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Development from below: an exploratory study of the concept and process of development from lay people’s point of view

Jihad Makhoul
University of Wollongong

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DEVELOPMENT FROM BELOW:
An exploratory study of the concept and process of development
from lay people’s point of view

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Jihad Makhoul, BS, MPH.

Graduate School of Public Health
1999
I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Jihad Makhoul
Abstract

This thesis introduces a new perspective on development in Lebanon, that of lay people in rural communities. Lay views have been missing from development literature and practice around the world. Development projects which emphasise economic development and infrastructure are often described by development professionals in terms of their achievements and tangible benefits. However, concerned researchers are dissatisfied with the outcomes of many development projects and their effects on people and their environments. The perspectives of the recipients of development projects is the topic of this research.

In Lebanon, funds for development projects during and after the recent war (1975-90) have stressed economic development and infrastructure. The governmental and non-governmental agencies carrying out these programs are driven by donor accountability and the need to apply for further funding. As a result, they have tended to overlook longer term social needs. A significant omission in official development reports are the views of project beneficiaries. It is this omission that this thesis seeks to remedy.

The study provides an ethnographic account of people's viewpoints on development in two typical rural villages in Lebanon. They are situated in Akkar which has received much development assistance over the past two decades. The ethnographic approach, similar to that used in anthropology, was used for its ability to uncover in-depth information using multi-methods of data collection. The thesis presents a detailed description of the layout and social organisation of the two villages. In many respects, these do not differ significantly from descriptions in the earlier literature which dates from the 19th century, although outside contacts, for employment, education and political activity are now more frequent.

Villagers were asked about their views of development, what they valued about their village and their experience of development projects. Their views were found to reflect their gender and position in the village hierarchy. The male leaders, who see themselves as initiators of development projects and use them to further their political ambitions, hold similar views to development professionals and use the same vocabulary. Other, less powerful men and the women hold different views, use different vocabulary and tend to talk more about the ill-effects of projects. The religious leaders espouse an
Islamic viewpoint which is similar in some ways to that of the women but their activities mirror those of the other male leaders.

No development project which has been undertaken in either village could be considered to have been successful. A detailed investigation of a water project in one of the villages shows why this is so. Lack of success has to do with factors internal to the village, as well as the project approach favoured by development agencies.

The findings indicate that there are gaps in development practice at both a state and development agency levels. Complex village social relationships, particularly internal and external power relationships, affect development projects and outcomes. These favour involvement of key male figures in development initiatives rather than all the community. Such issues point to the need for training in gender awareness and participatory approaches for the professionals as well as the need for equitable resource distribution at a country level. Although the research was limited to two villages in Akkar, the implications for practice and further research are nationwide.
Acknowledgements

My deepest gratitude goes to Dr. Lindsey Harrison, my supervisor and mentor, who has been a constant source of inspiration and intellectual stimulation for me during coursework and thesis write up. I have learnt immensely from her academic capabilities and meticulous editing.

My warmest thankfulness goes to my family: Mum, Dad and my two brothers for their prayers, encouragement and financial support. Also worthy of mention is my sister-in-law, Paula, who has always been there to help in transcribing, Arabic editing, and to listen.

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I am grateful to the many professionals in Lebanon who have taken time to speak with me and provide me with useful literature and for whom I hope this thesis will be of benefit. I thank all the residents of Ain Zeitoun and Dar el Lawz who have shared their thoughts and lives with me during my visits, put up with my endless queries and welcomed me in their homes.

Thank you, Marcella Carfield, Maumi Fisiiahi, Toufic Rizkallah, Mohammad Taleb, Najib and Patrick Khoury.

Thank you, God.
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List of Abbreviations

CDR  Council for Development and Reconstruction
CDS  Central Directorate of Statistics
DPT  Diphteria, Pertussis, Tetanus
EIA  Environmental Impact Assessment
GAD  Gender And Development
GDP  Gross Domestic Product
HDI  Human Development Index
IMR  Infant Mortality Rate
IRFED  Institut de Recherches et de Formations en vue du Developpement
MOH  Ministry of Health
MOSA  Ministry of Social Affairs
NGO  Non governmental organisation
OECD  Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRA  Participatory Rapid Appraisal
SCF  Save the Children Federation
TBA  Traditional birth attendant
UN  United Nations
UNDP  United Nations Development Program
UNFPA  United Nations Population Fund
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
WHO  World Health Organisation
WID  Women In Development
YMCA  Young Men's Christian Association
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abu</td>
<td>the father of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addawleh</td>
<td>the state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aili</td>
<td>extended family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ain</td>
<td>water spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al hamdillah</td>
<td>Praise God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aqdiyah</td>
<td>small provinces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baal</td>
<td>non irrigated crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bir</td>
<td>well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burghul</td>
<td>crushed wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day'a</td>
<td>colloquial Arabic term to mean village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dibs rimman</td>
<td>pomegranate molasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fellah</td>
<td>peasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitr</td>
<td>Muslim religious feast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furn</td>
<td>village bakery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghorb</td>
<td>strangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haj</td>
<td>pilgrimage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harat</td>
<td>neighbourhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illet maddiyeh</td>
<td>lack of financial resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>islah</td>
<td>reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kibar</td>
<td>the big, refers to powerful individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kishk</td>
<td>Lebanese food made of yoghurt and crushed wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lijni mahaliyyeh</td>
<td>local community committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahroumeh</td>
<td>deprived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makbas</td>
<td>olive press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min al dakhel</td>
<td>from within</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mit'admeh</td>
<td>advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mittawrah</td>
<td>developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moallem</td>
<td>foreman, tradesmaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modarabeh</td>
<td>competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mokhtar</td>
<td>village mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mouni</td>
<td>foods prepared in summer and stored for winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>msha</td>
<td>village land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nayib</td>
<td>member of parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nohood</td>
<td>uplifting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
qariyeh  formal Arabic term for village
sab bittankeh  manual construction labour
saha  village square
sahel  coastal plain
saj  hot metallic sphere for baking bread
shabab  young men
shari'a  Islamic law
sheikh  Muslim religious leader
sighar  the small, refers to powerless individuals
sobhiyyeh  morning visit
sor'a  stealing
succar abyad  white sugar
ta'addom  advancement
tanmiyeh  development induced by an agent
tanmiyeh mostadimeh  sustainable development
tatawwor  progress
tayyarat mouakisi  opposing currents
to'od  to sit
um  the mother of
Ummah  Islamic Community
wajih  aili leader
waseet  intermediary person
wasta  mediation
wilayat  provinces
wili  Muslim holy figure
wojaha  aili leaders
wosoul  access
yinammi  to develop
zaim  political leader
zu'ama  political leaders
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Map 2

- Unpaved road to fields
- Village boundaries
- Mosque
- Olive groves
- Almond groves
- Houses

Scale: 1/850
Map 4  Hand drawn map of Dar el Lawz
Map 5: Hand drawn map of Ain Zeitoun