Limits of Anthropology of Humanitarian Aid and Development:

An Overview

Georges Bomino Bosakaibo

1. Introduction

The humanitarian aid and development have gain momentum as hot topics and have created expectations as well as problems to policymakers and practitioners of both humanitarian action and development assistance. Both refer to the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the provision of long-term development assistance. Distinct actors are motivated to cooperate regardless how the situation is defined. The humanitarian aid and development distinct to each other, but they are characterized by great internal diversity.

The humanitarian actors share a more principled approach to policy and practical work as compared to what more pragmatic and political development actors do despite their differences. The humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence provide the foundations for humanitarian action. These principles are important in constituting humanitarian actors' identity and legitimacy, they govern humanitarian practice, and they are central in constructing the conceptual and physical humanitarian space in which humanitarian actors operate.

The humanitarian principles are, however, not blueprints, but propositions and values that guide action, set standards, and provide benchmarks against which practice aspires and is later measured. This makes the principles subject to contextual interpretation and application, by different actors in different settings, something which affect the formation of humanitarian and development assistance.

However, the anthropologists can be involved in both humanitarian aid and development assistance to enhance their results. In fact, this involvement of anthropology in both humanitarian aid and development assistance is not easier in practice. There are limits from both sides regarding their actions in practices. Therefore, it is imperative to make this overview to show how anthropology can or cannot connect with the humanitarian aid and development.

The data used in this study are collected from secondary data that are not exhaustive for this study, but important materials have been selected to achieve this overview.

The argument of this study is that anthropology is a discipline that can boost the humanitarian aid and development assistance despite the obstacles that can hinder its actions.

After this introduction, the first section outlines the anthropology of humanitarian aid and

development as a social and global anthropology. The Second section explores the linkage between anthropology and humanitarian action. The next section presents the anxious relationship between Anthropology and development by introducing the concept of development and its uneasy relationship with anthropology. The fourth section focuses on the illusion of planned change in social dynamics and development interventions. Finally, a conclusion ends the study. Then, the first point can be explored.

2. Anthropology of humanitarian aid and development as a social and global anthropology

In their book entitled "Anthropologie de l'aide humanitaire et du développement: des pratiques aux savoirs, des savoirs aux pratiques" (Anthropology of humanitarian aid and development: from practices to knowledge, from knowledge to practices), published in 2009, the authors Laëtitia Atlani-Duault and Laurent Vidal ask the question: what is the position of anthropologists who take the world of development or humanitarian aid as their subject today? Is their work necessarily subject to the constraints of expertise and strong social demand, or can they, on the contrary, keep their distance from the practices they observe and not engage in their transformation? These are the main questions posed by Laetitia Atlani-Duault and Laurent Vidal to the authors they have gathered in this book. While the question obviously does not allow for a single answer, the variety of contributions opens up a multiplicity of paths, between expertise and critical distance [Revet 2010: 181].

The objective of this collective work is to present the work of authors from multiple horizons who defend various forms of commitment to their fields. The chapters that make up the book establish a historical and theoretical framework (chapter 1, L. Atlani-Duault), open to methodological, epistemological, and ethical questions (chapter 9, L. Vidal) and outline the main themes of development and/or humanitarian aid studies. The book offers a large number of references, questions and case studies, an unprecedented combination on this theme which is framed by a preface by Jean Copans and an afterword by Philippe Ryfman. It is also part of a broader movement of reflection on contemporary anthropology, its methods, its fields, and its objects according to Revet [2010: 181–182].

The introductory article by L. Atlani-Duault [2010: 17] offers an interesting historical and contextual perspective on the relationship between anthropology and development. In particular, she reminds us that the question of the dynamics of externally driven change has marked the discipline since its origin, as far as it developed in the wake of colonial policies. In Great Britain, an institutionalization of the discipline placed researchers at the service of the colonial administration to accompany this process. In France, this institutionalization came later, and some anthropologists were more critical of the colonial administration from the outset. The links with the management institutions of the Indian territories mark American anthropology [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 17; Revet 2010: 182].

The participation of most American anthropologists in the first development policies operates a turning point in the 1940s–1950s. In France, the political anthropology of the colonial situation (Georges Balandier) and Marxist economic anthropology (Claude Meillassoux) elaborate truly critical

postures of the "development process" while an anthropology of minorities emerges in the 1950s–1960s. Under the impetus of development agencies and non-governmental organizations, which, in a concern for efficiency, solicit anthropologists who mark a new turning point in the second half of the 1970s. This was the beginning of the golden age of the ideology of "participation" of populations in aid programs. In the United States, the federal agency USAID, whose pioneering approach in this area would later be adopted by the major development agencies, promoted this mobilization of the social sciences.

According to Revet [2010: 181] two movements stand out from this "anthropology of development".

The "postmodern critique" of Atlani-Duault is the first movement in the 1990s that denounces several aspects of anthropologists' engagement with development aid projects: the culturalist bias of their studies, their inability to identify power relations, as well as their propensity, vigorously denounced by James Ferguson and Arturo Escobar, to contribute to the reinforcement of the postcolonial system of domination.

The second, more recent movement criticizes the postmodern current by pointing out its focus on the discourses of development agencies rather than their practices, as well as its populist tendency, a legacy of the idealization of "savage peoples" by nineteenth-century anthropologists.

Atlani-Duault concludes the approach that characterizes the book by saying that we must overcome the dichotomy between radical criticism of the notion of development and total involvement in aid projects. Today, she says, aid professionals themselves are increasingly rejecting the culturalist bias of anthropology, and are inviting it to adopt a different posture that allows "to think about the balance between critical distance and engagement, between deconstruction and reconstruction of aid practices" [Revet 2010: 183]

Thus, the authors of this book are united by a common desire to "think the in-between, between commitment and critical distance" [Revet 2010: 183]

Although addressing different themes, these themes are all constructed according to the same plan: an introduction recalling the importance of the subject; a state-of-the-art tracing the way in which the question under consideration has been treated by anthropology; three case studies illustrating the different postures adopted by anthropologists [applied "anthropology, critical "anthropology" and intermediary "posture"].

Patricia Foxen has been thinking about the issue of refugees. The anthropological literature on this topic is organized around several major themes: the notion of the refugee itself, whose critical analyses draw in part on the work of philosophers such as Giorgio Agamben or Michel Foucault, to denounce the techniques of power put in place in order to control these populations, and emphasize the limits of international legal definitions; refugee camps; refugees in the countries of the North; and gender-inclusive approaches [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 41].

Pierre-Yves Le Meur and Philippe Lavigne Delville focus on the issue of rural development and resource governance. They emphasize the tensions that exist in this field between technical and social approaches, between sectoral and systemic approaches, between top-down and bottom-up logic [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 73].

Four themes are currently emerging: the insertion of local communities into larger economic

groupings; the practical knowledge of local actors, but also their moral, normative, and legal categories; the "ecological" approach, which is reflected in studies of the relationship to nature and natural resources, on the one hand, and to land issues, on the other; and finally, the development interventions themselves [Revet 2010: 183]

Another theme is devoted to the anthropology of the environment. Alicia Sliwinski first traces the history of anthropology's interest in the relations between humans and their environment, a history marked by several major periods, from the determinism characterizing Boas' anthropogeography at the beginning of the 20th century to the questioning of the categories of nature and culture at the end of the 1990s, via the functionalist ecological anthropology of the 1950s–1960s and the ethnoecology of the 1970s. She then focuses on several contemporary trends: the new political anthropology and the new anthropologies of the environment (conservation and biodiversity, conflicts over natural resource management, Indigenous claims, ecotourism, patents, etc.) [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 93].

Jacky Bouju addresses in the next theme the issue of sanitation, which is a key area of sustainable urban development. Presenting the issue of urban waste as a "total social fact" he shows that anthropological work initially focused on theoretical approaches (Mary Douglas, for example) while development studies were the essential fact of urban sociology and history, which brought out two sub-themes: public health and sanitation of the city. It was in the late 1980s that anthropology became interested in health and sanitation practices. In doing so, it revealed the complexity of this field, which blends, in an "eminently political conjunction" social order and symbolic order, sanitary order and security order, and allows anthropologists to shed light on the relationship between actors and institutions [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 123; Revet 2010: 184].

Carl Kendall, an anthropologist renowned for his numerous collaborations with international and North American health institutions (WHO, USAID, Center for Disease Control), wrote the theme on health. Unlike the other authors, who present the entire body of work in their assigned field, Kendall proposes, in view of the extensive existing literature, to limit himself to the applied anthropological work that is taking place in "poor countries." In the history he traces, he outlines several phases ranging from the explicitly interventionist projects of the postwar period, critical for their verticality, to the phase of anthropologists' participation within programs implemented by health institutions. Applied medical anthropology has developed in the fields of family planning, child health, vector-borne diseases, and AIDS/HIV [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 155; Revet 2010: 184]

Charles-Edouard de Suremain deals with food and nutrition, a theme that, unlike health, has been little studied by anthropologists. It was in the 1980s that anthropologists began to invest in this field, a major development concern, in order to optimize the fight against the various forms of child malnutrition. Their work is now increasingly solicited to analyze the interactions between food and public policy [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 175].

The last of the themes is devoted to gender. Kristina Tiedje presents the three main perspectives that have characterized anthropological approaches in this field: Women in Development (WID) studies the effects of development on women; Women and Development (WAD), which emerged in the 1970s, analyzes the existing relationships between women and development; and Gender and Development (GAD), which emerged in the 1980s, focuses on gender relations in development

[Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 203].

It is important to note that it is difficult for the reader to distinguish, in this theme, between the main currents of anthropology and the main programmatic trends of development agencies because these "concepts" were otherwise used by the major international agencies to qualify their projects [Revet 2010: 184].

Laurent Vidal's concluding theme allows for a re-discussion of the key issues that anthropology encounters when dealing with humanitarian and development themes: autonomy, innovation, capitalization, mediation, temporality, transformation, and reflexivity. While drawing on examples from his own practice in the field of health anthropology in Africa, the author draws on previous chapters to show the diversity of possible postures for the researcher in these complex fields; he thus emphasizes the interest of a "permanent oscillation between methodological, epistemological, and ethical questioning" [Atlani-Duault and Vidal 2009: 229].

According to Revet, this book has an important merit which is undoubtedly to present in French the breadth of the spectrum of work related to the themes of humanitarianism and development in anthropology.

However, the very notion of "critical" would have deserved a more thorough treatment. The meaning of this word indeed varies according to the texts, and this heterogeneity leaves the reader perplexed: what reading grid, what tools is a "critical anthropology" likely to propose in a context where, as the book very well describes, anthropologists are increasingly solicited by development and humanitarian actors who ask them to shed light on their practices and no longer only to help them implement projects? Could we not, for example, consider thinking of an "anthropology of criticism" which would draw on the work of Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thevenot to explore the different forms of criticism that actors deploy in the face of humanitarian or development projects? This would certainly make it possible to go beyond the reproaches addressed several times in the book to anthropologists who, like Arturo Escobar and James Ferguson, only see humanitarian or development enterprises as means of control or development enterprises only as means of control and domination, and who, in so doing, do not give themselves the opportunity to look at how a critique of these projects arises within these enterprises themselves among the actors of development and among those who are designated as its "beneficiaries" [Revet 2010: 186].

An approach that is less interested in the posture adopted by anthropologists than in that of the actors-development and humanitarian practitioners and supposed "beneficiaries"–would indeed lead to considering development projects and humanitarian actions not only for what they reveal of the institutions that carry them, but also for what they produce at their margins: misses, flaws, or unforeseen events. Without being strictly speaking "intermediary" this posture would undoubtedly open up both theoretical and practical perspectives [Revet 2010: 186]

3. Linkage between Anthropology and Humanitarian Action

3.1 The Value of Anthropology and the Possibility of its Integration into Humanitarian Action

This section does not address the difference between humanitarian and development work. However, these two fields of action are part of various times and objectives. While humanitarian action aims to respond to the vital needs of the most vulnerable people, development action is designed for the long term and aims to accompany social change.

The discussion of the value of anthropology and the ways in which it can be integrated into humanitarian and development actions must therefore be adapted according to the situation on the ground, which may be urgent, conflictual, or unstable. For humanitarian action, anthropology may be of interest when the emergency becomes chronic and in the post-crisis and reconstruction phases.

The terms 'international aid' or 'international action' or 'aid actors' are used to refer generally to development and humanitarian actors and action. However, it is important to be aware of the distinction between these actors and modes of action [Trentesaux 2021]

Anthropology has long integrated development mechanisms and humanitarian action into its field of study. It provides an often-critical view of the logics of power specific to the international action of NGOs. Many anthropologists have studied these issues and it is now agreed that there is indeed an "anthropology of development" or "anthropology of humanitarianism". The reverse is also true, but to a lesser extent, that anthropology is integrated into humanitarian action.

Indeed, anthropology is not always integrated into the design of aid programs or into the reflection of NGOs on their own actions. However, there is a broad consensus on the value of this discipline for humanitarian action [Atlani-Duault 2007]. The anthropological study of the populations targeted by international action would allow for a better understanding of the populations, the logic of power within the groups, the knowledge, and practices in place. This information, once considered by aid actors, would allow for better targeting of projects, and increase their adoption by the targeted people. Thus, Trentesaux [2021] identifies factors that hinder integration and also suggests solutions that are available to humanitarian actors.

3.2 Obstacles to the use of anthropology in humanitarian work

3.2.1 Opposite modalities of intervention

Anthropology and humanitarianism have quite different modalities of intervention. Whereas anthropology aims to describe the world while altering its object of study as little as possible, the aid sector assumes a modification of its field of action and, in the case of development, aims to accompany social change.

These two disciplines are part of opposing temporalities. The anthropological study, through its ethnographic method, is part of the long term. It is necessary to understand the logic of actors in depth and to share their experiences. Conversely, development and humanitarian work are conducted in a shorter period, often defined by the funding granted by donors. The action must be effective to achieve its objectives in a brief period, since the NGO is accountable to institutional or private donors,

to donors and to beneficiaries [Trentesaux 2021].

Finally, because of these two characteristics, anthropology and humanitarianism have distinct approaches to reality. Anthropology, which tries to understand the complexity of social relations, takes a position from the logic of actors. Conversely, humanitarianism sees reality from a programmatic perspective. The latter sometimes requires a simplification and homogenization of social reality.

These quite diverse ways of working make it difficult to work together. There is sometimes a lack of understanding between these two working cultures and their respective actors. The anthropologist is said to be too academic and detached from the "field reality" of the humanitarians. Their work does not fit into the time frame of the developer and is not operational enough. Humanitarians, on the other hand, are at the service of action and cannot take the necessary distance for more abstract reflections that are far from the field [Trentesaux 2021].

3.2.2 A project logic that prevents a long-term approach

The integration of anthropology into humanitarian work is made difficult by the very way the aid sector operates. NGOs have little time between the call for projects and the first response they must make. This time lapse does not allow for a real study of needs before defining the activities and expected results.

When the donor validates the project, it means that everything is already complete and presents a needs analysis, baseline study, planned activities, deliverables, and targeted results. Once the funds are released, the project can begin. The anthropological study, when it fits into the project, is often located in the needs assessment phase, integrated into the project. This is the problem: the assessment phase takes place once the activities have been defined and approved. However, once the terms of the project have been validated, it is not easy to modify them [Trentesaux 2021].

However, readjustments are sometimes essential, as shown by this example from Chad, detailed by Florence Chatot (2020), Groupe URD research officer, during a telephone interview. Groupe URD works in partnership with an NGO which fights against female genital mutilation and has carried out operational research focusing on the analysis of the dynamics and social norms linked to this practice. One of the activities planned by this NGO was to retrain female excisers by setting up IGAs to compensate for the loss of income due to the abandonment of the practice. The study revealed that such a strategy was far too simplistic to address a problem as complex as FGC. In fact, far from being restricted to a strictly female "excisor/excised" interaction, the study revealed the existence of a real economy of excision bringing together multiple community actors with divergent interests who, through their social function in the practice, legitimize its persistence. In fact, one of the recommendations of the study was to reinvest the budget initially allocated to IGAs in prevention activities [Trentesaux 2021].

This example points to the need for precise studies, conducted by people who already have knowledge of the topic, upstream of the definition of activities in order to avoid readjustments whose costs are not only organizational and human but also financial [Trentesaux 2021].

Some associations have the capacity to conduct socio-anthropological studies prior to calls for projects. Médecins du Monde, for example, has even integrated an anthropological skill within its

headquarters in a "Research and Learning" department. This organization is made possible by the relative freedom of Médecins du Monde, which has its own funds that are not earmarked for a particular project.

3.3 The need for an anthropology of humanitarianism

The interest of the humanitarian community in anthropology is real, but the meeting between the two disciplines is not so simple. The researcher is too often presented as a critical academic and not a force for proposal or idealized as the "rescuer" of a failed project.

It is necessary to have a type of anthropology for humanitarianism. This means that anthropology must be at the service of action. It must not be subservient to it but must keep the objective of improving humanitarian action [Trentesaux 2021].

3.3.1 Making local action logics intelligible for international action

Anthropology is interested in specific social functions, always trying to grasp the vision of the people who live the phenomenon in order to understand it. Humanitarian action is often carried out by multinational actors, notably the UN and its agencies, or international non-governmental NGOs that act outside their borders. The interest of anthropology here is to make the link between this local scale and these international actors. It makes the social exchanges of some intelligible to others. It can be mobilized both to help international actors at the global level and to support the populations targeted by aid programs at the local level.

Sharon Abramowitz highlighted the anthropologist role in her article "Ten Things that Anthropologists Can Do to Fight the West African Ebola Epidemic" (2014). In it, she lays out ten actions that anthropologists could implement to be helpful to humanitarians in the fight against Ebola in West Africa in 2014. Three of her proposals are used below by Trentesaux [2021]:

Anthropologists can observe, report, interpret, and explain local perspectives on external action. The point here is not to understand for the sake of understanding, but to operationalize one's understanding in order to propose arrangements, adapt humanitarian action, and make it acceptable to local populations.

Anthropologists can identify local health capacities and local structures that can participate in the epidemic response (for example, in the case of Ebola). The anthropologist must not only share "objective" knowledge of existing health structures, but also his or her knowledge of social constructions that could be useful to the humanitarian response in place. Faced with a disaster, populations invent and implement ways to respond and mitigate its effects. The interest of anthropology is to identify these structures, to bring them to the forefront so that international action can work by integrating them into its response strategy.

Anthropologists can share their local contacts with the global health experts coordinating the response. Whether they are researchers, members of civil society, or leaders in the public or private sectors, these individuals can assist and communicate with the international response actors. Humanitarian response targets different scales and therefore needs contacts from these different local, national, and international levels.

Anthropologists can also make the international humanitarian response intelligible to local populations. They have a role as "cultural mediators"[Anoko and Desclaux 2017: 479] with targeted populations.

This work can defuse social tensions, as Faye has shown in the case of the burial of dead pregnant women in Guinea [Fassasi 2014]. Among the Kissi in Forest Guinea, it is forbidden to bury a pregnant woman with her child in her abdomen. It is expected that the fetus be removed from the woman's body and that the two be buried separately. In the context of the Ebola epidemic, it was not feasible to operate on the woman to complete this separation. Faye explains that "if it was impossible, for one reason or another, to extract the fetus from the mother's womb, a rite of reparation consisting of offerings and various ceremonies must be sacrificed. This is how the burial took place [Trentesaux 2021].

3.3.2 Operations research provides recommendations.

"Action research," or "operational and/or participatory research" allows for collaboration between international development and humanitarian actors and researchers. It is not a question of erasing the specificities of these two disciplines. On the contrary, as stated by Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, "all action research must submit simultaneously to the rules of research and those of action, otherwise it will be nothing but bad research and bad action" [Olivier de Sardan 1995: 192].

Thus, action research must respect the academic criteria of recognizing the researcher's involvement in the object of study and considering personal and subjective biases. This is all the more relevant since anthropology values participant observation, in which the researcher has an active role in what he or she observes.

New constraints apply to "action research": the delimitation of a more restricted subject, a shorter time frame and more accessible writing.

Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan [1995] points out that research is subject to the same principles of selection and detour as development projects. The people targeted by the study select what they share in order to best serve their objectives. The researcher must be able to identify and integrate these processes.

Action research can guide the action so that it is in line with the logic of the targeted populations.

The case detailed during a 'Médecins du Monde seminar' [2009] about unwanted pregnancies in Côte d'Ivoire shows how the socio-anthropological study guided the project prior to its implementation.

The study aimed to "understand the difficulties of adherence of Ivorian middle and high school students to prevention messages distributed in schools" [Bouchon 2019: 3). It showed the coexistence of two opposing discourses that confined high school students and reduced their capacity for action. The first, conveyed by peers and social networks, encouraged "early sexuality and a multiplication of partners." The second, promoted by adults and certain Ivorian institutions, makes sexuality a taboo subject and presents numerous barriers to accessing contraception.

The approach described above made it possible to involve all stakeholders (social, educational, health) in questioning their perception of sexuality, considering their position in society and their

capacity to act. Young people were integrated into the project by hosting radio programs to support behavior change. Community agents were recruited to reduce the gap between young people's experience of sexuality and the community's perception of the subject [Trentesaux 2021].

3.3.3 The articulation of anthropology and humanitarianism: The example of Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan's "contractual model"

a. Three zones of preferential interaction

J. -P. Olivier de Sardan presents the solution of the "contractual model" in order to link and cooperate anthropology and development. This is where "researchers and operators agree to define a clearly circumscribed zone of interaction and collaboration, without giving up their specific identities" [Olivier de Sardan 1995: 194]. This way of thinking about the articulation of anthropology and humanitarianism is both broader and more specific than action research. The author details three "preferred areas of interaction".

First, the training of development agents in the method of ethnographic inquiry, which would help to protect them from certain clichés. Second, anthropologists should be involved in monitoring project outcomes. Finally, the contribution of new types of investigation that cannot be all quantitative and all qualitative.

b. Type of survey

i. Anthropological experts

J. -P. Olivier de Sardan proposes three ways to overcome these survey problems. The first method is to call upon socio-anthropologists as "experts." These researchers are long-term specialists in a theme or region within a research framework and bring these skills to the development framework and the constraints that accompany it, notably the constrained subject, speed of action and efficiency. The richness and accuracy of their contribution to the world of development is nourished by their knowledge built over an extended period in an academic setting.

This is what Anoko and Desclaux [2017] describe during the Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa in 2014. The world health organization (WHO) called on anthropologists, including some who had already been mobilized during the 2000–2001 epidemic in Uganda, the 2003 epidemic in the Democratic Republic of Congo, etc. The scientists mobilized during these different episodes collect and create knowledge on "medico-technical aspects [of the disease], biosecurity constraints, the history of population reactions during previous epidemics, institutional dimensions"[Anoko and Desclaux 2017: 479).

When the epidemic started in Guinea, WHO immediately called on these experts to "implement the humanization of public health measures, to make explicit people's interpretations of the disease as well as the social logics underlying their reactions" [Anoko and Desclaux 2017: 479].

ii. Mixed research

J. -P. Olivier de Sardan then proposes to set up doctoral themes in which development and research actors invest. They would jointly define the research theme and the development actors would commit to making a fieldwork site available to the doctoral student.

These research techniques have proven to be effective. This was the case for Florence Chatot, who worked in Niger on a water access program. Prior to the project, she conducted a needs assessment in collaboration with a water, sanitation, and hygiene engineer. The study showed the importance of traditional wells for the targeted people and highlighted the difficulties, particularly financial, related to the maintenance of the wells.

Thanks to the integration of social sciences into technology and vice versa, the association has adapted its activities by proposing improved traditional wells that do not necessarily meet international standards but correspond to the needs expressed by the people interviewed [Trentesaux 2021].

Linking the technical and social sciences makes it possible to find technical innovations that are adapted to the field.

iii. Combining surveys

Finally, it is possible to implement a combination of individual and collective surveys in the medium and short term in order to produce relevant observations in a timeframe that is acceptable to the aid actors. The ethnographic survey, which favors the individual over an extended period, can be conducted in conjunction with rapid collective surveys of the MARP (Accelerated Method of Participatory Research) type.

J. P. Olivier de Sardan and Thomas Bierschenk propose the ECRIS (Enquête Collective Rapide d'Identification des Conflits et des Groupes Stratégiques) method or "framework" [Olivier de Sardan 1995: 180]. This approach of comparative analysis on several sites aims to grasp "from the inside" the conflicts, contradictions, and local issues to construct qualitative indicators adapted to the field and to the theme of the survey.

This methodology makes it possible to introduce non-standardized qualitative indicators and common lines of inquiry that will then guide the researchers' individual fieldwork. It is useful for comparing several sites, but also meets needs related to "the preparation, monitoring or assessment of development operations".

The proposals outlined above can facilitate the integration of anthropology into humanitarianism, which responds to a constant objective of humanitarianism to improve the quality of its programs. Anthropology, with its ethnographic method, and the anthropologist, with his or her outside perspective, can bring to the fore the complexity of the world on which the humanitarian and the developer are working. Anthropology thus brings a new perspective that is useful to humanitarian action, although sometimes difficult to integrate [Trentesaux 2021].

4. Anxious Relationship between Anthropology and Development

The relationship between anthropology and development has long been filled with difficulty, ever since Bronislaw Malinowski advocated a role for anthropologists as policy advisers to African colonial administrators and Evans-Pritchard urged them instead to do precisely the opposite and distance themselves from the tainted worlds of policy and 'applied' involvement [Grillo 2002]. David Lewis [2005: 3] briefly introduces the concept of development and summarizes the history of the relationship

between development and anthropologists. Along the way, he considers three main positions which anthropologists have taken and may still take in relation to development.

The antagonistic observer is the first position marked by critical distance and a basic hostility towards both the ideas of development and the motives of those who seek to promote it. The second is the reluctant participation where institutional financial pressures and livelihood opportunities have led some anthropologists to offer their professional services to policy makers and development organisations. The long-standing tradition is the third position in which anthropologists have attempted to combine their community or agency-level interactions with people at the level of research with involvement with or on behalf of marginalized or poor people in the developing world [Lewis 2005: 3].

The concept of development went on to become one of the dominant ideas of the twentieth century since its emergence in its current usage after the Second World War. It embodies a set of aspirations and techniques aimed at bringing about positive change or progress in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and other areas of the world. However, Development also brings a set of confusing, shifting terminologies and has been prone to rapidly changing fashions.

Whatever the terminological momentum, the 'development industry' remains a powerful and complex constellation of public and private agencies channeling copious amounts of international development assistance, including inter-governmental organizations of the United Nations, multilateral and bilateral donors. Relations between anthropologists and the world of development ideas and practices date from the early days of the discipline during the colonial period and have continued up to the present. Such relationships have encompassed the spheres of research and action, from positions of sympathetic involvement as well as the stances of disengaged critique or even outright hostility. Whatever point of view anthropologists may take about development, the concept is a contested term and remains one of the central organizing and defining systems of our age and will therefore continue to demand anthropological attention [Lewis 2005: 4].

4.1 Development concept

'Development' in its modern sense first came to official prominence when it was used by United States President Truman in 1949 as part of the rationale for post-War reconstruction in 'underdeveloped' areas of the world, based on provision of international financial assistance and modern technology transfer. Development has subsequently been strongly associated primarily with economic growth. However, there has also been a growing recognition that while the well-being of an economy may form a precondition for development it is not a sufficient one, and that attention too has to be paid to issues such as income and asset redistribution to reduce inequality, support for human rights and social welfare, and the sustainable stewardship of environmental resources. The Human Development Index developed by the United Nations Development Program at the start of the 1990s has attempted to address such concerns, at least in part, by combining gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, life expectancy and a measure of educational attainment [Lewis 2005: 4].

However, few words offer as many definitional difficulties as 'development.' While dictionary definitions focus on the idea of 'a stage of growth or advancement,' development has several layers of

meaning. As a verb, 'development' refers to activities required to bring about change or progress and is often linked strongly to economic growth. As an adjective, 'development' implies a standard against which different rates of progress may be compared, and it therefore takes on a subjective, judgmental element in which societies or communities are sometimes compared and then positioned at different 'stages' of an evolutionary development schema.

At the same time, 'development' has also come to be associated with 'planned social change' and the idea of an external intervention by one group in the affairs of another. Often this is in the form of a project, as part of conscious efforts by outsiders to intervene in a less developed community or country in order to produce positive change. Finally, within radical critiques, development is viewed in terms of an organized system of power and practice which has formed part of the colonial and neo-colonial domination of poorer countries by the West.

After 1945, in Europe and North America, development was increasingly understood as economic growth and modernity. The benefits of economic growth would 'trickle down' to the poor, while the transfer of modern technology would bring material benefits. Frustration with the scale of global poverty, exploitation and inequality led some academics and activists to usher in an era of 'post-development' thinking in the 1990s. it advocated a radical rethinking of the assumptions and the goals of development, characterized in this critique as a Western cultural mind-set which imposed homogenizing materialist values, idealized rational-scientific power, and created unprecedented levels of environmental destruction. After the clarification of the development concept, it is important to consider the relationship between development and anthropologists with emphasis on the three main positions which anthropologists have taken and may still take in relation to development [Lewis 2005: 5].

4.2 Antagonistic Observers' Position

Some anthropologists select the ideas, processes, and institutions of development as their field of study, but such work has tended to be highly suspicious and critical, in its approach. At one level, anthropological work on development has flowed from many anthropologists' long-standing concerns with the social and cultural effects of economic change in the less developed areas of the world. Such work has shown how the incorporation of local communities into wider capitalist relations of production and exchange has profound implications for both. For example, Wilson's [1942] work in Zambia in the late 1930s showed the ways in which industrialization and urbanization processes were structured by colonial policies that discouraged permanent settlement and led to social instability, as massive levels of male migration took place back and forth between rural and urban areas. Updating such approaches to understanding social and economic change, Arce and Long [2000] make the case for the role of the anthropologist as furthering understanding of the 'localized modernities' through ethnographic study of the ways in which dominant development processes are fragmented, reinterpreted, and embedded.

A more explicit area of anthropological analysis in relation to development has been research on the performance of development projects, by studying the ways in which such projects operate within and act upon local populations. Here the dominant emphasis has been to understand the reasons

why they 'fail,' with few studies bothering to examine why some projects 'succeed.' A classic study of this kind was Barnett's [1977] analysis of the Gezira land-leasing scheme in Sudan introduced by the British in the 1920s, which aimed to control local labor and secure cotton exports. The study found that the paternalistic structure of the intervention led to stagnation and dependency, since there were no incentives for farmers to innovate. Another key theme within anthropological work has been the gendered character of outsiders' understandings of productive relations and intra-household processes.

The focus within these kinds of anthropological studies has been on the so-called 'beneficiaries' of development assistance, and in general there has been less anthropological work undertaken on the internal organization and workings of the aid industry itself. Research on the so-called 'developers' who seek to bring change to local populations, has nevertheless proved a fertile and instructive field of study when it has been conducted. A recurring theme has been the ways in which encounters between outside officials and local communities are structured by 'top down' hierarchies of power and authority [Lewis 2005: 8].

For instance, Robertson [1984] examined the relations between local people and bureaucrats and focused particularly on the state, providing an anthropological critique of the theory and practice of planning. The well-known work of Chambers [1983], though not himself an anthropologist by training, on power and participation in development has also been concerned with relations between people and professionals, and Chambers has gone on to develop this theme and challenge conventional development policy and training assumptions at the levels of both theory and practice. Studies such as these provided detailed insights into the workings of development organizations but made no claim to offer answers or solutions to the still disappointing results being obtained by those in search of development.

Answers of a kind were offered by another influential, but completely hostile, study of the workings of development. Escobar's [1995] study traces the ways in which development as an idea has constructed and framed the concept of the 'Third World' as a location which is defined and acted upon by the West, and he documents and advocates resistance to its onslaught. Escobar's conclusion, in line with the post-development view, is that the idea of development is itself degraded and outmoded and that only the rise of new local, identity-based social movements that directly challenge the orthodoxies of development offer hope for a new paradigm within a 'post-development' future.

4.3 Reluctant Participants' Stance

In the 1960s and 1970s, the tradition within anthropology that engaged with development and modernization continued, and some of this work began to influence development work more widely. For instance, Geertz's [1963] research on Indonesian agricultural change began to link anthropological research to practical concerns about technological change and land use. It showed the ways in which adaptation of an increasingly complex and 'involuted' system of wetland agricultural production reflected both cultural priorities and material pressures and was widely study by agricultural economists and policy makers [Gardner and Lewis 1996].

As a result, there have been many anthropologists who have avoided any formal engagement with

the topic of development at all. But there have been pressures which have led other anthropologists to participate in development at some level, sometimes due as much to pragmatism as wholehearted commitment. Government and funders have also increasingly called into question the relevance of anthropology to the modern world [Lewis 2005: 9].

This trend was also associated with the rise of radical development theory and the growing politicization of anthropology itself as a discipline in the 1970s. The shift away from modernization theory towards critical dependency theory within development studies also attracted the attention of anthropologists, who began to locate their detailed studies of specific, small groups within wider political-economy contexts. Wolf's [1982] Europe and the people without history established a global, historical political economy which showed how the capitalist world order linked even the most remote communities into its system through processes of economic, technical, and cultural incorporation. The trend towards a more critical, politicized anthropology also opened up scope for engagement with development because it made the subject more intellectually interesting and because it gave the academic discipline of anthropology an opportunity to show that it had something to say about the wider world, rather than just about its more conventional 'tribal' concerns [Ferguson 1996: 158].

The period of post-modern reflection which overtook anthropology later in the 1980s also served to underline anthropological attention on the idea of development. In particular, Marcus and Fischer [1986] questioned the tendency of anthropologists to focus on an ahistorical or exotic 'other' and instead argued for a new focus which would integrate the ideas and institutions of the anthropologists' own societies and contexts, emphasizing the need to show the ways in which power is acquired and exercised across the dimensions of the local, national, and global [Lewis, 2005: 10]. Elements of this post-modern anthropological agenda also led back to the study of development, because the development landscape formed an ideal space for the study of a wide range of familiar and less familiar institutions and relationships that linked ideas, individuals and groups at transnational, national and local levels. It also simultaneously opened up fertile ground for anthropologists to re-consider their own roles as actors within the production of knowledge about and practice within development.

4.4 Engaged Activists' Standpoint

There have long been anthropologists interested in using their knowledge for practical purposes. The field of applied anthropology has seen anthropologists collaborate with activists, policy makers and professionals within a range of fields, including that of development. Anthropologists have involved themselves in applied work and contributed research findings to policy makers on issues such as local customs, dispute settlement and land rights in Africa and in other regions in the world. The gradual professionalization of the development industry from the 1970s onwards led to a growth of opportunities for anthropologists to work within development agencies as staff or consultants as well as within the community work and corporate personnel departments. Anthropologists often played a role of cultural translators, interpreting local realities for administrators and planners. At the same time, anthropology came to be seen as a tool which potentially provided the means to understand, and therefore to some extent control, people's behavior, either as beneficiaries, employees, or customers [Lewis 2005: 11].

Applied anthropologists have drawn on various aspects of anthropological thinking in the ways they have tried to contribute to development work. First, anthropologists have helped to counter the dominant privileging of the economic in development thinking by underscoring an approach which gives equal emphasis to both social and economic aspects of societal change. At the methodological level, applied anthropologists have taken the open-ended, long-term participant observation tradition and tried to relate field work more tightly and in a time-bound way to a set of focused research questions. An example of this is research in rural north-western Bangladesh by Lewis, Wood, and Gregory [1996], concerning an ODA aquaculture project. Through their extensive participant observation, the researchers were able to identify a complex range of hidden (to the planners) intermediaries within local fish production and marketing networks, and their findings contributed to the rethinking of objectives, away from a concern solely with production and towards a greater emphasis on rural poverty reduction. The growth of participatory paradigms in development practices has also drawn extensively on anthropological methodology (cf. Chambers 1983), albeit with more of an emphasis on 'quick and dirty' field work than many anthropologists would wish for.

Applied anthropologists have also drawn attention to issues of Western bias in the assumptions that inform development initiatives, uncovering areas of cultural difference and highlighting the value of local or 'indigenous' knowledge. The growth of interest in Indigenous knowledge has now been a long-standing area of engagement between anthropologists and development practitioners, with its recognition that development interventions should be informed by the systems of knowledge recognized by local people [Lewis 2005: 12].

Applied anthropologists have played several diverse types of roles, including mediation between communities and outsiders, helping to influence public opinion through journalism or advocacy work, helping to aid directly during a crisis, or working as consultants to development organizations. Consultancy work by applied anthropologists within the NGO and donor communities has expanded in the community development field and covers a variety of sectors and projects, including micro-finance, social forestry, slum improvement, monitoring and evaluation and training on participatory techniques [Panayiotopoulos 2002].

The sub-discipline of 'applied' anthropology has, since its emergence in the colonial period, always been controversial within the discipline. After the Second World War there was a reaction in the US against the widespread involvement of anthropologists in the occupation and subsequent administration of overseas territories, and in Britain the process of decolonization went hand in hand with a critique of the colonial origins of the discipline of anthropology itself. The status of applied anthropologists within the wider discipline was also a source of tension, with applied departments and academics frequently considered second rate, leading to its marginalization during the 1960s and 1970s.

According to Schonhuth [2002] from within the German academic context, there still remain three broad sets of arguments against applied anthropology. Within his schema, the 'purists' argue that scholarly endeavor should always be separated from its application. An engineer should be considered an 'applied physicist,' and therefore an applied anthropologist is best regarded as a social worker or a politician, with no place in the formal discipline of anthropology. Schonhuth's second

group, the 'innocents,' are concerned that development will destroy traditional, fragile cultures before they can be studied, and therefore want nothing to do with it. Finally, the 'ethically correct' adherents to a third position argue against any kind of collusion with the practitioners of development because they simply regard development policy and practice as inherently immoral [Lewis 2005: 14].

5. Illusion of planned change in social dynamics and development interventions

The objective of development interventions is to bring about change on predefined plans. Development coincides with intervention in a technicist vision, where societies are fixed, and where technical change induces social change. But there are researchers who say the opposite of this, affirming that a development project is an intervention in dynamic systems [Elwert and Bierschenk 1988], made up of heterogeneous actors, engaged in social relations that are carriers of inequality and domination, as well as solidarity, in competition for resources and/or power, or in disagreement over world views, subject to broader processes of economic and political change [Aberlen E. et al 2016: 21]. From then on, the question of what intervention in local arenas represents arises.

There are relevant questions that help to understand the issues surrounding intervention, including the following: What influence does the intervention have in relation to ongoing dynamics and macroscopic factors of social change? Can an action to preserve natural resources significantly influence the logic of overexploitation linked to demographic growth and poverty? Can an agricultural development action counterbalance the impacts of the liberalization of the sector? What can raise awareness of the effects of early marriage do to counter the dynamics of religious fundamentalism? Finally, what are the forms of reappropriation/reinterpretation of intervention in local arenas?

The socio-anthropology of development has shown that projects are reinterpreted, reappropriated, or neutralized in local arenas, according to the interpretation grids of the different actors, local issues, and opportunities to capture resources for these local issues or for personal strategies [Olivier de Sardan, 1995]. The so-called "resistance to change" covers active strategies to neutralize the potential effects of interventions deemed inappropriate or dangerous, at least for certain categories of actors [Aberlen et al 2016: 21].

According to Aberlen et al. [2016: 22], the illusion of control is all the stronger when:

- the intervention does not assume this reality and is conceived in a mechanical logic.

- the intervention is conceived in general terms, in a technicalized and depoliticized vision, without reference to local arenas, current dynamics, and existing stakeholder games. For example, planning to promote agriculture without asking which farmers to support, planning to modify gender relations without knowing the demands of the distinct categories of women or what is socially acceptable. The lack of knowledge of local issues, of the interests of the diverse groups of actors, of those who will or will not be able to appropriate the project, of those who will neutralize it, makes it impossible to anticipate the strategies of the actors and makes the intervention even more subject to the play of interests.

- the intervention is conceived as a succession of pre-programmed activities, difficult to adapt to the

realities encountered. It is essential to specify one's objectives and the means one deems necessary to achieve them. The reasoning of the logical framework implicitly assumes that once the diagnosis has been made and the relevance of the project has been established, it is sufficient to mechanically carry out the planned actions in order to obtain the expected results, forgetting that an intervention induces permanent interactions between local spaces and the intervention, that projects are "voyages of discovery" [Hirschman 1967], and that adaptation to realities must be built [Korten 1980, 2006].

- the intervention is on a time scale that is incompatible with the objectives pursued. Any change requires time to reach a phase of stability, but this stabilization process is often thwarted or even made impossible by funding phases that are too short or by changes in priorities. Because of the cessation of funding, the processes of change that were being put in place are abandoned before they are consolidated. This is a frequent cause of failure: actors who do not have an interest in the change driven by projects know that it is not necessarily necessary to oppose them head-on. They just have to put the brakes on and wait until the end of the project: when the external actors are no longer there, things "go back to normal". Having had bad experiences with past projects that were abruptly terminated, the actors who would have an interest in the project do not have confidence in the duration of the support, do not dare to take risks, and remain in a wait-and-see position.

- In 20 years, the objectives of projects have broadened and are increasingly societal, with reduced time steps (3–year phases) and more rigid contractual conditions. There is thus a growing contradiction between the objectives and the capacity to achieve them. As well as the realization that a development project cannot control all the conditions for its own success, does the multiplication of terms such as "contribute to" and "promote" in the logical frameworks not reflect a certain renunciation of the ability to achieve given objectives?

Not all projects, of course, fall under these logics; at least they are not subject to them to the same degree. The tyranny of the logical framework and the bureaucratization of project implementation depends on institutions and individuals [Aberlen et al 2016: 21–22]. For a long time, committed practitioners (aid institutions, NGOs, certain consultancies) have been promoting the idea of projects to accompany dynamics, and questioning the limits of the "project" tool [Lecomte 1986]. The projects that have had the most remarkable results are rarely those that have followed the model of predefined and precisely programmed projects.

The most relevant projects are those that are in phase with dynamics and strategically bring technical, economic, and symbolic resources to certain actors, those that are based on a realistic analysis of blockages and issues and that have a duration and means consistent with the expected changes according to Aberlen et al [2016: 22]. They are also those who understand the challenges they face and adjust their approach to the realities and problems encountered, thus bringing about significant changes through technical and organizational innovations that allow certain groups of actors to modify and renegotiate their place in social relationships and in the sector. From this point on, significant impacts are possible: the parboiling of rice in Guinea has "made the sector more fluid" and has considerably strengthened the position of women; the rehabilitation of the Prey Nup polders in Cambodia has greatly reduced the rice deficit of poor households and has enabled a peasant organization to enter negotiations with the State [Aberlen et al, 2016: 22).

Aberlen et al [2016: 23] believe that these findings raise three major questions for development interventions.

Since an intervention plays only a limited role in relation to broader dynamics of change, since its operational relevance must be constructed in each context, and since it is subject to forms of re-appropriation, should we not assume that we are making an "intervention in dynamic systems", an intervention that is not socially and politically neutral? Should we not strategically consider our temporary position in local arenas, our alliances with certain groups of actors to whom we direct financial and cognitive resources, to increase their capacity to renegotiate their position in the sectors and arenas, and to influence the balance of power?

Any intervention necessarily has a normative dimension. It puts forward visions, conceptions of what "must" be done, of what "must" be changed. How can the promoters of an intervention define these choices according to an analysis of local issues and strategic groups, and not only according to their conceptions and the fashionable themes of development conferences? How can they assume their normativity while questioning legitimacy in relation to the social and political contexts of intervention? How can they debate or negotiate it with local actors?

How can practitioners best assume and manage the tension between the logic of accompaniment (which presupposes anchoring, listening, flexibility, and the ability to seize opportunities) and the logic of programming?

There is a great deal of thought on this subject, particularly with regard to the strategic use of "logic tables" [Neu 2005]. However, the author is not sure that the full extent of the implications of these analyses has been considered in the way development projects are designed and managed. Despite the evolution of objectives (more societal) and methods (complex, multi-actor systems), are we not still in a mechanistic conception of intervention? Are current developments in aid policies not leading to greater rigidity? [Lavigne Delville 2013].

6. Conclusion

In this study, various scholars gave their position about anthropologists who take the world of development or humanitarian aid as their subject today. The variety of contributions opens a multiplicity of paths, between expertise and critical distance. Anthropology as social and global discipline encounters key issues dealing with humanitarian and development themes like autonomy, innovation, capitalization, mediation, temporality, transformation, and reflexivity. Anthropologists are increasingly solicited by development and humanitarian actors who ask them to shed light on their practices and suggest the consideration of thinking of an 'anthropology of criticism' to explore the different forms of criticism that actors deploy in the face of humanitarian or development projects. This would certainly make it possible to go beyond the reproaches addressed to anthropologists who only see humanitarian or development enterprises as means of control or development enterprises only as means of control and domination.

Concerning the linkage between anthropology and humanitarian action, it has been mentioned that

anthropology has value that can be integrated in the humanitarian action must be adapted according to the situation on the ground may it be urgent, conflictual, and unstable. It provides an often-critical view of the logics of power. However, anthropology is not always integrated into the design of aid programs. There are obstacles like the opposite modalities of intervention, the prevention of a long-term approach by the project logic with the misunderstanding between donors who impose their view and anthropologists with a long-term study. Furthermore, it has been suggested the necessity for anthropology of humanitarian aid by making local action logics intelligible for international action, by operating research that provides recommendations and by the articulation of anthropology and humanitarian following the contractual model of Olivier de Sardan in consideration of three zones of preferential interaction, type of survey.

In his discussion, Lewis pointed out the three anthropological positions antagonistic observers' position, reluctant participants' stance, and engaged activists' standpoint in relation to development, and he illuminates various aspects of anthropology's complex relationship with development. The three strands are intertwined in complex ways. Individual anthropologists are unlikely to inhabit just one of these positions, but instead may juggle various combinations of them at one time or another. The difficulty of unpacking these relationships, and their overall sensitivity even today, is explained by Ferguson [1996: 160], who argues that development can in one sense be understood as anthropology's 'evil twin'. Development is concerned with many of the same geographical areas and communities that have attracted anthropologists but threatens and challenges many of the assumptions which anthropologists have traditionally considered as important, about the value of the traditional, the local and the autonomous [Lewis 2005: 14].

The inter-mingling of the three positions highlighted here, and the illusory nature of the belief that one can separate anthropological work 'on' and 'in' development, requires us to move beyond such dualism. As Harrison and Crewe [1998] argue, the boundary between development anthropologists and anthropologists of development has come under increasing criticism for being artificial since it obscures the positioning of all anthropologists within the dominant organizing idea of development.

Anthropology has managed to influence development practice in many ways, from the recruitment of anthropologist 'social development advisers' to the growth of participatory practices among non-governmental organizations and others. The merit or otherwise of such influence will continue to be debated, but anthropological contributions increasingly take the form not just of what anthropologists do within development agencies and processes but also what they say about development [Lewis 2005: 16]. More anthropological work is needed to help build this new vision to provide insights into the unclear area of development intervention, to challenge the growing managerialism which obscures development histories and to offset tendencies towards social engineering.

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Limits of Anthropology of Humanitarian Aid and Development:
An Overview

Georges Bomino BOSAKAIBO

Abstract

The humanitarian aid and development assistance have gain momentum as hot topics and have created expectations as well as problems to policymakers and practitioners of both humanitarian action and development assistance. Both refer to the delivery of humanitarian aid and long-term development assistance to improve the economic well-being of the most marginalized and to alleviate poverty. Distinct actors are motivated to cooperate regardless how the situation is defined. The humanitarian aid and development distinct to each other, but they are characterized by great internal diversity. There is a connection between anthropology and humanitarian action as well as anthropology and development. Then, the anthropology of humanitarian aid and development is considered as a social and global anthropology. The anthropologists' involvement as intermediaries between humanitarian aid or development assistance providers/donors and aid recipients/beneficiaries contribute to enhance their results. However, there are limits regarding their actions in practices given the growing complexity of humanitarian aid and development assistance. Therefore, this study attempts to identify the factors that prevent the application of anthropological perspectives to the humanitarian aid and development assistance. This qualitative study uses the secondary data from journals, articles, books, and internet sources. The argument of this study is that development anthropology as a field for practitioners can boost the humanitarian aid and development assistance despite the obstacles that can hinder its actions in their relationship.

Keywords: development anthropology, humanitarian aid, development assistance,