified to figure out how they can work together to respond to the situation. They exchange information about different strategies they are using as well (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: Do you collaborate/partner with any local NGOs, religious institutions, or community organizations? Please describe.

IRC/DRC: IRC collaborates with local NGOs, religious institutions, or community organizations very well. IRC understands that they are the future of the work IRC is trying to do, the seed planted which will grow better if IRC works with them. These institutions have a lot to offer and do not cost a lot, they have people, and IRC offers technical support, a small amount of financial support and training (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: In terms of partnerships with local NGOs, Oxfam Quebec is working with some local NGOs in Kinshasa but not in Bukavu. As far as religious institutions, Oxfam does not work with religious institutions in the Congo (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: As for IRC collaboration with local NGO and religious institutions, there is almost no local NGO in the zone where IRC works in CAR rural areas. IRC works with agricultural cooperatives to provide them with the training, to try and use them as mentors for the youths. Also IRC provides them with agricultural inputs. Also IRC relies on them to identify individual beneficiaries for a given project. IRC CAR does not collaborate with religious institutions (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: What is your relationship with the government?

IRC/DRC: IRC puts the government way out ahead of everything. The government is not the NGO partner but NGOs are partners of the government. It is arrogant on NGO's part to think that way (that the Government is their partner). I think NGOs have to understand that as much as there are lots priorities and needs, there are lots well educated Congolese who know their country and the language. It is backward to think that NGO from the outside knows the problem of the

host country better then the people, the host government. Foreign NGOs should come in with the agenda but ask people; help the government coordinate better not impose anything (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Oxfam has a relationship of collaboration and monitoring with the Congolese government, a relationship of support to the government. Oxfam supports the government and at the same time wants to be monitored by the government. Oxfam believes that the government is an indispensable partner in all their activities and projects (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: In term of the collaboration with the government of CAR, IRC tries to partner with the government and have them participate in their projects in terms of providing training for IRC or participating in training given by IRC. IRC coordinates with the government if the government is doing the same thing. Also IRC relies on the government host as a source of information about communities and past development projects executed in a community. Also IRC works with the government in trying to use strategies that harmonize with the government development plans (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

V. NGOs fund source and donor influence

➢ **Fund acquisition procedure**

Q: How does your organization acquire funds for a given project? What is the procedure?

IRC/DRC: There are a lot of mechanisms:

- A donor may approach IRC and ask IRC to develop a project proposal based on their priorities (donor priorities) or ask to develop a concept paper with a rough budget attached. If the donor likes the paper, they may ask for a full project with a developed budget.

- USAID may make public projects that they want to fund. NGOs in this case will get together and form a consortium and a lead NGO. They will than make a proposal to USAID. USAID may come back and ask a NGO according to their priorities and criteria. Some NGOs may be selected, other may not. A NGO may have to hire consultants to write a proposal. It is natural for IRC to gravitate to USAID because they have a pretty good relationship with them. Most of the time, it starts informally at a senior level.

- Most donors ask NGOs to compete in order to get the best deal possible and the best designed proposal (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

(IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The procedure for acquiring funds for a given project is that Oxfam gathers the population's needs and submits them to a potential donor in the form of a project proposal. If a donor is interested in the project, Oxfam is contacted and asked to implement the project. The main sources of Oxfam funds are CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) pool fund (UNDP), World Bank (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: IRC has different sources of funding: UN funding and private funding. The procedure to acquire funds at least in CAR is really to see what the priorities of the different donor institutions are and knowing when they have funds that they want to disperse and writing a

proposal that falls in those categories. Sometimes proposals to private foundations are submitted when there is a particular political event in a country or maybe a study has just come out showing certain economic conditions. Also IRC is part of the common humanitarian application aid process, a procedure for streamlining humanitarian aid where NGOs get together; write projects to submit to the UN—it is like working with other NGOs to access UN funds (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

> ➢ **Donor influence**

Q: Does fund donor influence a project choice and community in which the funds will be invested / allocated? If yes, how?

IRC/DRC: More often than they will like to admit, IRC is one of the few NGOs that will turn down money if they feel that it is not strategic to implement that money but most NGOs don't. NGO may have a beautiful proposal; they may throw their beautiful strategy and go after the donor priority. In my opinion, at the end of the day, it is the donor who wins out although it is more of a dialogue between donors with NGOs because the donor needs an implementing partner and NGOs needs money. Small NGOs are more likely to compromise but with a big NGO like IRC it is more of a dialogue. But in the end, like I said, it is the donor who wins because NGOs need funds (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The donor has a great influence on the choice of a project and the community where the project will be executed but does not interfere with the operational phase of the project. It is true that the donor requires the respect of norms and principles incorporated in the project agreement because a project proposal that Oxfam submits to the donor already

includes methodologies in the form of a contract. And thus on the general level, the donor has some influence on Oxfam but there is no interference. Oxfam Quebec does not like donors who are hands on; that is why Oxfam Quebec does not (absolutely) accept USAID funding because they interfere too much with the philosophy or even the structure of the NGO being funded. With CIDA who is the main source of Oxfam Quebec funds, there is no interference. What I am trying to say is that there is no influence of the donor on the specific level, although they monitor and evaluate the project to ensure proper execution in order to suggest new strategies or address encouragements to Oxfam, when necessary (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: Yes, because projects are written according to the priorities of the donor, so, projects are chosen and oriented according to those priorities**.** It is really project choice in terms of who the donor wants to serve but in terms of community, I think the NGO can choose who to serve, I mean a specific community (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: Do you think your donor funding has any impact on your NGO's overall behavior?

IRC/DRC: Not so far the IRC because they have diversified donors. Donors don't have that influence on them but a lot of USA based NGOs are more of the implementing partner because more of their money comes from the USA government (IRC Provincial Director- South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The donor has no impact on the behavior or philosophy of Oxfam Quebec, the influence is only in terms of resources allocation not in terms of philosophy of Oxfam Quebec. All that the donor does is to reassure the compliance in standards and procedures

described in the Memorandum of Agreement signed with Oxfam Quebec (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: Yes especially when you are doing development work that is not receiving as much aid as emergency projects, or if you are working in a country that does not receive much aid like others, the organization has to implement what the donor wants not what people really need. They really try to have donor input in the design of their projects as much as possible. Because there is a lot competition for funds, it almost seems like the donor has more influence on the design of the projects than the beneficiary communities (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

VI. NGO project/program evaluation phase

Q: What assessment indicators do you use to measure your project/program outcomes? Who do you report your project/program assessed outcomes to? In what form: print, booklet, photos, website or other?

IRC/DRC: IRC assessment indicators are set up from the beginning and written from the beginning. SMART (Simple, Measurable, Realizable, and Timing): the evaluation is written in the proposal and funded as part of the project. The government is also involved in the evaluation process. The report is usually sent to the donor and the host government. Sometimes we would share that with other NGOs, just to highlight our realizations (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: The evaluation indicators used by Oxfam are quantitative. There is always a work calendar, a schedule that Oxfam checks each month to see what has been done and what remains to be done, computing percentages to assess the project's outcome. There are

surveys that deal with statistics from the start. There's a bunch of parameters to go through in the middle and the end of the project to review progress. In health centers and schools, for example, we analyze the numbers of people suffering from waterborne diseases. After the project, we do evaluation studies to analyze if diseases resulting from improper sanitation were reduced. After the evaluation, the report is sent to the project donor. (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: We count the number of beneficiaries; for training, IRC conducts a pre-test and a post-test to assess how information was retained; looking at improvement and living standards as reported by the beneficiary. In terms of livelihood activities, looking if household income has increased, or listening to the reported beneficiary satisfaction. After the evaluation, IRC reports her projects'/programs' assessed outcome to donors, headquarters, and the technical unit at the headquarters, usually in a form of a print report, with some photos (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: How do you document your projects/programs outcomes? (Interviews, written observations, photos, audio, or video?). How do you use your outcome reports? Do you include previous outcome reports when designing new projects/programs?

IRC/DRC: It depends on the indicators but interactions with the beneficiary; focus group to ask questions is the evaluation technique most used by IRC. The evaluation report is used to determine what was accomplished or not accomplished in order to better strategize. There are some follow up questions, lessons learned. The report is more of a learning tool (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBC/DRC: It varies with the project, but the results of our projects are documented through interviews and written observations. For example in our project "Watsan," we go to health centers and schools to request statistics in terms of progress made in reducing waterborne diseases. Oxfam provides advices it is up to the people to make better decisions. In each school and health center, we try to train teachers and medical staff, we assess their vitality and we try to inculcate the spirit of customer service, as well as equality and equity between women and men. Evaluation reports are used as a database for our ongoing projects as well as for future projects. Oxfam takes into account the evaluation report, shortcomings and inadequacies are taken into account to see if we can strengthen our strategies. This is why Oxfam has adopted "Action accée sur le resultat"(action oriented toward result type of approach). Meaning, in the evaluation report, Oxfam tries to highlight the impact and tries to visualize indicators that are classifiable, datable, and measurable meaning the maturity. In developing similar projects, Oxfam uses the results of previous projects in the planning phase (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: IRC conducts interviews with both beneficiary and members of the community who have participated in the project (trainers, project volunteers) to document the outcomes of their projects. Report from the community volunteers, photos. The report is presented to the donor to show how money was spent. The report is reviewed internally by the field team and technical unit at the headquarters to identify areas of improvement for future projects. In theory I would say that IRC includes previous outcome reports when designing new projects/programs especially if it is the same person who implemented the same project, they bring in their experience. But practically, a lot of times IRC staff design a project before they know the result of the previous project to avoid fund not being cut. NGO does not really care much about the

long term impact of their projects. The evaluation is usually done for the donor not for the sustainability of the project. The outcome report feedback is always sent back to the field late, consequently the NGO does not optimize the report outcome for their future projects. IRC never really had the opportunity to incorporate the long term impact of the project in the design of their projects (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

VII. Marketing/information distribution

Q: Do you distribute information on your upcoming projects/programs in advance of their implementation to the government, to the community, others? How? To who?

IRC/DRC: Very interesting, IRC and any NGO have to sign a convention (Protocol D'accord) with the government prior to the implementation in which you describe what each party should expect from each other. In fact, IRC just got a letter through OCHA in which the Congolese government wants to know what every NGO is doing, the NGO location, and budget. The government should know everything that the NGOs are trying to do to verify the amount, report, and work plan on a provincial level. The government will disseminate down the chain but IRC would do that directly (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Oxfam Quebec first informs the local authorities; meets with them to talk about the implementation of their office if they are at the implementation stage. We also contact different state bodies to inform them of our activities and discuss our execution plan as well as our future projects. For instance, we meet with the provincial Ministry of Planning to discuss our plans and future projects (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chef of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: Sometimes but rarely IRC distributes information on upcoming projects. For certain programs IRC distributes information to local and government officials explaining the project through an information sheet or a meeting with government officials or local leaders. They organize community meetings explaining their projects but it is way in advance, it is usually by the commencement of the project. They usually don't give material that people can read because sometimes most of the population is illiterate (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

Q: Do you post project/program information on your website? What type of information? How current is it?

IRC/DRC: Yes, there are a lot of publications on IRC's website but not in great detail, it is usually general information. The info on the IRC website is up to date. The Website is usually utilized as a fundraising tool, so yes the information is posted regularly (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Oxfam posts information on its projects on its website. But this information is often general although they may at times post detailed information (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: IRC posts information but it is general information, an overview on where they are working, the kind of beneficiary, the number of beneficiaries, how long they've been there and a lot of time they put the context and challenges they encounter, security and logistical not strategic difficulties. The information is usually not current and mainly because it is general (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

VIII. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Q: Is your NGO factoring the MDGs in their program design, implementation, and evaluation? Is your NGO "reporting" their project outcomes to any MDGs monitoring body?

IRC/DRC: No because IRC does not consider themselves as a development organization although they intervene in development. Their development interventions are more sporadic, they come in and go. IRC does not report their projects outcomes to any MDGs monitoring body (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC)

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Oxfam Quebec is factoring the MDGs in their program design, implementation, and evaluation, especially for projects funded by UNDP. Oxfam has adopted the method of management by results. Project indicators are assessed regularly and Oxfam believes in a strict project monitoring. Oxfam Quebec is an organization that works in the very high fiscal discipline. For example: The monthly financial report and narrative reports are sent to donors within five days of the following month, after reports are reviewed by donor, they are returned to Oxfam within 10 days along with donor comments (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: No, IRC is not factoring the MDGs in their programs design, implementation, and evaluation. However, if a project is funded by a UN agency, IRC reports the project outcome to the MGDs monitoring body because I am assuming that by reporting to the funding agency, they are reporting the result to UN (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

IX. Interview conclusions

Q: Is the information you just gave me in public access? Is it available in print or online? Exactly where?

IRC/DRC: In terms of methodology on how IRC designs their projects, not sure, but most information was personal opinion. A lot of IRC documents are tools for fund-raising, more on success than failure (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC)

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: No, most of the information was personal opinion and experience (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic)

Q: What else should I know about your development projects to better understand how you design, implement and evaluate your project?

IRC/DRC: Monitoring is a key aspect in IRC projects. Evaluation is looking back to what has been done but monitoring is an ongoing activity. Monitoring helps make corrections to get back on track. IRC puts a lot of emphasis on monitoring (IRC Provincial Director, South-Kivu DRC).

OXFAM QUEBEC/DRC: Oxfam is more interested in projects that are the expression of the beneficiary population needs. This is the foundation of all Oxfam actions. Meaning that, everything starts from the bottom with the population expressing their needs through local leaders. Oxfam, in turn, submits the data to donors to negotiate funding. If the project gets

funding, Oxfam assures its implementation and execution (OXFAM QUEBEC, Chief of Project, ADI/IKOMA/Walungu, South-Kivu DRC).

IRC/CAR: The information given is a post conflict development context which has an impact on how projects are designed from a security stand to all other factors. Also consider that IRC is engaging in both humanitarian and development programming and that approaches that may be appropriate to humanitarian contexts are carried over to development projects (staff such as identifying population needs themselves). This arrangement or this way of doing things does not produce the best result because the design, implementation, and even the evaluation of humanitarian projects and development projects are way different (Former IRC Youth and Child Protection Program Coordinator, Livelihood Project in Central Africa Republic).

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

DePaul University

Interview Questionnaire

I. Interviewee identification:

    a. Name: _____

    b. Position:_____

    c. Email: _____

    d. Date: _____

    e. Location:_____

    f. Beginning time of interview:_____

    g. End time of interview: _____

II. Organization identification:

    a. Name: _____

    b. Mission:_____

    c. Headquarters:_____

    d. Countries of intervention in central Africa: _____

    e. What projects/programs does your NGO have in central Africa?:_____

        _____

        _____

III. Can you please tell me about the last project/program that you developed walking me through the process from the initial idea, (design) through its development and evaluation?

    ➢ (How do you design your development projects/programs?)

        1. What procedures do you follow in designing your development projects/programs?

2. What are the major factors that you take into account in designing and implementing your development projects in central Africa?

3. How does your organization determine to whom to give aid, what community to support, the project choice? (What are the variables that help your organization in making those decisions)?

4. Do you survey the community to ask them what they want in terms of development?

5. What role does your projects/programs beneficiary community play in the project?

6. Does your organization encounter any obstacles in the design and implementation of projects/programs that are the wish of local communities? If yes, can you name some?

7. Do you have any suggestion on how to overcome those obstacles?

IV. Collaboration/partnership activities

1. Do you collaborate/partner with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) or any other United Nations organization? Please describe.

2. Do you collaborate/partner with other international NGOs? Please describe.

3. Do you collaborate/partner with any local NGOs, religious institutions, or community organizations? Please describe.

4. What is your relationship with the government?

V. Marketing/information distribution

1. Do you distribute information on your upcoming projects/programs in advance of their implementation to the government, to the community, others? How? To who?

2. Do you post project/program information on your website? What type of information? How current is it?

VI. NGOs fund source

1. How does your organization acquire funds for a given project? What is the procedure?

2. Does fund donor influence a project choice and community in which the funds will be invested / allocated? If yes, how?

3. Do you think your donor funding has any impact on your NGO's overall behavior?

VII. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. Is your NGO factoring the MDGs in their program design, implementation, and evaluation?

2. Is your NGO "reporting" their project outcomes to any MDGs monitoring body?

VIII. NGO projects/programs assessed outcomes

1. What assessment indicators do you use to measure your project/program outcomes?

2. Who do you report your project/program assessed outcomes to? In what form: print booklet, photos, website or other?

3. How do you document your projects/programs outcomes? (Interviews, written observations, photos, audio, or video?)

4. How do you use your outcome reports?

5. Do you include previous outcome reports when designing new projects/programs?

IX. Is the information you just gave me in public access? Is it available in print or online? Where?

X. What else should I know about your development projects to better understand how you design, implement and evaluate your project?

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

DePaul University

Interview Introduction and Consent Form

My name is Claude Chofi and I am an undergraduate student at DePaul University in Chicago, USA. I grew up in The Democratic Republic of Congo and moved to Chicago in 2005. I am interviewing you as part of my graduation research project titled International NGO Development Projects/Programs Design Process. Basically I want to understand how international NGOs working in central Africa design, implement, and evaluate their projects and the obstacles that they encounter. Your participation will help identify the obstacles to these processes and it is hoped that the result of this study can be useful in helping NGOs overcome potential obstacles in designing, implementing, and evaluating their development projects/programs that are based on beneficiary population development needs.

If you agree to participate, which I hope you will, you will be asked open ended questions about your projects/programs design processes mentioned above. The interview will take about 30 minutes and we can go over as you wish to share about your job. I guarantee that the information that you provide will be confidential unless you authorize its release. Although individual opinions and experiences are of interest in this research, and linking your identity to your answers will give more credit to the research, I will not be putting your name on anything except on the question form unless your permission is granted to do so; otherwise, I will use only your organization's name, location, and your position and a code name as your identification and your name will remain anonymous.

Although all studies have some degree of risk, the potential in this research is quite inexistent. The information will be anonymous unless you give permission to use your name.

Upon completion of this interview, a copy of the interview transcript will be sent to you to ensure the accuracy of the information that you provided. And if you are interested in getting a copy of a final report of this research, I will be more than happy to email it to you.

If you have any questions prior to your participation or any time during the interview, please do not hesitate to ask.

AUTHORIZATION: I have read the above and understand the nature of this research. I understand that if I have any questions, I can contact the researcher Claude Chofi, email: claudechofi@yahoo.fr, telephone: 773-428-3686. I agree to participate in this interview and understand that the information that I give will be used for academic purposes and my confidentiality is guaranteed. If in any event, the researcher wants to publish this work, he will seek my consent prior to publishing. I understand that my name will not be used unless I grant permission to reveal my identity.

Please check one or more of the boxes that apply:

☐   Use my name

☐   I want to remain anonymous

☐   Send me a copy of this interview transcript to verify accuracy

☐   Send me a copy of the final research report

☐   Contact me after the interview if you have further questions

      My email is: _____

      My Phone is: _____

Interviewee's Name (Print): _____

Interviewee's signature: _____   Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____   Date: _____

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW RECOMMANDATION LETTER