Finding a Way in International Development: Options for Ethical and Effective Work

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Introduction

On a searingly bright day in 2003, I sat on an upturned plastic milk crate on the floor of a one-room shack in the midst of a shanty settlement in Khayelitsha, a large black township on the sand flats thirty kilometers east of Cape Town in South Africa. I remember that day very clearly, sitting there on the milk crate, watching and listening while a woman in her early forties stood over a paraffin stove and worked as she spoke to Millicent, my research assistant.

"Khayelitsha" means "new home" in Xhosa, the language of most of its residents. But it isn't a particularly welcoming place to make a home. No vegetation, limited groundwater, just miles and miles of flat, bare sand. I could see it all from my vantage point on the crate because the door of the shack was wide open to let in the light. And all around us, on that sandy expanse, sprung up thousands of modest settlements, most put together from pieces of corrugated iron and sometimes wood. In that particular part, they were piled in almost on top of each other, so there was no sense of privacy, no particular order, no streets. We had wended our way through the maze of shacks, as people cooked and bathed and went about their lives in the open, outside their homes, or with the doors open to let in light.

Khayelitsha is sprawling and broken into sections. It boomed since apartheid ended, with an estimated population of about half a million by 2005.[1] Whole families came from the homelands to join the men who had been living there even as the postapartheid government tried to move people in from the already overpacked townships closer to Cape Town. Many of these people were unemployed, many of them children and youth. By 2003 there were some paved roads and social services in parts of it, and even a shopping center. The government had also instituted a program to provide people with modest but modern cement homes and to resettle them away from the shacks. But the program had run into problems of various sorts, including allegations of

corruption and mismanagement. Khayelitsha's frustrated residents had vandalized many of the cement homes, their new glass windows smashed.

I was there because I was carrying out a small research project for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), a Canadian agency funded directly through Canada's federal aid budget. IDRC had funded efforts to increase public access to new information and communication technologies (ICTs), mainly computers, telephones, and the Internet. I was studying community access to ICTs in South Africa and Uganda, in areas where IDRC had worked. So I had hired two young women who lived in Khayelitsha to help me, and we were carrying out, among other things, a small household survey. The results of all these efforts, which I carried out in select locations around the two countries, were later written and shared with the aim of improving universal access policy and strategy.

In a very weak, indirect way, this research may have been of some benefit to the woman who was answering our survey questions. We took about ten minutes of her time. Insofar as the results might play some modest role in influencing policy toward better public access, and insofar as this might help her or her family in their day-to-day efforts to communicate, to get information, to conduct business, and so forth, it could be helpful. Certainly not harmful. But probably not a pressing priority. Probably not anything that would ever make a felt difference in her life.

Sitting there, I had ample opportunity to reflect on all of this because the woman and Millicent were speaking in Xhosa, which I didn't understand. But then she switched to English, and turning from her stove, she looked at me as if she'd been sharing some of my thoughts and said, "You see how we are living here. It is not right. It is not good."

She spoke softly and deliberately with a melodious South African accent that made her sentences sound like a poem, beautiful and important. But the words, simple as they were, spoke to a truth that was not beautiful. Khayelitsha, its very existence, was a product of social injustice and seemed like a testament to the limitations of our humanity. She had a slightly wistful, expectant look on her face, as if she were vaguely hoping that I, a stranger with access to greater resources, to large institutions, had brought something more useful than the survey. I didn't know what to say; I had nothing to offer her. I just nodded.

We thanked her warmly for her time and stood up to leave. She'd already turned back to her work, away from us. But then she stopped, hesitating a few moments before calling to Millicent. They spoke in Xhosa. And then in

English: "Come, I will take you to the road; you are in danger here." And she walked with us back the way we came, back out of the settlement and to a paved main road, where she left us. Millicent explained to me that the woman had overheard a gang of young men talking. They had seen us. I was a white stranger; Millicent was from another part of Khayelitsha, also a stranger according to them. Khayelitsha could be a violent place, and order was kept through neighborhood protection groups and vigilantism. But we were out of our territory. They were waiting for us farther within the settlement, the direction we would have gone if the woman had not guided us. Their intentions were not good.

I had known some areas might be too dangerous to venture into, but I thought that place was okay because Millicent hadn't said anything, and she knew Khayelitsha. Millicent knew we might be in danger going too deep into that settlement, but she had not warned me because she thought I was the boss and should make the decisions. I didn't ask, so she didn't speak out. And so our unspoken assumptions led us unwittingly to what could have been a very bad situation.

Given the frequency of murder in South Africa at that time, the woman may well have saved our lives.[2] Police records show 2003–2004 to have been a particularly violent year for Khayelitsha, with 358 recorded murders, 395 attempted murders, and over 3,000 assaults with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm.[3] I was doubtful that my efforts benefited her, but I am sure about what she did for me. I don't know her name. And I don't know, but I imagine her life hasn't gotten much easier since I saw her. I have often wondered what was in her mind as she hesitated. And I'm grateful for the kindness she showed to us that day.

When I think of that woman, I also think of the implicit question behind her words and looks: "What value does your work have for me?" I wonder, am I contributing to a broader, well-structured effort to address poverty, to address the causes of poverty that meant she was living in such conditions? Am I focusing my efforts in the best way? I was, after all, part of the international development system when I did that work; the funding came from Canada's aid budget. Perhaps it is rather simplistic or arrogant to think that there is anything much I should or could have done for her, but when she spoke, she spoke the truth. And I wasn't sure of an appropriate response. When I think of that day and that woman, I am aware foremost of all the uncertainties in my own understanding and the gaps between what I imagine international development to be, in some ideal parallel universe in my head,

and the way I've experienced it playing out over the years I've worked in or around it.

The Rationale for International Development

Part of the reason for my wondering is that the purpose of international development is usually stated in terms of reducing, if not eradicating, poverty. International development can be loosely described as a global human effort to combat poverty and its concomitant suffering. The people at the World Bank claim to be "working for a world free of poverty."[4] The United Nations Development Programme explains itself as "the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life."[5] BRAC, the world's largest nongovernmental organization (NGO), is "dedicated to alleviating poverty by empowering the poor to bring about change in their own lives."[6] Oxfam, another well-known international development NGO, describes its work as "to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice" through a combination of working directly with communities and seeking "to influence the powerful."[7] The Development Co-operation Directive of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) claims its work is focused on helping to "ensure better lives for people in the developing world."[8] As a deliberate effort, it can be traced back to Harry Truman's 1949 inaugural address, as he became the president of the United States. Truman argued that the world, and particularly the West, had for the first time the capacity to address global poverty and hence the moral obligation to do so.

Since that time, the world's wealth has vastly increased, as has its interconnectedness through increased trade, travel, and communication. Official development assistance from rich nations to poor nations has increased, and some once-poor countries have become much wealthier. But poverty is still with us on the planet, and as the world's human population has increased from 2.5 billion at the time of Truman's speech to 7 billion in 2012, the numbers of people living in poverty have not diminished, even if the proportion has.[9] The depletion of natural resources, the consequences of climate change, and an increasing global population are putting ever-greater pressure on the ecosystems that ultimately sustain us. The growing prevalence and sophistication of transnational terrorist and criminal networks have provided further rationale for development assistance as a form of enlightened self-interest on the part of the wealthy. If large numbers of people are suffering in desperate poverty, knowing that others are living in comfort, and if they are given no

other recourse, at least some are likely to resort to criminality or to radical political action.

Into the Looking Glass—Or How the Rationale Gets Lost in Practice

From the very beginning of international development's history, it has not been motivated solely, or even primarily, by the desire to rid the world of the scourge of human poverty and suffering. Rather, the international development effort has been as much political as humanitarian. Official development assistance often followed cold war politics more closely than it followed need, giving money to some horrific regimes for the sake of political alliances. The term "third world" was primarily a political designation for those postcolonial countries that had no clear alignment with either the United States or the Soviets. Former colonial powers such as France and Britain have used international development assistance as a way of maintaining trade and diplomatic links with former colonies. And aid has often been tied to the economic interests of big businesses within donor countries.

Although not secret, these other interests are not usually part of the official rhetoric about international development. And so there is a gap between what is said and what is done. This gap, visible at the broadest level of aid policy and international relations between donor and recipient countries, continues in various forms through every level of the aid system.

The donor agencies that provide official development aid may be influenced by the international political interests of their governments. This influence can filter down because those receiving aid from donors do so largely on the donors' terms. Although international development is justified in the name of the poor, it is accountable to those who pay. In one example from Georgia, an American working for a small development NGO there recalls that the United States insisted the World Food Programme temporarily stop food distribution to internally displaced people living in camps. Instead, prepackaged humanitarian daily rations supplied by the US military were given to agencies to distribute for about two weeks. The people receiving them complained that the rations were inedible, unfit even to feed their dogs. The United States' rationale for doing this was to send Russia a political message of "solidarity with Georgia."

Even without such overt political influence, aid institutions can be hobbled by their own management practices. Institutional accountability systems tend to focus on predictable, measurable outputs attributable to aid funds. Development theoretically aims at broader economic and social change, namely,

the reduction of poverty, improvement of public health, improvement of other key services for people, and so forth. But it is hard to trace and attribute such changes to any three-year project or even a ten-year program.

There is an old story about a man who is looking for his keys under a street lamp one late evening. A friend who is passing by comes to help him but cannot see them anywhere. So the friend asks him, "Where exactly were you when you dropped them?" "Over there by my front door," the man replies, pointing to the door of his house, one hundred feet away. "Then why are you looking over here?" asks his friend in frustration. "Because it's too dark over there," he answers.

Efforts at monitoring and evaluation in international development often do the same thing—they focus on what is easy to measure rather than on what is important. And so the tools of development, the means by which some broader change is supposed to take place, become ends in themselves. Development becomes about how many workshops you had, how many people received training, compared to how many you said you would have in your funding proposal.[10] People living in squalor in places like Khayelitsha become almost invisible behind it all.

The tendency to measure rather than to understand reduces the possibilities to learn from experience. Even the most carefully planned development initiative may turn out quite different than expected. People have different views and interests that can make change more difficult. In Khayelitsha, the government plan to build better housing for people and move them out of the poorly constructed shacks seemed straightforward enough. But many people preferred to stay in their shacks and rent out the permanent housing they received for extra income, while profiteers diverted public funds to their own pockets, meaning construction was slow and quality was often lacking. The outcome was decidedly different from the original vision of the planners.

There is often a gap in perspective between those who are working in international development and those who are supposed to benefit. This gap is often wider when people come from different cultures, and it's wider still between citizens of donor countries and those of recipient countries. When I was doing research work in South Africa and Uganda, I would go back to visit Canada, and people would congratulate me for "helping" the Africans. I was conducting research that, realistically, was only of very marginal and indirect value to most of the people who kindly gave me their time and participated. I wasn't exactly out there saving lives, but many people back in Canada spoke as though I were. Given my experiences in Khayelitsha and elsewhere, that is

quite ironic. People I met everywhere I went in South Africa and Uganda were continually helping me, informing me, looking out for me, and enlightening me. The assumption that Westerners are empowered and knowing and that Africans are passive and needy seems like a stale hangover from the colonial past, but it is still with us.

For anyone working in development, and particularly anyone from the West, we unfortunately carry the baggage of a collective historical heritage of paternalism and inequity. This could cause us to feel that our values, knowledge, and actions are more important than those of whom we purport to help. Even if we think we're free from that, the same history influences opportunities and relationships with others. In Khayelitsha, I wasn't trying to exercise power and silence Millicent from voicing her opinion. But still, with the history of the world, and the history of race relations in South Africa, Millicent was silent, and I wasn't perceptive enough in that moment to ask her explicitly for her advice.

Those coming to work in international development must contend not just with a gap between stated intent and actual practice but with countless gaps, from the grossest and most blatant political uses of development aid in support of war, to the most subtle psychological and interpersonal inconsistencies in their own practice. They must learn how to contend with and manage all of these gaps and try to be effective. Is it possible to be effective in such a topsy-turvy world? How do they adjust to this reality while holding on to whatever motivated them in the first place? What can they do?

What to Do?

The persistence of gaps and inconsistencies among words, actions, and results throughout the history of international development has not gone unnoticed. As early as the 1960s and 1970s, people were raising concerns about the effectiveness of development and voicing objections to the whole enterprise. Given the persistent use of development aid for political ends, some people argued that this was the only purpose of development, and so it was no surprise that development efforts routinely failed to achieve their stated goals. As David Mosse explains, "A now extensive literature argues that, like those of colonial rule, development's rational models achieve cognitive control and social regulation; they enhance state capacity and expand bureaucratic power (particularly over marginal areas and people); they reproduce hierarchies of knowledge (scientific over indigenous) and society (developer over the 'to be developed'), and they fragment, subjugate or silence the local," all while claiming to be benignly working on behalf of the poor.[11]

The staunchest critics of international development see the whole system as morally bankrupt and view the majority of people working within it as hypocrites, cynics, and self-important opportunists. In *The Lords of Poverty*, Graham Hancock documents the excesses of World Bank executives. He recounts, for example, how one donor employee proudly showed him a basement filled with a lifetime's supply of toilet paper, which he had supplied and shipped around the world several times at great expense, paid for with aid money.[12] Hancock is willing to exonerate many NGO workers as well intentioned, although he notes that by the age of thirty, many of them change tune and begin to show an interest in pursuing the coddled lifestyle of a UN or donor employee.

That greedy, indifferent, incompetent, and even villainous people are present in the aid system is incontrovertible. That they characterize it is not. Many of those who are attracted to work in international development do so because they are, at heart, idealists and humanists. Perhaps their initial understandings are limited, but they are capable of learning, of thinking critically, and of empathizing with other people. What happens to these people? Do they sell out, burn out, or drop out? Or are they at-large and at work? And if so, what are they doing, and how are they doing it?

The best-documented answers to these questions are held within the careful work of development ethnographers who have studied international development work and relationships, often as participant-observers. They are interested in how development operates through relationships and discourses and how people's actions are shaped by ideologies.[13] Their studies show that development practice is not nearly as clear-cut as it is presented by either the development policymakers, with their three-year plans and strategy documents that will lead to measurable progress through a logical sequence of actions, or the critics, with their equally deterministic analysis of how development processes are inevitably oppressive. The ethnographers argue instead that there are powerful tendencies within the system, especially the tendency to adopt and re-create certain prevalent ways of thinking. These ways of thinking in turn tend to re-create the system itself, including its gaps and inconsistencies. The only possible way out of this cycle is to understand one's role and learn to be reflective.

Everyone working in international development traverses a unique path through a broader system joined together by donors, aid funding, predominant ideologies, international conventions, institutions, and training. Although diverse, international development, or international aid, does have these broad commonalities, which means that certain patterns or tendencies are likely to occur across our experiences. Many people working in development, for exam-

ple, have experienced the need to justify their work according to donor criteria that frame and prioritize issues in a different way than they would otherwise choose to. Their experiences in the system contribute to their ideas of what it is and what is possible within it. And because those development workers often share similar assumptions and understandings, they are likely to interpret their experiences and react in similar ways, contributing to the ongoing re-creation of the broader aid system.

As practitioners within the system, we can base our responses on fairly stock, superficial thinking or on deeper reflection. When we are able to reflect on our part in the system, we can begin to see spaces and opportunities for changing the system, or at least for a broader set of responses within it. This increases the power we have to renegotiate the rules.

Like the ripples that emanate from a stone thrown into the water, our power to act and effect change is strongest at the center, which in this case is our own assumptions and ourselves. Beyond ourselves, the next domain in which we can make some waves is our work environment. This includes the institution where we work and, more broadly, the international development system as a series of institutions. These institutions both condition and are conditioned by the actions and experiences of those working within them. As individual practitioners, we have power to choose where we work and some power to negotiate functions, culture, and policy within the workplace.

Finally, beyond the development system, we come to the political, social, and economic forces at play. These are as large and encompassing as an ocean. No matter the stones we throw, the waves we make, they are barely perturbed. It is difficult to expect we can change geopolitical realities as individuals, or even as a collective, although it may be possible to aspire to broader change on specific issues and practices. So these are most often seen as constraining forces on what we do.

It's the sum of all of these individual beliefs and actions, embedded in institutional dynamics and in broader social dynamics, that creates international development as we know it—a huge tangled web of the good, the bad, and the ugly. And it's through gaining a better understanding of these domains that we can maximize our own agency and come to terms with the limits we perhaps can't change.

At the heart of development's operation are knowledge framing and valuing, relationships, and relative power. We can understand these at an individual level, within our own professional practice. We share norms around them within our educational and professional development systems. Robert Chambers called for "reversals" that privilege the local and that see development

professionals as facilitators of process rather than subject matter experts. But the international development system often requires people who are experts foremost in the international development system itself. That means being familiar with the particularities of donor reporting and audit systems, being able to speak English, knowing how to use computers, knowing the right jargon, and so forth. Uma Kothari has argued that the trend is toward a managerial view of professionalism in international development, one that reinforces the initial biases within international development—privileging the general and universal over the specific and local, the formal over the informal, the outside expert over the local.[14]

How can an individual practitioner navigate through these broad trends? Donald Schön argued that reflective practice can be learned and cultivated.[15] Those working in international development need to be reflective practitioners if they wish to be ethical and effective practitioners. They need to grapple with a system that is rife with internal contradictions. Most people coming to work in international development want and expect a logical, internally consistent system. But once we get over the shock that we don't have that, not even close, we can start to look at what is possible within what we do have. And the contention of this book is that for a reflective and dedicated practitioner, many possibilities exist. One possibility, which we consider in chapter 11, is to choose not to work in international development at all. Whether or not to work in international development is ultimately a personal decision. But it should, above all, be a conscious one.

Seeking Answers

The main concern of this book is to understand the various gaps and tensions between stated intent and actual practice and to understand the ways that individual development practitioners behave that may bridge, or fail to bridge, these gaps in their own work. By understanding this, we can improve our chances of being effective in our own work.

One obvious way to understand what people working in international development face and how they respond to it is to ask them about it. So I interviewed 153 people, mainly people working in international development, as well as professors who taught international development courses or programs, students studying development, and some people who studied development but never practiced it or people who decided to stop working in it. I asked them about their experiences, their thoughts about what international development was, what it should or could be, how their work related to it, how

their ideas had changed over time, trends they saw within development, and the difficulties and achievements they'd experienced in their own work and seen in the sector more broadly.

Those interviewed are a diverse lot, working for different kinds of institutions in various positions, at different points in their careers, with different personalities and attitudes, coming from thirty-six different countries.[16] Some were seasoned hands who had already retired or were heading up major missions for a UN agency or a large development NGO; others were working in small independent initiatives or just starting out in their first job. In total, the people I spoke with have just about 2,000 years of collective experience working in international development. I spoke to people in Afghanistan, Kenya, Canada, and Uganda. But their work experience encompasses a much broader range of countries, upward of 107 in total, located all over the world. Some people had spent their whole career in one or a few countries, while others had worked in over thirty countries.

In terms of professional specializations, many people, especially those working in small or midsized NGOs, tend to be generalists, while others have very specific technical knowledge. Interviewees had worked on topics that included health, education, rural development, gender, agriculture, water and sanitation, emergency relief, disaster preparedness, governance and democratization, anticorruption, human rights, public administration and civil service development, refugee resettlement, security development, organizational development, national development planning, economic policy at a national level, drug control, peace building, private sector development, and research, policy, or advocacy related to any of these topics. Some people were primarily in administrative or support roles, while the majority of interviewees were in either programming or management positions and involved in setting overall policy and direction.

This gets back to the tricky question of what international development actually encompasses. Roles and positions are often classified as "international development" because of the nature of the funding and institutional arrangements—people working on education or sanitation in Canada might never consider themselves development workers, but individuals working on the same issues in Afghanistan or Bangladesh, especially if employed by an organization such as Save the Children or BRAC, might well classify themselves this way. Some government workers in countries such as Nepal or Uganda may end up implementing a donor or NGO program or partnering with such a program. Are they then part of the international development system if they are receiving funds from UNICEF and providing it with quarterly reports?

In selecting interview participants, I applied the term "international development" broadly and then asked people how they identified themselves professionally and if they felt the term "international development professional" applied to them. About two-thirds felt that it did apply to them. Some preferred other terms, such as "aid worker," or for those in the UN, "international civil servant." Many distinguish between long-term development and short-term humanitarian relief, but because many people have worked in both capacities or touch both issues in their work, I have included humanitarian work as a particular type of development work. This categorization may not be theoretically rigorous, but it seems to better reflect existing working realities. To refer to those working within the international development system, this book most often uses the terms "development worker" or "development practitioner."

Given the wide ranges of experiences and backgrounds, and the broad nature of some of the questions, the interviews were diverse. No doubt some of our conversations were a reflection of how someone's day had gone rather than someone's definitive viewpoint on issues of development. With that in mind, I viewed the interviews as snapshots of people's thoughts and feelings at a particular point in time, with the hope that from the larger collective, a broader gestalt would emerge. To frame and balance the often anecdotal and off-the-cuff nature of what was said during interviews, I have also considered various books and articles on international development, focusing on written firsthand accounts of working in development; work that analyzes international development as a sector, development ethnographies, and work examining particular kinds of institutions within international development, especially NGOs and donor agencies.[17]

Talking to so many people about their work and ideas on development has been a fascinating experience, and it was much more positive than I had ever expected. As I started interviewing people in Afghanistan, I was poised to be depressed given that international engagement in the country had been a "ten-year train wreck," as one friend observed. Effective work was hampered by deteriorating security and the overriding politicization of aid.[18] People would get frustrated and burned out fairly regularly, often choosing to leave after a relatively short period of time. And yet, many people were quite positive about their overall work experiences and what they had been able to do. Even those who faced grave doubts were, for the most part, so willing to engage with those doubts and seek ways forward, and so sincere about the work that they were doing that I was left feeling quite inspired and hopeful despite myself. The same held true when I interviewed people elsewhere. Certainly, many people I

spoke with shared serious concerns about development, but for most these did not vanquish the value of what they had managed to do.

Some people interviewed for this book preferred to be completely anonymous, while some preferred to be acknowledged where their ideas are referred to or they are directly quoted. Understandably, most people did not want to go on public record speaking negatively about particular people, institutions, or programs, especially when they may have to work with them in the future. So with few exceptions, negative comments are anonymous. Where necessary to maintain participants' anonymity, I altered some details or removed them from such accounts.

I've tried to convey the heart of what I learned through the interviews in the following pages of this book. This book does not, however, convey the full depth or scope of those interviews and the thoughts and reflections that people expressed. It also cannot and does not attempt to reflect any definitive consensus emerging from the interviews. The overall tone and the assertions made in this book are based on my interpretation of what people told me, combined with my own experience and readings on the topic, and often may not reflect the opinions of those quoted.

This book, informed by these 153 interviews and secondary sources, seeks to answer the questions that have been raised in this introduction. Foremost among these, how can we reduce the gap between stated intention and actual practice, at least within our own work?

Given the great diversity of the work done under the title of "development," this book does not address any aspects of the "how-to" at a technical level. What we are concerned with here is understanding and working within the particular institutional context of international development and how to grapple with some of the practical and ethical challenges of international development work that are commonly faced by development workers.

We can learn, through the experiences of others, to better understand the institutional landscape. Development practitioners typically do this by extrapolating from their own immediate experiences and perhaps some incidents shared by friends and colleagues working in related areas. By casting the net widely and considering a much broader range of experience, we can gain some distance and objectivity in our thinking. This can deepen our understanding of both the international development system and our own part within it. We can learn about key strategies and choices that we can make over our careers and the potential consequences of these. Finally, seeing the diversity of approaches that people have taken in their work can both broaden our thinking and enable us to take greater responsibility for our actions.

Notes

1. Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation, *The Population Register Update: Khayelitsha 2005* (Cape Town: Government of the Western Cape, 2006).

2. South Africa has one of the highest murder rates in the world, at 39.5 homicides per 100,000 people (2004 figures). See "Global Homicide: Murder Rates Around the World," DataBlog, *The Guardian*, October 13, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2009/oct/13/homicide-rates-country-murder-data.

3. South African Police Service, *Crime in the Khayelitsha (Wc) Police Precinct From April to March: 2003/2004–2008/2009* (Cape Town: Government of Cape Town, 2009).

4. See their brochure, for example, World Bank, *World Bank Group: Working for a World Free of Poverty* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006).

5. United Nations Development Programme, *Overview: What We Do*, 2012, cited February 15, 2012, http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/overview.html.

6. BRAC, *BRAC*, 2012, cited February 15, 2012, http://www.brac.net/.

7. Oxfam, *Oxfam: About Us*, 2012, cited February 15, 2012, http://www.oxfam.org/en/about.

8. OECD, *Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD-DAC)*, cited January 15, 2012, http://www.oecd.org.

9. Definitions of poverty may be given in relative or absolute terms, and there are various measures for this, which I will not go into here. Generally, though, global inequalities have increased, although patterns have changed with less clear inequalities between groups of nations (i.e., first world and third world), and even by absolute measures, the number of poor people has increased.

10. W. Easterly, "The Cartel of Good Intentions: The Problem of Bureaucracy in Foreign Aid," *Policy Reform* 5, no. 4 (2002).

11. David Mosse, *Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 4.

12. Graham Hancock, *The Lords of Poverty: The Power, Prestige, and Corruption of the International Aid Business* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1989), 80.

13. See, for example, David Lewis and David Mosse, eds., *Development Brokers and Translators: The Ethnography of Aid and Agencies* (Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press, 2006).

14. Uma Kothari, "Authority and Expertise: The Professionalisation of International Development and the Ordering of Dissent," *Antipode* 37, no. 3 (2005).

15. Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

16. This is counted based solely by where people were born; the number increases slightly more when national citizenships are included, as many interviewees hold multiple citizenships.

17. References to these works are made periodically throughout the book.

18. Ashley Jackson, *Quick Impact, Quick Collapse: The Dangers of Militarized Aid in Afghanistan* (Kabul: Oxfam, 2010).