

DEVELOPMENT, VALUES, AND SOCIOCULTURAL EVOLUTION (continued)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AS PROGRESSIVE VALUES SHIFT

Certain explicit propositions about development underpin my thesis that values development should be the goal of development efforts. Much as the following might contribute to, and reflect, our level of development, our development—our maturation into full humanity—is not measured by:

- how much we know
- or how much we produce
- or how much we have
- or by how much we consume from the world
- or by our state of contentment and well-being

Thus, I argue that development is not about growth, or consumption, or material wealth, nor even by the advance of knowledge, or a sense of well-being. These could be means to development, or the product of it, but they do not measure development. Neither are happiness or contentment a measure of it; after all, it depends on what one is happy or content about.¹ I argue that development is shown by what we value as expressed by our behaviour—by how we relate. But most of what we do when we engage in development assistance is about the *means* to development, not its goal.

Nevertheless, all these elements of who we are undoubtedly express something about the level of our development. And our development will be dependent upon having the means to fully express ourselves; how well we are able to feed, clothe, house, and medicate, ourselves; how well, quantitatively and qualitatively, we can meet our material needs and wants and ease the labour of our lives. These afford the means for raising our focus beyond survival, they are all indicative measures of our development and they are the context of concerns to which our development efforts challenge us to address.²

To repeat, living systems co-evolve. The history or developmental path of an individual—ontogeny—is a history of the individual's interaction and co-adaptation with its context. Individuals and societies co-adapt within changing contexts. Different societies, and different groups within societies, co-adapt to one another. The history of the human species—its phylogeny—is a history of its evolution from intra- and extra-species interactions. There are many human societies and sub-cultures, and the history of their complex differentiation, interdependence, and integration is a key aspect of human phylogeny. As human society, with its many subcultures, evolves, its developmental process can be traced, described, and measured by reference to behavioral norms, locally and globally. Humans progress—or fail to progress—individually and collectively—along a

¹ Consider the contentment of the inhabitants of Huxley's *Brave New World* and the knowledge, and material wealth of that world. Is that what we seek as development? Was Hitler happy over his success in achieving power, in his military conquests, his attempts to exterminate the Jews?

² This is where Maslow (1968) is relevant.

dimension of relational values—the path of individual transformation—development.³ In collectivities, this path is also marked by the complexification of structures and processes of governance.

DEVELOPMENT IN HUMAN SYSTEMS

I have described the development process for individuals and noted that the *same values development path is traced by social collectivities—dyads, groups, organizations, societies and their sub-cultures.*

Reference to the Values Development Map in Annex 1 shows (along the bottom of the map) the progression of stages of development of collectivities as defined by their style of leadership or governance. As noted, this starts from authoritarian, and progresses through paternalist, managerial, facilitator, to collaborator and servant leadership styles.

It is the process of moving through these stages that I see as central to the concept of societal progress. And, yes, especially when it comes with material adequacy. But material adequacy, and more than adequacy, can be realized at any stage of development in the sense I am speaking of it. Once past Stage 4, with increasing inner-directedness, authenticity, integrity, and self-reflection, we are also, as individuals, on what I see as a spiritual path—a path of self-identification with larger and larger wholes.⁴

Note that the realization of full human potential is more than simply the development of competencies and the freedom to express them. While the achievement of competencies is necessary to values development, their contribution to development depends on how maturely competence is applied.⁵

As individuals, our development involves a process of increasing congruence, coherence, and integrity in the course of learning how to live increasingly into what we believe to be right. Whereas, before, the focus was self-centered, the focus widens through a realization of interdependence and community to becoming increasingly ‘we-centered’ with an increasingly larger perception of ‘we’—the common good. The same is true for collectivities.

THE NATURE OF A DEVELOPED SOCIETY

If we see human fulfillment—development to the fullest expression of human potential—as the goal, and see this as expressed by high level lived values, then a developed society would be one expressing these values as norms. Most especially, it would be one that supported individuals to their highest fulfillment so expressed—the expression of their full human potential.

A key marker of progress in the development of a social system is in the degree of its capacity to recognize itself as a system, to care for both the whole and for all of its parts as it relates to its changing environment.

DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE IN THIS CONTEXT

³ See bibliography for topics and author viewpoints to be referred to in a fuller discussion.

⁴ See Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, which describes stages passed through in the course of a religious life that correspond to the stages depicted by Hall-Tonna and discovered independently.

⁵ Hence the inadequacy of Sen’s proposed goal of development, which is means rather than end.

The point of this paper is its conclusion: that *the goal of development practice is the promotion of sociocultural evolution, and that the pursuit of this goal needs to be informed by the understanding of the dynamic of values development in the design of both the content of development programmes and, most particularly, as I will now discuss, in the design of the process of development intervention—in the norms of relationship modeled.*

Awareness of a society's values—its norms—allows us to take account of them. Using available technology for doing so, we can gain an understanding of the next stage of values and organizational development and the pre-requisites of getting there. This applies to both systemic change efforts—decentralization, health systems—and projects—irrigation schemes, biodiversity projects. Innovations modeled on Western practice almost inevitably presuppose shifts in local norms or require design to accommodate to local norms.

The expression of values into behaviour requires skills.⁶ Comparing values currently expressed as norms with those required for proposed changes, we can see the skills that will need to be developed. Especially, we might become aware that the path of a tribal society (e.g. Afghanistan) to becoming a nation governed as a representative voting democracy implies incremental progress through stages of values shifts with the acquisition of the skills called for by a new worldview.

Shifts to higher values presuppose that values upon which the new values can build are already operative. This might require attention to foundation values needed, and possibly missing, as a basis for those now aspired to for the fuller realization of citizenship responsibilities and the evolving social contract for this next stage.⁷ These understandings are critical to the design of a strategy for supporting what might need to be a step-by-step process of change.

It will be noted that there is an assumption that the values described are universal even though cultural expressions of particular values might differ. Given the validity of this assumption, there is no imposition of values. Rather the opposite since a sensitivity to cultural values is central to this approach. What is clear, however, is that there is much work to be done to test the assumption of universality in the recognition that the validity of the approach has to date largely been tested in post-traditional contexts.

Values development, as understood here, offers a model of overarching human species development that allows quantifiable measurement and assessment of progress. Used in a process of systemic self-reflection, it can build on the best of systems thinking and complexity science to aid us in supporting capacities for social resilience, to address resistance to change, to making the shifts in behaviours necessary for sustainability and the values development that this presupposes.

I now look briefly at the significance of this for development practice.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: VALUES SHIFT AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

I shall now look at five implications for development practice.

⁶ Around 1,500 skills have been identified as needed for, specifically linked to, the expression of 125 values.

⁷ For example, the value *Equality/Liberation* (Stage 5, Recognizing that one has the same value and rights as others.) presupposes *Rights/Respect* (Stage 3, Recognizing the worth, accomplishments and property of others).

1. *Walking our talk*

The first lesson from all this is that if we of the development profession are to be effective in promoting development we need to walk our talk—our behaviour needs to reflect developed values—at least the values aimed at in the next stage of social development of the societies we are working with. Transformative cultural shift requires leadership that exhibits behaviours relevant to at least the next stage of values development toward which the culture is shifting. When experts—Western or indigenous—take a superior role, offering advice rather than understanding, impose their expertise and prescribe what is good for a country, the opportunity is missed to model developmental values.

In much of our work, we model Stage 4 managerial values. This could be entirely appropriate where we are working with systems exhibiting Stage 3 values. This is developmental. But we also work with colleagues open to Stage 4 facilitative values with opportunity to model these successfully if we are aware of what we are doing. Accepting values development as the goal would lead us to abandoning prescriptive advice, to modeling inclusion and facilitative/collaborative behaviours in the identification and design of technical assistance, and supporting learning *programmes* rather than ‘blueprint’ and projects. While there is acceptance of this in principle, practice often falls far short.⁸

2. *Content and process*

Content and process are almost inextricably mixed. Development projects commonly support the *means* to development—e.g. health centres, irrigation and water supply projects—but they can easily be identified, designed and implemented in ways that fail to support development. (See above.) Values are expressed in relationships. Planning systems can readily model what would generally be developmental values by involving whole populations in identifying critical concerns, defining objectives, and participating in the identification, design, and implementation of intervention and accountability processes. I offer an example that illustrates how one might approach this. I see it as a significant example of effective pursuit of the common good by engaging the whole human system in self-reflection, invoking facilitative/collaborative values of the Phase III stages of societal development. Note that my role was simply as coach to a local facilitating team.

In Papua New Guinea, I coached a team of nationals:

- to facilitate a group of senior provincial departmental officials in a process to identify their perception of the major trends and concerns of the province regarding the conditions of individuals, communities, and habitat and telling stories about the nature of these concerns
- to help these officials to use their stories to create together a systems map that led to a shared view of the interdependence of identified concerns
- to have them list the top ten priority concerns of the province as they saw them

⁸ Principally because the funding agencies do not demand this of consultants who themselves operate with Stage 4 values.

- to then secure public response to this list of priority concerns and ownership from village and township communities, churches, unions, university etc., as well as provincial 'cabinet' officials⁹
- to repeat this process with respect to their proposed development objectives for addressing these concerns
- to then use their systems map to identify and choose between intervention points, policies and programmes (and the roles of the different departments in these programmes)
- to repeat the cycle of public feedback
- to develop a set of interdepartmental programmes with programme budgets (not departmental budgets for these programmes—thus shifting the budgeting process from top-down national ministerial level to bottom-up—from province to ministries rather than from ministries to province)
- to secure public engagement in the development, operation, and evaluation of these programmes.

3. Process consultation

Process consultation (not just a process of consultation) used to support a system's self-reflection is a key practice for developmental change. (Joy 1997) It might be applied for organizational and cultural change in government, a hospital, the judicial system, the educational system, a religious order, or, as above, a planning-programming-budgeting-accountability system. It involves managing a process that clarifies and creates a shared systems understanding of reality. This requires an explicit practice of holding a consultant to client system relationship of effective mutually supportive collaboration. It is a practice too little in evidence. In my experience, it is even resisted by development agencies impatient to wait for the result of the process, and too concerned to lose control.

Bringing the development profession up to speed as process consultants would require a substantial investment in training. This would need to cover the art of evoking stories and translating them into systems maps, and, especially, the art of securing a mandated role and guarantors, champions, and client system ownership of the process and its outcome.

4. Supporting collectivities in cultural shift

Understanding values shift can critically inform the possibilities and limits to change and point to measures needed to realize what is possible. An understanding of current values and the new values required for the success of a programme reveals the values prerequisites that need to be attended to in programme design. Lived values imply skills that will need to be acquired for transformative shift. Failure to have invested in skills enhancement beyond the needed instrumental skills is likely to explain failures to

⁹ One consequence of this of this process is that it raises concerns among elected officials that they are not readily able to claim credit for their role as voice of the community. Ideally, I would have engaged them explicitly in the process and encouraged them to initiate such processes in the future.

accomplish the desired cultural shifts in many a development programme.¹⁰ Values analysis has proven insightful in dealing with organizational culture shift.¹¹

I have had the experience of consulting to a hospital that had a Phase II culture that was not working well. I saw my task as one of helping management to understand how and why it was necessary to shift to a Phase III culture and what that would mean. I encouraged management to hold a meeting of all hospital staff and doctors to explain that it heard the feedback that came from my engaging everyone in the hospital in expressing their experience of it, to identify the priority concerns that it would now address, and to set up groups to go further with the reflective process and return with recommendations that had the ownership of the hospital community. With management we developed and examined a systems map of the impact of critical actions and behaviours to derive the list of priority actions for change. I coached management in needed skills. With the CEO and senior management opening up to people from all departments and professional levels of hospital personnel, morale changed almost instantly. In contrast, typically, major consulting firms will, in such a situation, aim to advise management on the basis of how they see the need for the redesign of structure and process without seeking ownership by those affected and without understanding, even considering, what this means for change in management style and the values shift and skills development that this requires. They might also prescribe and deliver motivational programmes to change behaviours with, in my experience, more or less limited effect.¹²

5. Understanding the values development sequence

I undertook an evaluation of UNDP programmes for government decentralization in preparation for drafting guidelines for the development of such programmes. My task was to assess how sensitive they were to human rights concerns and to determine how such sensitivity would be manifest. What I found was that at every stage of the development of these programmes—from the identification of decentralization as a desirable programme, to its design, implementation and accountability—there were disparities between what sensitivity to human rights concerns should indicate and what had actually been done. I found a lack of such sensitivity at every stage of the programme. These deficiencies in practice suggest that those directing programme development and implementation did not themselves live the values that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights embodies in its articles. Without question, much development intervention would be found to be similarly lacking in some degree.

The example is pertinent. Human rights express values, so we can say that in the programmes evaluated there was a lack of sensitivity to developmental values. Human

¹⁰ Four skill categories are recognized: instrumental; interpersonal; imaginal; and systems skills.

¹¹ A notable case in my experience was an analysis of the implications for a proposed merger of corporations with significantly different cultures. The nature of the challenges being clear, it allowed consideration of the design of strategies to address them and appraise the feasibility of a successful merger. Many development projects present similar challenges of conflicting values.

I am currently engaged in a water development project in India in which explicit attention to the values expressed in project implementation is used to enhance project performance. Initial results suggest that it is producing the desired effect.

¹² Note that the challenge of transformative leadership—leadership for culture shift—makes different demands depending on the stage of values development it is to transcend.

rights, as written in the Universal Declaration, imply quite specific values (though not the full range of developmental values). Different articles of the Declaration reflect different levels of values development. Some rights are prerequisite to others. Understanding that rights are likely to be effectively adopted only incrementally and in sequence is important for the design of programmes to promote them. Thus, a right such as that of Article 27 (1), for example, (Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.) presumes the application, at least, of Article 3. (Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.) Also important is the understanding that values demand skills for their expression. Skills might have to be learned or reinforced. The understanding of this, and of the skills related to specific values, is significant to the design of programmes to advance human rights. The point can be generalized for any intended innovation that requires a shift in norms. Moreover, it is to be noted that, in spite of Koffi Annan's call to see the promotion of human rights as a prime development task (together with supporting countries to build capacity for non-dependence), the advance of human rights is not always seen as a development task.

THE BIGGER PICTURE: DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABILITY, AND SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

There is a bigger picture. Global warming not only challenges us to collaborative adaptation. It could become irreversible and it therefore challenges us to ensure the longer-term survival of the human race. Global warming changes the context of our efforts to support development. Now, development—values development—has become critical to ensuring sustainability. If we fail to reduce greenhouse gasses to a level that is sustainable, and do so before global warming becomes irreversible, not only will our future be abbreviated, it will likely be one of regression with conflict, not amenable to sociocultural development.

And sustainability is critical to development. Not least, the security challenges of global warming are likely to pose threats of regression to authoritarianism, competitiveness, self-protection, and xenophobia.

The allocation of our interest and energy needs to be guided by awareness of the context of global warming in which development practice unavoidably finds itself, and the demands of a global perspective that this thrusts upon us.

Arresting global warming calls for significant behavioural shifts. It requires governments at all levels, businesses of all sizes, and ourselves as individuals, acknowledging, and observing, new priorities. It means adopting new norms, new values. These new values will be values higher on the values development path than those currently the norm. *Development is the precondition of sustainability.* Understanding values shift will inform strategies for shifting behaviours.

We can say that, *for sustainability to occur, and thus for us to survive global warming, societal development is an absolute necessity.* In this context, development studies becomes not a sidelined and closed field, but instead the single most important discipline to research and to practice. Should we be supporting the call to shift values in service of sustainability?

We need to know: How can the values shift dynamic be invoked? How do our programmes and the way they are designed provide means to individual and societal development? How can the process by which they are identified, designed, implemented, evaluated and made accountable, express a progressive shift of norms? What are the resistances to and

leverages for change that require values understanding? These are questions that aid agencies, consultants, activists, and the development profession especially, must address if we are to achieve sustainability. We are only just beginning to discover 'development'—and it is not a moment too soon.

The values shifts required are minimally those that emerge from the transition from Stage Four to Stage Five on the values map—from managerial to facilitative and collaborative phases.

CONFRONTING CHOICES

I see that the power in the system driving global warming and related crises¹³—the actors most significantly required to shift—to be the large corporations and finance houses, governments and agencies at all levels, including, especially, at the international level. It is clear, too, that the key shifts need to be in the rich countries. Development is needed here as well as in poor countries.

This poses a challenge for the development profession. Yes, there is much to do by way of supporting countries with adaptation. And, yes, enhancing governance, community building, and strengthening capacities for resilience will be an important contribution. And caring for the vulnerable will be a growing challenge. It will be essential to continue with these efforts.

But there are even more fundamental concerns that also need to be tackled.

I offer some questions for discernment:

- How do we, as a professional body, allocate our efforts and our skills between concern for mitigation, adaptation, and our traditional concerns?
- Does getting to the heart of development mean a strategic, systemic, effort to address the power in the system?
- What of our energies should be addressed to global powers?

¹³ Note the distinction made by Derick Millar between a crisis and a climacteric—from which there is no returning to the previous state. (personal communication)

