Third Stage Development Ethics

Global Institutions, Scientific Uncertainty and Resistance against the Politicization of Moral Worth.

Discussant: Paper presented by Associate Professor Asuncion St. Clair (University of Bergen) during the International Conference and Workshop Ethics and Development: The Capability Approach in Practice held at Michigan State University April 11-13, 2005

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Introduction
The paper focused more on the international institutions and its negative impacts towards development. However, there are positive impacts also contributed by international institutions towards improvement of peoples’ well being. Looking to the international institutions development policies and strategies, there is a trend of having values of development ethics as well as the use of the capability approach in implementing some of their projects. St. Clair mentions that “researchers in development ethics and powerful development agencies acknowledge some of the roles and values may have increasing the effectiveness of development process”. That is reflected to what is done by international institutions currently through Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and HIPIC. Many research and development programs are funded by International institutions. St. Clair agrees that “more researchers interested in development ethics and powerful development agencies acknowledge some of the roles that values may have in increasing the effectiveness of development processes”.

Globalization Effect:
The author pointed out that international institutions contributed to the globalization effects, which are harmful to human beings due to the prevailing development ethics.
Issues of human rights and freedom of choice are not well covered. So the third stage of development ethics should focus more on the capability approach, which will consider the voice of poor, minority and others who are marginalized in the development process. This is true in the sense that international institutions’ ideas of sustainability are limited to the project level, so that economic and social assessment is limited to the knowledge base of mankind at each point in time and the harmful effects of development would perhaps be known only in later years. For example, many hydroelectric projects which were created in Nepal through a variety of EIA and ESA today are seen as a major reason for the sudden siltation of the river deltas in the plains in India which cause periodic flooding, loss of life and other social economic impacts. This could be avoided if assessment was done in line with new/proposed values of development ethics.

- The third stage development Ethics can be related to tourism development, which can be categorized under three types. The fast type is not in favor of third stage development ethics since it is continuing to exploit and deteriorate people’s wellbeing in the developing countries. However, slow growth and volunteer tourism are new tourism approaches which exhibit less of these harmful effects.
  - Fast growth, bigger airports, more tourists and high impact on social and environment. This category is targeted towards the ‘sun-n-sand tourists’ – mostly charter tourists which do not interact with the local population and economic benefit remains with the internationally located operators. This is how globalization brings back developing countries’ economy with this trend of tourism.
Slow growth based on a democratic process through a dialogue with stakeholders and realizing the carrying capacity of the area. This category is targeted towards the sophisticated, more evolved tourist who is interested in the cultural experience and first hand feel of the realities in the country (and is also willing to spend more time and money). Higher impact on local economy

Volunteer Tourism attracts high net worth tourists who are professionals such as doctors willing to provide some days as volunteers for development programs along with the tourism agenda. Ambassadair is a high growth tourism operator focusing on this aspect of tourism taking people into Africa, East Europe, Latin America and Asia through its Ambassadors for Children concept. (www.ambassadair.com) This is what third stage development ethics advocates, that which empowers poor people and will be sustainable.

Tourism in one of these sectors, if there is no sabotage in its investment, would help to boost the economy of many developing countries. But the tendency of having co-financed programs through bi-lateral or multilateral aid leads to less of an effect on the countries economy. Since tourism is primarily private sector, it is useful to receive financing from private sources even for the slow growth process. Therefore, the third stage development could correct the type of investment in tourism and other sectors to reduce the global inequality in resources distribution.

World Bank developments over time have improved people’s welfare through the following programs:

- 1970s Basic needs
- Integrated Rural Development
- 1980s SAP, ERP
- 1990s PRSP
- Community Driven Development

- St. Clair cited some donors and agencies for successfully using the capability approach, but without mentioning international institutions. I hope they are among those agencies. For example World Bank has established Social Protection Department which deals with Social Risk Management (SRM). All these are efforts to improve social and welfare of the people.

- She argued that economic theory explains that “economic growth reduces poverty almost on a 1 to 1 basis”. This is not the case according to economists. There is an understanding by the World Bank that the ability of economic growth depends on the distribution of assets. The Lorenz curve and other measures of inequality can help to show that economic growth does not have a direct equal balance measure with poverty.

TSDE requires new approach

- The paper focuses on globalization and international institutions as causes of poverty.

Still, there are other causes of poverty (internal causes) like government policy

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decisions e.g. Tanzania under socialism opted for villagization policy. The idea was
good but lack of funds caused difficulties in the implementation and led the country
into more difficulties. The government could not get foreign support from Western
countries due to its ideology. The country was not able to stand on its own. Hence,
people suffer a lot health-wise, economically and politically.

➢ Development ethics challenges us to move beyond theory and effectively engage with
the World Bank and governments of developed and developing countries to listen to
and implement Development Ethics in practice. Issues of U.S. subsidies for
agricultural products affects the African agricultural products market. If both sides
agreed upon a new development ethic, the U S and its allies would stop subsidizing
its farmers and that could lead to free trade and markets for African produce. Thus,
poor people’s income will increase their standard of living would rise.

➢ Development ethicists should use any opportunities available to make changes to
international and other institutions to enable mainstreaming economic development
with the new developmental values and use of the capability approach, in order to
have real development in the world.

➢ There is a need for development ethicists to have a holistic approach, to
involve and commit all actors on economic development (NGOs, Private
sectors, governments, International institutions, Community etc) rather than
focusing solely on international institutions or solely on individual projects.