WHY DEVELOPMENT-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT IS MORALLY OBJECTIONABLE: AN ETHICAL APPRAISAL OF THE MACDOM-ARDA CHISUMBANJE ETHANOL PROJECT IN CHIPINGE, SOUTHEASTERN ZIMBABWE

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ABSTRACT
Elitist socio-economic policies have remained largely responsible for community displacements in many African countries. Previously, colonial governments established land-intensive projects which became major disruptive phenomena for the affected communities in Africa. Experience has shown that displacement unsettles communities, upsets cultural or traditional practices, justice systems and communal livelihoods. In some instances, communal displacement represents low regard for human rights by state and non-state actors. Ironically, planners of displacements often adopt and deploy the rhetoric of development and modernism. In Zimbabwe, the persistent conclusion in displacement narratives is that land dispossessions pushed Africans into supporting the nationalist movements of the 1960s and the liberation struggle of the 1970s. However, post-independence state-sponsored projects have continued to haunt communities. This paper tackles the moral issues associated with development-induced displacements and resettlement. It provides the communal narratives emanating from the grand state-sponsored Macdom-ARDA Chisumbanje ethanol project, arguing that the project's establishment is morally objectionable.

Key words/ phrases: Development; Ethics; Development projects; Development-Induced Displacement.

Introduction

For many people and communities, development is closely linked to the idea of progress. It has been the mark of generational advancement from time immemorial. To this end, various societies the world over have been identified as developed, developing or underdeveloped. The rhetoric is that the path to a developed society has been through development projects that have transformed the socio-economic, political as well as cultural landscape of many a community. Paradoxically, planners of displacements and resettlement programmes often

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adopt and deploy the rhetoric of what David Crocker (2008) calls high modernism. The ideology of high modernism leads to an overriding belief in the authority and power of scientific knowledge to improve the human condition through the establishment of state-sanctioned technical and social engineering projects such as dams, the spatial reconfiguration of cities, the reorganization of forests and resettlement schemes. In essence high modernism implies a radical disjuncture with history and tradition. Its temporal focus is almost exclusively on a scientifically transformed and better society. In the context of colonial Zimbabwe`s multiple histories of race and power-laden spatial dislocations, land dispossessions for purposes of establishing development projects generated a broad corpus of literature. However, development projects often involve the introduction of direct control by a developer over land previously occupied by another group. Therefore, as Furtado (1971) argues, the way in which progress is quantified, whether through economic, social or ethical justifications, determines the way in which people conceptualize development. Ethical issues are similarly ambiguous, although this arises from the sheer diversity of moral justifications for development-induced displacements that take place in different parts of the world today. Consequently, the relationship between development and ethics is emotively complex. It is so inconsistent that it eludes simple definition. Nevertheless, since the first missionary endeavours of the colonial era, development ethics have, for better or worse, always been involved whenever a development project was established. Thus, the case of the Macdom-ARDA Chisumbanje ethanol project is just one of the many projects that have had far-reaching socio-economic, cultural and ethical issues raised concerning the plight and life of communities it affected. This paper explores the moral issues associated with development-induced displacements and resettlement in general. In particular, it provides the communal narratives emanating from this grand state-sponsored ethanol project, arguing, in the final analysis, that the project's establishment remains morally obnoxious.

Research Methodology

A combination of the historical and the phenomenological methods were employed since the study intended to argue that it is morally impermissible to displace people for any purposes, even for establishing development projects. In addition, a qualitative approach was used to enable the researcher to explore and understand the impact of development on the social,

religious and cultural meanings and practices of the affected people. Guided by various authors, the researcher managed to explore how developmental projects affect local people's ways of life. The researcher carried out unstructured interviews with local traditional chiefs whose jurisdiction was curtailed by the investors in the project. These chiefdoms cover the greater part of Chipinge district where the ethanol project is located. In addition, fifteen headmen, drawn from the affected areas, were interviewed. Six local government councillors, drawn from the political wards covering the affected areas in the respective chieftaincy, were also interviewed. The focus on chiefs and headmen was prejudiced by the idea that traditional leadership is the custodian of communities' religious, moral and cultural practices. Local government representatives (councillors) were included to bring in the side of the state or central government's participation in development-induced displacements of local communities. The information so gathered was analysed and blended with information from secondary sources to enlighten the focus of this paper.

Theoretical Framework

In the early 1980s, building upon earlier approaches that dealt primarily with the processes of voluntary resettlement, various African governments, as outlined by Glover, J. (1995) proposed a four-stage model of how people and socio-cultural systems should respond to displacement. The stages were labelled conscription, transition, potential development and handing over or integration. In the conscription phase, policy-makers and/or developers formulate development, displacement and resettlement plans, often without informing those to be displaced. During transition, people learn about their future displacement, which heightens their levels of stress. Potential development occurs after physical relocation has occurred smoothly. The displaced persons begin the process of rebuilding their economy, political and social networks. Handing over or integration refers to the entrustment of local production systems and community leadership and management to a second generation of residents that identifies with and feels at home in the new community. Once this stage has been achieved, resettlement and relocation is deemed a success.

However, these models focused on the different behavioural tendencies common to each of a series of stages through which the resettled persons passed. At first, the models were

formulated to explain the stages of voluntary settlement, and they were only later applied to some cases of involuntary resettlement, that is, those 'successful' cases that passed through all the four stages.

In Zimbabwe, following its independence in 1980 and throughout the 1990s, the mounting evidence of involuntary resettlement schemes that failed to pass through all four stages suggested that a new model was necessary to explain the consequences of involuntary displacement. In particular, it was recognized that a new theory was necessary to explain what was increasingly being seen as predictable impoverishment in forced relocation or resettlement schemes, just as was the case during the pre-independence epoch. As a result, Goulet (1998) suggested the Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model which arose in the 1990s in response to the need for a model that was less violent to the affected communities. In contrast to the earlier models, the IRR model does not attempt to identify different responses to displacement, but rather aims to identify the impoverishment risks intrinsic to forced resettlement and the processes necessary for reconstructing the livelihoods of the displaced communities. In particular, it stresses that, unless specifically addressed by targeted indigenous or home-grown policies, forced displacement can cause impoverishment among the displaced by bringing about landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, loss of access to common property resources, increased morbidity and mortality and community dislodgment. To these risks Hardman, M. and Midgely, J. (1981) added the following disadvantages: loss of access to public services, disruption of formal educational activities for children and the loss of civil and human rights. The IRR model also recognizes risks to the host population which, while not identical to those of the displaced, can also result in impoverishment. Not all of these processes necessarily occur in each case of forced resettlement and not all displaced households are necessarily affected in the same way by each process. Rather, the model notes that, when taken together, these processes capture the reasons behind many failed resettlement programmes.

The IRR model has been used as a framework for a number of studies. For example, Gunatilleke et al (1983) use the model to examine India's experience with involuntary

resettlements from 1947 to 97, examining each of the IRR risks in turn. In his study, Gasper (2004) employs the model to analyse resettlement operations in two Indian projects – the Upper Indravati Hydroelectric Project and the Orissa Water Resources Consolidation Project. Again, Quarles van Ufford and Giri (2003) look specifically at land-based resettlement strategies in African dam projects, arguing that such strategies must include not only land on which to resettle, but also common land, adequate productive farmland, full title deeds for land (rather than tenant arrangements), and resettler-directed, instead of top-down imposed development schemes and projects.

Development: A Brief Definition

Generally, 'development' is a term that can be used to describe the growth of humans throughout their lifespan, from conception to death. According to Hardman, M. and Midgely, J. (1981), the scientific study of human development seeks to understand and explain how and why people change throughout life and this includes all aspects of human growth, including physical, emotional, intellectual, social, perceptual, and personality development. Development for Adger (2009) does not just involve the biological and physical aspects of growth, but also its cognitive, ethical and social aspects. In this article I acknowledge that there is no unanimity over the meaning of 'development.' However, I argue that development should represent human growth in all aspects of life. 'Development' is considered to be the process in which human beings experience abundant life and have their liberties upheld. The authors of this article contend that, 'development' suggests that citizens are meeting their basic needs (food, clothing and shelter) as well as their higher needs (emotional, aesthetic and intellectual). Although indices of development remain contentious, this article argues that it is possible to identify the absence of development. Where there is no development, there is poverty, oppression and general discontent.

The idea of development is as controversial as it is relative. To develop is to grow. Growth, be it in stature, configuration or competence, therefore, becomes the measure of all forms development. Development is the outcome of the process of growth. It is as natural as much as it can be induced. It goes without saying then that development is closely linked to the concept, and it is the mark, of progress and an increase in value. This conception of

development implies that development is desirable to any person because it brings with it increase in both quantity and quality. Thus, development improves, or it is the process of improving the quality of life lived by those experiencing, and affected by, it. This is to say that development aims at the common good.

Ethics /Morality Defined

The word *ethics* refers both to a discipline- the study of values, traditions and actions and their justification- and to the subject matter of that discipline- the actual values and rules of conduct by which we live (Robert C. Solomon, 1993).Thus, on the one hand, ethics includes the whole gamut of acceptable social and personal practices ranging from the rules of conduct to the institutions that govern the kind of work and how we do it. In this case, ethics refers to the general science which enquires into the meaning and purpose of life and conduct. Esquith, S. and F. Gifford (2009) also observe that ethics represents a systematic attempt at considering the purposeful actions of mankind, to determine their rightness or wrongness, their tendency to good or evil. On the other hand, morality is a subset of ethics. It is more specific, particularly significant and transcends boundaries of any particular culture or situation. Thus, the distinction between ethics and morality (ethics as the whole of our sense of self and our place in society and morality as the core, universal and most sacrosanct rules in any society) is not always followed in general conversations and philosophical discourses. To that affect, this paper uses the words 'ethics' and 'morality' interchangeably.

Development-Induced Displacement: An Oxymoron

The implication of the preceding part is that the displacement of people by development projects is morally objectionable and that it should be prevented because it does the opposite of what development means and seeks to achieve. This paper argues that displacing people for development purposes is morally objectionable. We notice that the phrase *development-induced displacement* is, in fact, an oxymoron in that, on the one hand, it implies 'development' meaning progress or improvement of quality of life. But, on the other hand, there is 'displacement', implying destabilization, disorientation and upheaval of communities and ways of the people affected. So, how do we handle this complication? This question comes from the two diametrically opposed orientations imbedded in the oxymoron itself. The

first argues that economic advancement (development) has always meant that the landscape of production and distribution is changed and people are often obligated to move as a result. It also claims that people need to learn to adjust and, perhaps, that they should be helped to adjust and become accustomed to their new settings. It further claims that displacement has been ubiquitous in all forms of development, whether capitalist or socialist. In fact, Hamelink (1997) maintains that displacement reflects mobility and as such it is the opposite of immobility or the idea of being trapped in a particular place. It is a fact that mobility is desirable for it brings about progress while immobility is not because it does not. Again, the former indicates freedom; the latter, lack of freedom. In any case, the argument concludes, as long as development serves the public interest or the common good, then there are no ethical issues implicated.

It is important, however, to note that the above position represents a form of developmentalism that is morally naive in that it treats only the ends of development as involving moral judgments, excluding the means. Thus, it allows the treatment of persons as means to a desired end, contradicting Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative provisions which veto against the treatment of persons as means to any end.

The other orientation that would short-circuit an ethical analysis is the opposite of the first. It is no less one-dimensional morally. According to this perspective, the displacement of people is ethically unacceptable and so are any development projects and policies that lead to it. But, this line of argument ignores the justifications that can and have been offered for development-induced displacement. Simplistic morality, whether pro- or anti-development, is disagreeable. In the end, our position is that both the means of development and their justifications require ethical appraisal.

A Contextual Rendition of Development through Community Narratives

The researcher went on to interview various people to find out their conception of development. The first group to be approached was that of the traditional leadership. The following views came out from the chiefs, Chief Garahwa and Musikavanhu (interviewed between 12 January 2013 and 27 March 2013 who agreed with their respective headmen

Mahenye, Chisumbanje, Takwirira and Machona. They gave an up-to-the-point narrative which the author captured in their language:

Hatirambi budiriro munharaunda yedu. Budiriro chiro chakanaka yaamho ngekuti tinobetsereka maningi. Chokutanga, vana vedu vanoona mishando, vosiya kunzerereka vachiita zvisina shwiro. Chechipiri, tinoonawo zvekushandisa semapato, mvura yekumwa yakachena, makiriniki uye zvikora. Asi panotinesa ngepekuti budiriro yacho inounzwa pakati pedu tisingabhuyirwi ngezvayo. Semunomu, takangangoona muyungu uyu Macdom aunzwa ngeARDA, ozwi ndiye aakutora minda yeshe yatainge nayo kuti arime nzimbe dze ethanol. Pasina nguva, takaona paakuvakwa fekitori ye ethanol kuchitorwa vanhu vekuretu kuti vashande. Minda yeshe yatairima magwere esadza netonje rekutengesa yakatorwa. Atisisina pekurima kuti tizviraramise. Sakei teiti iyi budiriro yakatipa dambudziko uye atisi kudakara ngezvayo. Pamusoro peizvi, makuwa evasharukwa vedu aasisina unongwarira. Nendau dzetaitira zvechivanhu chedu dzave pamhene. (We are not against development. Development is a good thing for it helps us a lot. First, our children get jobs and stop loitering and being mischievous. Secondly, we get utilities such as roads, clean drinking water, clinics and schools. But where we are troubled is when development is brought in our midst without consultation, our knowledge and involvement. As in this area, we just saw a white man Macdom who was brought by ARDA to occupy all the land we had so that he grows sugar-cane for ethanol. In no time, a factory was built with labourers being hired from faraway places. All the land we used to grow maize for our subsistence and cotton for sale was taken away. Now we do not have land to cultivate maize for self-sustenance. That is why we are saying this development project brought problems and we are not happy with it. In addition, the graves of our ancestors have no one to look after them now. Our sacred shrines where we used to hold our traditional ceremonies have been exposed.)

It is clear from these views that local traditional leadership is very supportive of development projects in their respective areas. However, the leadership claims that they are not, usually, consulted prior to the establishment of the projects. It is this approach that has given rise to so much resistance to the establishment of development projects. The socio-ethical sources of this resistance are attached to the local people's concept of land ownership. Verstraelen (1998:104) [15] observes that:

> The land forms a close and enduring bond between the living and the dead: through their control of the fertility of the land they once cultivated, the spirits are believed to continue to care for their descendants and the descendants are forced to remember and honour their ancestors.

For many Africans, the land symbolises belonging, connectedness and continuity. In support of this conception of land use and importance, Bakare (1993:46) has this to say:

> Land (house) is a place of connection with mother earth, where one's roots are, where one's umbilical cord has been buried, where one's ancestors are deposited, a place of connection and orientation. To sum up, land for Zimbabweans consists of things that can be qualified and not quantified. It offers them identity, a livelihood and it is sacred.

Is Development A 'Necessary Evil'?

When development is conceived of as given above it becomes attractive and readily acceptable. Every community would clamour to go through some form of development for the improvement of the quality of life of its members. However, development is only possible, at least in the majority of cases, through the route of development projects. A development project is a scheme or plan to be undertaken in a community so that when the scheme is completed the local people's welfare is improved. A development project, therefore, aims to improve the local people's way of life. Nevertheless, most development projects often involve the introduction of direct control by a developer over land previously occupied by another group. For example, some development projects such as natural resource extraction, urban area expansion, industrial parks, and infrastructure constructions (e.g. highways, bridges, irrigation schemes and dams) all require large tracts of land. This means

that, in order to pave way for development, people have to be moved away from such land. On the other hand, when indigenous communities are alienated from their lands because of development, they are often left to scrape an existence on the margins of society. This is certainly not a sign of development. Many such projects result in human rights violations involving forced evictions, displacement and even loss of life when social unrest and conflict over natural resources control and expropriation erupt. This is certainly not what we conceived as development. Natural resource extraction projects such as farming are land and water-intensive and often directly affect the collective rights of indigenous peoples to their lands and territories. All too often we see conflict between corporations, indigenous peoples and the State over development projects which are initiated without proper consultation or the consent of the very people who are dispossessed of their land. What, then, is the purpose of 'development' when it results in destabilization of communities which are supposed to be developed? Or, is development 'a necessary evil'?

Development-Induced Displacements: Some Moral Convulsions
The initial moral import of displacement resides in its very definition. To displace people means to force them to leave their home, village, town, region or country. To the extent that coercion is morally objectionable, so is displacement, too. Moreover, displacing people usually involves harming them emotionally, socially and economically, even when some form of benefit is made. Displaced persons lose their land, their livelihoods, their social networks and the cultural and moral patterns contained in their day-to-day lives. The environment from which they have had accumulated experience and knowledge, to mention just the most basic loss, is also taken away. Thus, apart from the moral objection to coercion, there is the further objection to harming people in ways other than contravening their wishes and commitments. Harming others for any reason including development, is morally objectionable. To this effect, Quarles van Ufford and A.K. Giri (2003) observe that development projects have the tendency of making some people get the gains while others get the pains. In this regard, it is morally repulsive to see that development projects leave affected community people in pain. Most people interviewed for this article said that the ethanol-producing plant in Chisumbanje was a grand project but they were quick to point out that from the time of its inception many people's lives had not gone well. They also indicated

that the various kinds of compensation (including assistance with becoming re-established in a suitable alternative location) could not offset the harm that the establishment of the project had brought.

If development-induced displacement has been an ethical humiliation to governments and funders of development projects, one reason could be that the effects of development-induced displacement can be so clearly distressing, contrary to the projected aims of development projects. Gunatilleke, et al, (1983) have clearly captured the paradox thus: whereas development projects are intended to raise the people's well-being and reduce poverty, their effect on displaced populations is often impoverishment, disorientation and disillusion.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As this paper has argued, the ethics of development represents the quest for a new paradigm for sustainable development in African countries. It has emerged the orthodox claims of uplifting community welfare no longer works. Indeed proper consultation processes must be done with indigenous peoples at all stages of the development and natural resource extraction cycle. The local people are entitled to full disclosure of environmental, social and human right impact assessments of the development project in their area in a language they understand. The central government, through the relevant ministry, should also provide financial and technical support to enable indigenous people to consult with corporations bringing development projects in their area. When indigenous peoples consent to such projects, they should have a right to a fair share of benefits from activities on their lands. And where projects proceed without consent, as in the case in this article, mechanisms for restoration of lost advantages should be provided and these should be fair and meaningful in order to sustain the lives of the affected persons. National and international institutions financing development projects must ensure that their operational policies and guidelines are consistent with indigenous and international human rights standards and principles.

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