

DO WE CARE?

Exploring Development & Partnerships

It has been almost fifty years following the adoption of 'Development' as a key global issue and plan for action, and the outcomes have been received with a mixed response. A World Bank Report of 1990 declares : "By any sensible measure, the development experience of the past forty years has been an astonishing success: life expectancy and education levels have increased dramatically, and average per capita incomes in the developing world have doubled." (Choksy, 1990, vi) , although that same report goes on to affirm : "Despite substantial economic and social progress in the past few decades, there is still much human suffering. " There are others like Wolfgang Sachs, an ecologist, who believe that: "Development has been emptied out..." (1990, p.6), "The idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape" (ibid p.2). People in the margins on whose behalf 'development' was initiated are struggling to survive. "My people are tired of development. They just want to live. " (Esteva quoted in Shiva, 1989)

In this climate of increased questioning this essay reflects on the motives of and basis for development, and takes a look at the possibilities and choices that remain for the future. Should development per se be abandoned ? Is development itself ethical ? Are there ethical possibilities for development? It is my belief that despite the questions being raised about the concept of development, there are ethical possibilities for partnerships in development: partnerships that nurture good communities and development that rekindles the search for the sacred in life.

What is Development ?

The Oxford English dictionary defines development as "A process through which the potentialities of an object or organism are released until it reaches its natural, complete, full-fledged form" (Oxford English Dictionary, cited in Esteva, 1992, p.8)

Webster has a string of other definitions to complement this understanding: to set forth or make clear by degrees or in detail , to make visible or manifest, to make active, to promote the growth of, to make available or usable, to cause to unfold gradually, to expand by a process of growth, to cause to grow and differentiate along lines natural to its kind, to go through a process of natural growth, differentiation or evolution by successive changes (as a blossom develops from a bud).

The definitions seem to be of two types : the first, meaning natural growth and evolution, which excludes, by implication, the necessity for outside or external interference or intervention to make that outcome a reality; and the second, which refers to expansion, growth, activity without indication of the process by which this might occur. In both cases it implies change, progress towards some goal, a standard of achievement, in one as found in nature, and the other caused by people. There is also the implication of change for the better - a movement from an inferior situation to a superior one, from the simple to the complex.

In recent history we find the word used to express these different meanings. It was used to explain the natural growth of plants and animals prior to the 18th century, and in the

18th and 19th centuries, when Wolff (1759) and Darwin (1859) used 'evolution' and 'development' interchangeably to refer to this process.

It has been used to explain and refer to personal change, and psychological changes and growth. In the 18th century, Justus Moser used the word "Entwicklung" to refer to social change and in the 19th century, the concept of self-development became fashionable (Esteva, 1992). 'Development' has been used to describe socio-political concepts, as in the work of Karl Marx (Esteva, 1992), and has spiritual implications when used to describe spiritual matters as in the development of the 'soul' and the psyche.

A new use for it was found in the 20th century as, for example, in 'urban development', 'colonial development', 'scientific and technological development' and 'economic development': the word is now completely removed from links to 'natural' growth', or else equated to it. It is now mostly linked to economic, scientific and technological activity.

In the aftermath of the World War, US President Truman declared :

"We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas ," (cited in Esteva, 1992, p.6)

With the Truman speech , a new dimension of 'development' came into being. Seeing themselves "the United States (as) preeminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques", the world was perceived in terms of dualities based on these achievements. From this single-minded perception of reality all of the countries of the South were marshalled into one category as the opposite of the 'haves' - the 'have nots' and the idea was promoted and received that the world was divided primarily into rich and the poor, the developed and the under-developed. Overnight on January 20, 1949, 2 billion people became 'under-developed' (Esteva and Prakash, 1998).

This world view that created 'under-development' defined poverty as the absence of western style possessions and values. From this deficit was thus created the need for 'help' in the form of aid.

Hence, development is an alleviation from the condition of 'under-development', a situation from which large numbers of people in previously colonized and therefore 'disadvantaged' situations had to be rescued and delivered. The battle lines were drawn. Poverty and deprivation as defined by the North were to be vanquished with their greatest weapons - economic growth and material gain accomplished through the wonders of science and technology, and the rules of 'The Market' ¹. "Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace" (Truman cited in Sachs, 1990, p.3) Development became a project of the 'haves' on behalf of the have-nots, development aid from the industrially advanced countries of the First World to the 'poor' countries of the Third World ².

It would be naive to assume that 'poverty' was and is only a matter of perception, or that it doesn't exist outside of a western mind set. Shiva makes the point that "It is useful to separate a cultural conception of subsistence living as poverty from the material experience of poverty that is the result of dispossession and deprivation. " (1989, p. 10) It is now widely accepted by field workers, and people living in such conditions, that poverty is a situation that is life-denying or destroying, the absence of basics that

maintain life, or what the African writer Bahro identifies as 'misery' (cited in Shiva, 1989, p. 10). In development jargon, this is called 'absolute poverty'.

Development projects were initiated to eradicate or alleviate the conditions of culturally perceived poverty : the slogan was 'prosperity and equality for all'. The basis for the eradication of poverty, and hence development, was through aid. There needs to be an exploration of the experience of and ethical possibilities for 'help' before we can see if the goals of development were achieved.

Helping

According to Webster, help is "to give assistance to, remedy, relieve, rescue, save, to be of use or benefit, to change for the better. Help carries with it a strong implication of advance toward an objective; aid suggests the evident need of help or relief and so imputes weakness to the one aided and strength to the one aiding; assist suggests a secondary role in the assistance or a subordinate character in the assistance. " (Webster's International Dictionary) There are clear links in meaning to 'development' - in the advancement towards an objective, a change for the better, and the inherent unequal power balance between the one-helping and the one-being-helped.

I would argue further to these definitions, that helping, by its very nature is a form of caring, and so examine it in the context of Nel Noddings' concept of the ethic of care. I limit this examination of 'helping as caring' to the public sphere.

According to Noddings, there is a form of caring natural and accessible to all human beings' (1989, p.28). It involves the one-caring, and the cared-for, in this case the one helping, and the one being helped. The main elements within Noddings' analysis of caring that I consider essential to ethical helping are : receiving the other by the one-caring, and reciprocity and completion of the caring act by the cared-for. "At bottom, all caring involves engrossment" (ibid, p. 17) and "Caring involves stepping out of one's own personal frame of reference into the other's. When we care we consider the other person's point of view, his objective needs, and what he expects of us. Our attention, our mental engrossment is on the cared-for, not on ourselves. " (ibid p 24)

The basis for caring is embedded deeply in the quality and nature of the relationship between the one-caring and the cared-for. This becomes problematical when we try to look at ethical forms of helping in the public domain. Does the relationship precede, and in fact stimulate the intention to help, or is the relationship there at all? Can caring take place when there is none? Both Noddings and Bowden admit that it is very difficult to care for someone outside the inner circle of family and friends. This is because it becomes a problem to complete the engrossment and reciprocity. In most public actions of charity and alms giving, the action is fleeting: money or goods changes hands, one gives, the other takes, and that brings it to a conclusion. I see this as being at one end of the range of possibilities. This cannot be considered an act of ethical caring according to the Noddings definition as there is no engrossment or reception, or reciprocity beyond the brief contact. "When we want to be thought of as caring , we often act routinely in a way that may easily secure that credit for us." (ibid,p 24)

This calls the act of fundraising for charitable causes into question. Is it caring? We have a range of cases here - from the Grade 3 class that raises money from a cup cake sale for the victims of Hurricane Mitch, to the diners who pay \$150 a plate in aid of the Children's Hospice. I am skeptical about the motives of the well-off diners, but the Grade 3's are certainly engrossed with the plight of the Central Americans: the children are stepping out of their frame of reference into the other's. Although reciprocity is questionable element here, the sense of well-being that the act of generosity generates among a community of people who care enough to do something for another community is a good substitute for reciprocity. This form of help is an act of caring in my book. It may not be as ideal as the completed relationship, but it is certainly a step up from mechanical charity. This is constantly expressed in the outpourings of generosity by the public: for example, after such disasters as the Red River Flood in 1997, the international appeal for starvation in Rwanda, and even local news of a family losing everything to a fire. Bowden confirms that it is possible to carry those virtues fostered and nurtured in the 'private sphere' to 'virtuous citizenship' (p. 147) and I will examine this further in the possibilities for ethical helping.

In order to help, there must be a need identified. We can look at how that need will be met (nature of the help), and the motives behind helping .

The perception of need can be subjective. A feeling of need - physical, emotional , spiritual, material - can arise out of my own experience , and be identified by me. My need may also be perceived by someone other than myself. The chances are that someone close to me - a family member, a close friend - is more likely to perceive my need accurately and in a sensitive manner, than someone who does not know me at all, but bases his perception on externally visible factors only. In some instances this frame of reference (i.e. externally visible symptoms) works, and is the only evidence there is: for example, if I were to lie unconscious on the floor, my life may depend on someone calling an ambulance. This is an emergency response, and it is the only response that is ethically possible. The absence of help in this situation could be considered morally wrong. Let's consider another example: if I were to trip and fall (and merely graze my knee), I would be grateful if someone were to come along and help me get back on my feet. However, if this person , seeing me fallen were to call an ambulance and rush me into the emergency care unit without checking with me on my condition or need, not only would it be excessive, but insensitive and out of touch with the reality of the situation. I might even be embarrassed and annoyed that I am now an object of help rather than the subject being helped. From another point of view, help from another may not have been necessary at all. It would have taken me longer to get back on my feet, but not impossible. If I am in a great deal of pain, or feel I might have broken a bone, I can ask for help. It is clear that the assessment of need cannot be based solely on the perceptions of the one helping alone; it has to be confirmed with input from the person needing help.

Once we assess need, and we make the intention(commitment) to help, what do we do to help and what form does that take? In the example above, it is clearly inappropriate to rush me to the hospital if I don't need emergency resuscitation. It takes some investigation to find out what the situation really is, and what I need - hospitalization for a broken leg if that is the case, or a band-aid and a hug. The kind of help offered must be relevant to and appropriate to the situation and to the one-being-helped.

What motivates a person to help? What are the goals of helping? It seems that the wish to help can spring spontaneously, where a person is moved to give or help, or be based on obligation. This can be paralleled with Bond's discussion of values - which can be deontic, (rule bound), or aretaic, virtuous³. Helping a fellow human being has been identified, among other duties and responsibilities, by every major religion as obligatory, and even necessary for the giver's future well being. One example that comes to mind is the practice of giving alms to the poor - started by the church in medieval times: it led to the salvation of the giver's soul, the poor being looked after by God. In Buddhist practices the giving of alms helps the giver to collect merit in the cycle of karma, influencing opportunities for fortuitous, good births in the future. In Islamic culture, giving to the poor is a necessity to promote the concept of brotherhood, and the equality of all people in the eyes of Allah. These religious beliefs have shaped the value systems of many communities, and cultures, and so it can also be considered a virtuous deed. 'Helping' is a moral virtue, and leads to the common good. However, the question arises: If the motive behind helping is self interest or guilt, can this be considered ethical 'giving'? On the other hand, the 'helper' can often have a genuine interest in helping the other. The feeling to do so springs spontaneously into the consciousness or heart of the helper, from pity, genuine love, or compassion, not out of a premeditated plan to do good so that he can accumulate karmic points, or save his soul. This can be called aretaic, and is at the other end of the spectrum from the act of mechanical almsgiving.

It would appear that ethical value has a lot to do with the motivation of the action, and the ideal for helping would raise the consciousness of people to aspire to the aretaic, but it cannot be depended on. Therefore, like Bond, I would argue that it is better to have a deontic value than not have one at all. The danger in this kind of giving is that "caring - essentially non rational, may be transformed into abstract problem solving." (Noddings, 1984, p.24) Noddings also identifies false 'caring for'. "When the one-caring is more concerned with how he appears, and wants to *appear* caring, he is not caring for the other." (p.26) Caring, then, is not present in all forms of civic helping, because of the difficulties in fulfilling the relationship but when it is, it transforms 'helping' to the aretaic dimension.

As Bowden points out in her analysis of the ethic of care in citizenship practices, "The insights of ethical caring do not float unified and free of their relational context to be applied at will to any given set of practices. The concept of caring is constituted within relations and it is in the play of contrasts and similarities between different relational practices that its import unfolds, producing new possibilities for other overlapping and interesting practices" (Bowden, 1997, p. 145) These practices will be examined in the possibilities for caring partnerships discussed further on in this paper, but first, with more of an understanding of what help means, we will look at the history of Development and apply these insights to its practices.

Lessons learned from Development

Did development transform the world? What benefits have been experienced as a result of fifty years of development activity?

The process that led up to the pronouncement of the Development "Project"⁴ began with economic growth in 19th century Europe and was very closely connected with colonization. Resources from the colonies went into accumulating wealth for the colonizers. It is no irony that the creation of wealth actually created the poverty and dispossession that Truman's troops of developmental experts were getting ready to deal with.

When help was offered to the colonies it was with a view to improving the other, to overcome "some kind of deficit" (Gronemeyer, 59) The relationship was based on a belief in the cultural, spiritual, and material superiority of the 'helper' over the one receiving help. It involved the raising of 'natives' from sub-human level by improving them.

The goals of development as envisioned by that first generation of 'developmental experts' were to help the newly independent countries of the Third World to improve, to catch up to the rich countries as modeled by the industrialized nations, to eradicate poverty, and to grow, expand and become rich: prosperity and equality for all. Vandana Shiva in her compelling analysis of women, ecology and development, "Staying Alive" describes it well:

"Development, as the improved well being for all, was thus equated with westernization of economic categories - of needs, of productivity, of growth. Concepts and categories about economic development and natural resource utilization that had emerged in the specific context of industrialization and capitalized growth in a centre of economic power, were raised to the level of universal assumptions and applicability with entirely different context of basic needs satisfaction for the people of the newly independent Third World countries" (Shiva, p.1)

A typical assessment of need - i.e. poverty (made mostly by male western professionals) took the form of checklists based on western standards of living, and success. Subsequently the absence of tractors and farm machinery, the non-use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, the non-profitable use of people (labour intensive) the absence of factories, roads, modern buildings, was poverty. The consumption of un-processed grains, building of houses from local material, the wearing of natural fibers and hand-made clothing, was poverty. (Shiva, 1989) What was perceived of the "Third World" was not their culture and their strengths, not their heritage and wisdom running into thousands of years, not their relationship to the Earth, not the intricate social fabric of their lives, or their spirituality, but a deficiency: a deficiency of sliced white bread, western-style homes with running water and electricity, synthetic fibers, toothpaste and toilet paper. These people did not produce anything in factories, nor were they involved in useful production to raise the GNP⁵. They lived not simple lives, but deprived ones. According to Chambers reality is personally, socially and locally defined (1992). The power to define that reality has negative consequences, which is what happened in development projects of the 50ies through to the 70ies.

The deficiency was created. Help was on the way, in the form of 'development assistance' or 'aid' - help that is provided to people in the developing countries in the form of money tools, materials, medical supplies, textbooks, equipment, volunteers, technical advice, commodities such as food or fertilizer, and so on. When used by

national and international aid agencies, the term 'aid' ,means official development assistance, all grants and low-interest loans made to developing countries by official agencies in developed countries, to assist those countries with their economic development in areas such as agriculture, industry, transportation etc. and their social progress in areas such as health, education, housing and so on. (CIDA, 1990)

In terms of the nature of help that took the form of development aid, or international aid, the assessment of need, and the value system on which it was based distorted what was offered as help. Books, theses and the stories of the 'poor' have been filled with examples of not just inappropriate forms of help imposed on the South, but help that has destroyed and damaged the people they were supposed to improve.

The Afar nomads in the Awash valley of Ethiopia, were displaced from their traditional pasturelands. Their lands were used for commercial agriculture, and they were re-settled in the uplands. The Afar had no knowledge of surviving in unfamiliar terrain, and to exacerbate the problem, the uplands had a fragile ecology. The net result was a degradation of the land, and starvation of the cattle and the people. Researchers claim that this was one of the main causes for the Ethiopian famine. (Shiva, p.11) An example of development causing the very problem it was supposed to solve.

Science was used to try and boost the living standards of the poor with the gift of the Green Revolution. It was created to increase food production radically, and the promise was food for all, prosperity for the poor, and perhaps some profit for the business interests who were involved. Western male experts went to the field and 'taught' peasants and farmers all about hybrid seeds that would produce bumper harvests not once, but up to three times a year, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers. In one such case, the International Rice Research Institute (established by the IMF and World Bank) based in the Philippines distributed miracle varieties of rice all over Asia. After the first flush of high yielding crops, there were reports of certain kinds dying out, and a questionable success in crop rates. The new varieties were not resistant to pests and fungi; indeed most viruses attacking rice did not exist before 1962 (Shiva, 1989). The new varieties use up more water and need more nutrients to produce the bumper crop, thus making farmers dependent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The outcomes were wide scale destruction of indigenous species, displacement of women in traditional food production, non-sustainable practices, dependency on companies that produce seeds, fertilizers and pesticides (hybrids do not pass their vigour on - and farmers have to come back to purchase more seed). 40 centuries of agricultural knowledge dismissed, disregarded and devalued by multinational corporations and western male experts. (Shiva, 1989) It seems that the only promise that was fulfilled was the profit for the multinational. "Planetary managers seek homogenized solutions that work against cultural and ecological diversity" (Orr, p.162).

Despite all the generosity that was being poured into development the mantra of economics was not quite working. The rich were getting richer, and the poor were not catching up . The reality was that more growth was translating into less development. At an ECOSOC conference in 1962 it was noted : - "The fact that development either leaves behind or in some ways even creates large areas of poverty, stagnation, marginality and

actual exclusion from social and economic programs is too obvious and too urgent to be overlooked" (Esteva, p.12)

This wake-up call led some in the field to recognize that economic development was not 'all'. The "Purpose of development should not be to develop things but to develop man" stated the Declaration of Cocoyoc at an UNEP, UNCTAD conference of 74. In 1975 the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation emphasized its search for human centred development. In 1987 the UN conference in Stockholm, chaired by Brundtland was the first consideration and examination of the environment and the notion of Sustainable Development .

These insights did not halt the amount of well-intentioned help. At the end of the UN Decade for Women, for instance, the research indicated that - "with a few exceptions, women's relative access to economic resources, incomes and employment has *worsened*, their burden of work increased and their relative and even absolute health, nutritional and educational status has *declined*" (Shiva, p.3)

The problem was not poverty, or the eradication of it, but development itself - containing the rampant growth and wealth accumulation of the North. Douglas Lummis, in an essay in *The Development Dictionary* submits some interesting statistics: the per capita GNP of the 20 richest countries in 1986 was \$12,960. With an annual growth rate of 2.3%, the yearly increase would be \$298.08. The GNP of the 33 poorest countries in 1986 was \$270. With a growth rate of 3.1%, the annual increase in income would be only \$8.37. Catching up with the rich through economic activity thus becomes a notion that "goes against both common sense and economic science; it is a physical impossibility and a logical contradiction" (Lummis, 1992, p.45 - 48). The situation reminds me of a quote from Mahatma Gandhi : "There is enough for everyone's need, but not enough for the greed of some" (Vittachi, 1988)

It was this environment that saw the emergence of a different way of approaching the problem- through participation. For the first time, there seemed to be a recognition that there needed to be a more equitable partnership in the role of help: consultation with and involvement of the one-being-helped was essential. The eradication or lessening of poverty was not going to be achieved from the application of money, but by the participation and empowerment of the people themselves. It is important to recognize the work of the pioneers of the participatory movement - Orlando Fals-Borda, Anisur Rahman and Robert Chambers. The influence of Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator, has also been significant. The basic principles of this alternative way of working with people, are that problems can be overcome by giving people opportunities to have an input into their activities, and to shape and define their own future. Chambers initiated a methodology called Participatory Rural Appraisal where villagers and rural communities identified and expressed their own reality and hence their needs.

Although tools like this went a long way towards lessening the imbalance of power between the 'uppers' and lowers'⁷, there still is a long way to go, as Chambers himself has pointed out. The one-helping still brings with him the values, biases and orientation of his culture. Having a participatory relationship does not *a priori* lessen the domination of the 'upper'. The dominant partner has to work at reducing his inclination to dominate.

Noddings observed that in a dependent relationship, the greater responsibility belongs to the one-caring. Chambers noted in a field training in Karnataka : in a meeting that lasted 45 minutes, the villagers spoke for 11 minutes and were interrupted 45 times. (Chambers , 1995) This behavior tends to confirm the incapacity of the local people rather than empower.

The success of participatory models is based on the behaviour and attitudes of the 'outsiders' in such key areas such as "listening and learning, relaxing and not rushing, "handing over the stick", embracing error and falling forwards, being transparently clear about who they are, their purposes, and what can and cannot be expected, and 'being nice to people'." (Chambers, 1995, p.) This dependency on the behaviour could be seen as an inherent weakness, but is also the only basis for clear, caring partnerships.

Another concept to come out of the Development Decades is Sustainable Development , emerging out of the World Commission on Environment and Development in Stockholm (also known as the Brundtland Commission) and the dominant paradigm of development today. It has been defined as changes in a society or an economy that meet people's present needs without having a negative impact on future generations' ability to meet their needs. (CIDA, 1990) " Meeting essential needs requires not only a new era of economic growth for poorer nations, it also requires that people who are richer live their lives in a way that does not harm the environment." (Brundtland Report cited in CIDA, 1990)

Although we have seen a vast array of positive outcomes⁷, not least of which is an awareness of the need for change in how we conduct our lives, the question that must be asked is: is sustainable development about sustaining development itself (creating dependency) or sustaining life and communities (independence and vitality of people) ?

The picture is not all doom-and -gloom as we look at other positive things to come out of development. This is especially notable in the health care field. Small pox has been eradicated, there is a drop in maternal death rates, infant mortality rates are down, and the campaign for immunizations has helped to curb diseases that would otherwise cause needless deaths in poorer countries, although other diseases such as HIV in Africa raise new challenges. Governments have been urged to look at the necessity for universal education - although again, the success rates are not the same everywhere. The ability in the world community to respond to emergencies is also very heartening, the current crisis in Central America after Hurricane Mitch being a case in point. It should be noted that what makes these response efforts work is the untiring, supererogatory efforts of individuals who are moved to often volunteer their time, energy and sometimes lives, on behalf of people they don't know. These are unrecognized acts of virtuous caring.

In looking back at the efforts of Development, we have failed in many ways to 'help' , to be of benefit or assistance to, the 'under-developed' to grow, expand, and catch up to the developed countries. Is this reason enough to abandon development, well-intentioned though it was?

Some Possibilities

" We need decent communities, good work to do, loving relationships, stable families, the knowledge necessary to restore what we have damaged, and ways to transcend our

inherent self-centredness. Our needs, in short, are those of the spirit; yet our imagination and creativity are overwhelmingly aimed at things that as often as not degrade spirit and nature" (Orr, 1994, p33)

Even as writers such as Sachs and Esteva proclaim the death of Development, there is hope - hope that individuals and groups alike are redefining the meaning and value of 'help'. Grassroots initiatives are opening the way to creative solutions based on ethical values.

I present here one example of a small non-governmental organization that supports such grassroots, locally initiated creativity. Susila Dharma International is an association of groups and individuals who believe in, and are guided by the principles of 'susila ' and 'dharma' in their efforts to support each other. The words 'susila ' and 'dharma ' are Sanskrit words which can be defined as follows: Susila denotes those qualities which give rise to a character, conduct and actions which are truly human and in accordance with higher powers of spirituality. Dharma signifies sincerity, surrender and submission to spirituality which are awakened in man . Taken together, the organization Susila Dharma defines it as "being guided from within to take action in the world. Susila Dharma work originates from an awareness of a common humanity that transcends differences. The intention behind Susila Dharma is to support people to live and work in harmony in their quest for a just and sustainable society. The focus is on people and relationships, and a belief in the ability of people to reach their potential socially, economically and spiritually. " (Susila Dharma International, 1998) "The actions of the one-caring are varied rather than rule-bound - predictable in a global sense , unpredictable in details" (Noddings, p.24) ; so are the different examples of Susila Dharma unique in their 'special regard for the particular ... in a concrete situation" (Noddings, p 24). There is no replication of project, methodology or rules, but a commitment to follow what unfolds.

Case Studies of Susila Dharma Activities

• Monica Ramirez and Fundacion Educative Amor - Soacha, Colombia

Monica Ramirez a native of Armenia in Colombia opened her own school after graduating in psychology and education. Dissatisfied with the relatively safe and easy life, she was moved from an inner calling to work with the very poor. She moved to Bogota, and through connections with the church sought the use of a small piece of land in the slums of Soacha and set up school. This is one of the most derelict areas in Bogota. There are youth gangs, drugs, very low employment and almost no community services. 85% of local children are undernourished, and some 6000 have no place in state schools. (SDI, 1991) In January 1988 supported by faith, love, and very little cash, Fundacion Colegio Amor was offered to the community. Today the school flourishes as an oasis in a neighbourhood run by drugs, violence and other social problems. They have around 800 children enrolled - from K - 12, and is accredited with the government. The programs include drug prevention, alternative activities for young people such as scouting, a community outreach, a cultural troupe that performs in the community as well as at school functions, foster care for abandoned youth. It was the first school in Colombia to offer vocational training and skill development: its graduating grade 12s have to present an enterprise plan of action based on practice.

The accomplishments of the school are many. My focus is on the philosophy of the school and the relationships between Ramirez and the children. She defines the meaning of Amor, not simply as 'love' but an absence of death - A-Mor. The basis of the school is love. Giving and receiving love. The school is a place for the nurturing of love. The first priority of teachers is the well-being of the children, not academic excellence. The children are in turn have the ability to make choices in their lives - choices that they did not have, and were not able to recognize. At the centre of the school is a recognition that the spiritual is what inspires, strengthens and shapes the people in it.

- Gurdip Aurora and Pacha Saale(Green School) near Zaheerabad, Andhra Pradesh, India

Aurora is a Professor of Sociology and Head of the Sociology Department in the Institute for Social and Economic Change in Bangalore. He has been focusing his programmes on the role of the NGO and rural development with particular emphasis on watershed management technologies and their social implications. "To me, the empowerment of the poor is directly related to their organization and their ability to understand their own potential. This is again connected directly with their knowledge of their environment and the skills they can develop. I see empowerment as a total effort in self-development as well as in the areas of developing linkages with like-minded people for coalitions." (Schreiber, 1996)

He is one of the best examples of Orr's ideal university educator - a professor who finds little value in lecturing in the confines of classrooms, "My approach has been to always link action with research. ... In every case the major thrust was to see what are the crucial aspects of society and economy directly related to development. so one could really take up these programmes of teaching with the aim to develop knowledge in applied areas rather in purely theoretical areas." (Schreiber, 1996)

He bases his work on participative research - the communities themselves are both the subject and object of development. The Green School is one of over 60 village projects, initiated among the Dalit people in the central plains of India. Dalit, 'the down-trodden' is the name given to themselves by people who are classified in the Indian caste system as 'the untouchables'. The school is based on environmental practices. Children are taught basic academics, but the main focus is on life skills: they are taught the care of buffalo, kitchen gardening, crop selection, growth and maintenance, traditional and non-traditional skills - sewing, brick making. The school and its environs are a lesson in sustainable living. Each unit is inter-connected with the others.

- Susila Dharma Germany and Suhadha Project in Sri Lanka

The third case offers an additional kind of partnership - a cross-cultural one. The project, Suhadha, was initiated by Helena Goonetilleke who walked by an urban slum on the banks of a polluted canal, for many years on her way to work as a school teacher. She was not just moved by the conditions that the women and children had to survive in, she was moved to do something about it. As in Colombia, the conditions were bad: violence, crime, low levels of nutrition, health, education and generally quality of life. Leading first with activities that generated a relationship with the community, she started a walk-in clinic with two doctors, which grew into group activities with mothers, and a pre-school. There was interest from a member of SD Germany who was visiting. A group in Germany followed up on the contact and maintained the initial friendship with the

Goonetillekes. There were a few small fund-raisers with money collected for the pre-school, and in that time frame, the Germans joined the Sri Lankans in following up on needs and requests made from the community, now organized into a formal community association. 3 years later, in 1988, the German group applied to an international aid branch of the German Government (BMZ) and accessed the capital necessary for project infrastructure. Over the next 9 years money was made available for buildings, equipment for a vocational institute, and training for people in the community, a water system, drains, a second pre-school. Assistance activities are now winding down, as the community is taking over their governance.

The partnerships in all three cases are unique, based on the individual relationships among the people involved, and yet they all exhibit some common features. Ramirez, Aurora, Goonetilleke and her German partners, were all moved to follow this work as a calling. This ties in with Orr's affirmation about the differences between a career and a calling - the former being a rational decision based on knowledge, and the latter based on a feeling arising from the inner. This is the foundation of the Susila Dharma philosophy - surrendering 'the rational' self to inner guidance.

Need was perceived by Ramirez, Goonetilleke and Aurora out of their familiarity with the people they wished to help. A caring relationship was established long before 'a project' was born that needed money to function; in fact, it was the basis for the project. There was reception of the other, and this allowed for a sensitive appraisal of the needs of all three communities.

Helping was motivated by a desire to empower the communities being helped. In this context, what does empowerment mean? Empowerment implies an attainment of 'power' by those who don't have power, something that is 'given'. It is easy to assume that the cared-for - in this case the children in Amor, the slum dwellers of Suhadha, and the Dalit women of Zaheerabad had no power. To an extent this is correct: they were unable to take charge of their own lives, to function in a basic way. But, as Paolo Friere, pointed out in his analysis of what he called 'the culture of silence', it is not correct to assume that these people had no power - they have a power of a different kind, but are not able to express it. When people are oppressed for years, even generations (as in the case of the Dalits) they do not even have an idea of what they need. Their oppression inhibits them from being their true selves; they have no confidence that they can contribute to their own lives and that of the community. In these cases it is appropriate for the one who is helping to initiate the process of empowerment, or self-discovery. However, empowerment does not mean giving other people what they don't have, but encouraging them to articulate or express what they do have - giving a value to who they are and what they have. Jean Vanier talks about empowerment as the feeling of belonging, of being loved. "As each of us feels the power of feeling cared for and loved, it enables us to truly become who we are, and offer the gift of ourselves to the other, to the earth, to God." (Massey lectures, 1998) The Dalai Llama once observed that all human history, human development is based on our need for warm feelings. "New things should be connected with these feelings. Science, engineering, law , politics. They are all different fingers linked with one palm." (Vittachi p. 72) Love is the deepest human need, and deepest human connector.

In each of the Susila Dharma cases, this is what transforms: at Amor, the children are able to realize their potential through the philosophy of the teachers and the school; at Pache Saale, there is a deep respect and individual care and attention shown to each child and person in the community. This has enabled the women who were the lowest of the lowest, to feel confidence in their gifts - gifts of growing the land, managing it and taking care of their families. The young girls are able to discover creativity in themselves, and the contentment of communal life. In Suhadha, Goonetilleke was able to convey her deep sense of caring to the people of the slum. This caring enabled them to take charge of their lives, and be responsible for their own well-being instead of being victims of circumstances. In turn, this provided an opportunity for the caring relationship between Goonetilleke and the Germans. Goonetilleke feels that what the project offered to the Germans was an opportunity to participate in a meaningful activity: the project benefited from the generosity and care of the Germans, and the Germans learned about 'the heart' from a cultural heritage many centuries old. There is a commitment on the part of both partners to recognize the strength and value of the other, and benefit from them, rather than go in with labels and judgements.

In the Susila Dharma projects we have looked at how people centred -relationships come first and drive the action and life of the community. Knowing the other, and 'feeling with' the other, are central to these very deep caring relationships. Here is an example of development that transcends the intervention: instead of having an object of development, both sides are engaged in a natural process of self-development and discovery. There is learning, healing, loving, and caring on both sides. Everyone has a gift to offer. The key elements of ethical caring are expressed: talking, listening, being willing to let go past mind sets and discover new ones - one that is appropriate, or 'right' for the present situation. " As I care for other and am cared for by others I become able to care for myself - as in the ideal self." (Noddingsp.49) To be able to care for another well, I need to step out of myself, or surrender myself to the 'beingness' of the relationship. It is a seeming paradox that I cannot do this, i.e. surrender myself, give up my will, unless I know myself. The Susila Dharma philosophy fosters this quality of surrender so that the 'right' (as in balanced, appropriate,) relationship, the best possibility for the situation emerges naturally. This is the basis for its work.

In caring for others and serving heaven

There is nothing like using restraint.

Restraint begins with giving up one's own ideas. (Tsu, verse 59)

As the focus in Susila Dharma is on the caring relationship and not on 'the problem', there is no pre-ordained solution. As was evidenced in the mega-development projects of the past, the solution was often the problem. Development was imposed from the outside with little understanding of how and why it should take place.

The world is ruled by letting things take their course

It cannot be ruled by interfering.

(Tsu, verse 48)

Spirituality is another important element of the Susila Dharma model. At Amor, the children learn in an environment that places these values first. Unmonitored, and without reminders, they stand in a short 'quiet time' together, before they enter their classrooms each morning. In the Dalit community in India, spirituality is manifested in the deep

respect for the wholeness of life. The community at Suhadha increasingly paid more attention to Buddhist values and how they related to their lives. As our search for external solutions is becoming increasingly frustrating, it is clear that we must turn inwards. Change must come from the inside. We must change the way we think and the way we perceive, and the way we connect with each other. We need to replace our thinking and knowledge with the values of spirituality - not externally administered remedies. I define spirituality as the energy, values, that transcend religion, a recognition that there is a Higher Power - whatever it is named: God, Allah, the Great Life Force, Gaia, Dao, The Source. The difference between religion and spirituality is that religion is the outer expression of spiritual beliefs and values⁸. Spirituality is the inner content of these values. They transcend material differences and have a universal : love, compassion, respect for life, forgiveness, contentment, peace. Dr. Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury articulated this at Earth Conference One in 1988 :

"I am not advocating a single-minded synthetic model of world religions. What I want is for each tradition, especially my own, "to break through its own particularity" as Paul Tillich put it. The way to achieve this is not to relinquish one religious tradition for the sake of a universal concept which would be nothing but a concept. The way is to penetrate into one's own religion, in devotion thought and action. In the depth of every living religion there is a point at which the religion itself loses importance, and that to which it points, breaks through its particularity, elevating it to spiritual freedom and to a vision of the spiritual presence in other expressions of the ultimate meaning of mans existence. " (Vittachi 97)

The quest for values in an increasingly mechanized, mechanical world is driving people to participate in efforts and grassroots movements such as Susila Dharma. The hope that we feel is that there are more of these communities trying to repair the damage of the past and looking for new ways of being.

Conclusion

My journey through the realms of Development have led me to believe that its failures stemmed from an inability, unwillingness, and an incapacity to explore the human condition in which it is based. As a project that undertook to make things 'bigger and better' it has created much disturbance and difficulty in the lives of people that were supposed to be helped. This is what is probably 'astonishing' about it. I see, however, that initiatives based on ethical helping and caring enable Development to be defined as the "process through which the potentialities of an object or organism are released until it reaches its natural, complete, full-fledged form" (OED). In allowing the 'right' form of helping to emerge from a partnership, the 'right' situation is supported to flourish and thrive.

There is so much negative association with the Truman-use of the word 'Development' that its use, even in this re-defined sense, has to be justified. We can spend time trying to find a new term that describes best what ethical helping tries to do, or we can carry on in the spirit of renewed faith in new initiatives that bring value to sharing, partnerships, and human development.

In the spirit of Susila Dharma I offer no strict solution to the question and problem of Development, rather a plea for an openness to the reality, and the complexity of human

inter-connectedness. There needs to be sincerity, sensitivity and the willingness to reflect before acting, and a belief that the 'right' way to act will emerge. In my experience, working in an environment like the one created by Susila Dharma affirms feelings of rightness, of balance, of goodness and belonging - belonging to a community that cares about the values that nurture its own well-being and those of its members.

".. the well being of society, or the community, is an essential part of the well being of each individual member.....The source of all value then, is eudamonia. By this is understood flourishing, thriving, well-being or happiness, whether through what has personal value for an individual, or through the common good, the good of the community of communities to which he or she belongs." (Bond, p.122)

A truly good man is not aware of his goodness,
And is therefore good.
A foolish man tries to be good
And is therefore not good.

A truly good man does nothing
Yet leaves nothing undone.
A foolish man is always doing,
Yet much remains to be done. (Tsu, verse 38)

NOTES

1. By this I refer to the belief system that places the number one priority on economic goals - money and the accumulation of the material - and the definition of success based on these achievements. Orr discusses some of these ramifications which include the dependency of the poor on global cash economy (which makes it well nigh impossible to break free of this domination), the power imbalance this entails with exploitation of poorer economies, and the wide-spread "de-placement" of people, and the adverse effects of free trade on local communities. Economists such as Hazel Henderson, Herman Daly and John Cobb, among a vast array of writers (from Capra to Shiva) are highly critical of the largely negative impact of "The Market" on communities everywhere.
2. The term (*tiers monde*) was first coined by French newspapers to describe the group of new states, formed as a result of decolonization, that became members of the United Nations and gained majority in the General Assembly in the late 50s.
3. E. J. Bond discusses these terms and concepts : "While aretaic morality is essentially concerned with the character of persons as expressed or manifested in their conduct, deontic morality is essentially concerned with the avoidance of wrongdoing, whether by doing something that is morally wrong, or failing to do what is morally required " (p.165).
4. I use "Project' to refer to the overall goals and intention of Development as it was espoused by the Truman government.
5. The use of GNP to measure the worth or value of a country is being questioned even by economists. The problem is that it measures some costs completely and ignores others (such as the costs of crime, pollution etc). Orr discusses this in the last chapters of "Earth in Mind". He calls for the need to account for all costs of consumption, and that real costs must include waste, ecological damage, damage done to health and subsequent health care costs, loss of rural communities and farms, loss of intelligence about the land, and the cost of future investment and capital. (Ch. 22)
6. terms coined by Chambers in his treatise "The origins and practice of participatory rural appraisal" (1994) to describe the facilitators - the uppers, those going into the partnership with more power - and the rural communities - the lowers.
7. An evaluation of sustainable development and its import is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is relevant in that I argue for the sustaining of strong, flourishing communities as the basis of 'holistic' development.
8. I exclude from the definition of spirituality, the practice of religion which emphasizes difference, superiority, and in the most fundamental sense, propagate hate and domination.

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DO WE CARE? Exploring Development and Partnerships

Questions that are explored:

What is development? Is development itself ethical ? Are there ethical possibilities for development ?

What is Development?

- Definitions
- Use in recent history
- New dimension in post-war era

"We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas ," (Truman)

"Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace" (Truman)

Help

- definition
- helping is a form of caring
 - reception and engrossment
 - reciprocity
 - relationship between one-helping and one-being-helped

"Caring involves stepping out of one's own personal frame of reference into the other's. when we care we consider the other person's point of view, his objective needs, and what he expects of us. Our attention, our mental engrossment is on the cared-for, not on ourselves. " (Noddings)

- perception/identification of need
- nature of help
- motivation

III Lessons Learned - A look at the Development Decades

- Development as help
- Negatives -
 - perception of need, nature of assistance, motivation
 - based on questionable values, lack of relationships, created more problems
- Some positive results -
 - Emergency Response -Health - Education - Children -
 - Awareness
 - Participatory movements
 - Efforts from the grassroots

IV Possibilities for the future

- One eg - Susila Dharma

Susila Dharma is "being guided from within to take action in the world. Susila Dharma work originates from an awareness of a common humanity that transcends differences. The intention behind Susila Dharma is to support people to live and work in harmony in their quest for a just and sustainable society. The focus is on people and relationships, and a belief in the ability of people to reach their potential socially, economically and spiritually. " (Susila Dharma International, 1998)

Case Studies

- Fundacion Amor - Monica Ramirez , Bogota, Colombia
- Gurdip Aurora and Pacha Saale, Zaheerabad, India
- Suhadha, Colombo, Sri Lanka and SD Germany

SD and the Ethic of Care - an analysis

- relationship centred. regarding 'the other', reciprocity.
- spiritual values first, material and money follows
- no pre-conceived solutions
- sustainable - because it sustains life , not development. supports community,
- well-being of community - physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual - eudamonia and common good.
- affirms development defined as natural growth

Conclusion

- The word Development - negative associations.

The success stories of development fit with its definition as a natural evolution, an unfolding.

A truly good man is not aware of his goodness,
And is therefore good.
A foolish man tries to be good
And is therefore not good.

A truly good man does nothing
Yet leaves nothing undone.
A foolish man is always doing,
Yet much remains to be done. (Tsu , verse 38)