ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: FORUM THEATRE AS THEATRE FOR
                           DEVELOPMENT IN EAST AFRICA

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Theatre for development (TfD) includes a variety of performance practices that aim to communicate or foster dialogue in a development context. Forum Theatre, developed by Brazilian Director Augusto Boal as part of his Theatre of the Oppressed movement has become one of the most widely used forms in TfD. This dissertation looks at the use of Forum Theatre specifically in public health-focused programs funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Uganda and Kenya.

The appeal of Forum Theatre for addressing development issues stems from its participatory nature, particularly as it aligns with current trends towards community involvement in development. However, power imbalances inherent in foreign-funded projects, public health communication theories modeled after advertising, and the realities of life- and livelihood-threatening conditions on the ground all work against the liberatory potential of the form. The focus of Forum Theatre is on identifying and combatting oppression; in developing communities,

what oppressions can theatre projects initiated from the top down by USAID actually address in practice?

This study is a multi-sited exploration of the organizations and individuals involved in the funding, planning, and executing of two forum theatre projects promoting global public health goals. Through interviews of stakeholders and organization publications including training manuals and project reports, I examine how the organizations involved implement, evaluate, and justify the effectiveness of the use of theatre in their work.

Despite the popularity of theatre for development in Sub-Saharan Africa, many development professionals, particularly in the US, have limited knowledge of how to use theatre in their programs. This study has the potential to improve the understanding of the use of Forum Theatre for both development professionals and theatre artists, allowing for more effective application. It will also place theatre for development in its context in the complicated web of the development industry, illuminating how TfD projects are planned and funded for an audience of theatre scholars and practitioners.

FORUM THEATRE AS THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN EAST AFRICA

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
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Dedication

To Cora and August: Thank you for always being cheerful, tenacious, and good sleepers.

And to Lee, who champions my dreams as if they were his own.

Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations

APHIA	AIDS, Population, and Health Integrated Assistance
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EDEAN	Emorikinos Daadang Etogogogitoth Alatanakithi Ngidwe (Let's Come Together to Promote Child Spacing)
FACT	Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation
FA	Fertility Awareness
FAM	Fertility Awareness-based Family Planning Methods
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IRH	Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PATH	Project for Appropriate Technology in Health
PD	Participatory Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

TfD	Theatre for Development
ToO	Theatre of the Oppressed
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1: Introduction

Theatre is a form of knowledge; it should and can also be a means of transforming society. Theatre can help us build our future, rather than just waiting for it. – Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-actors*, 1992

IRH has developed a summary of research that will be conducted during the proof of concept testing phase. The objectives of the research are to 1) describe the delivery and scalability of the EDEAN community theatre intervention at the community level; 2) assess whether peer group members, audience participants and community members learn and apply accurate fertility awareness information to their lives; and 3) assess whether the EDEAN community theatre intervention can lead to an increase in FP use in participating communities. A research protocol is being developed and will be submitted to USAID, the Georgetown University IRB, and a Ugandan ethics committee in April 2016. – Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation (FACT) Project Semiannual Technical Report, March 2016

Theatre and Development

Theatre and development often don't communicate well on paper. The language of theatre for social change is abstract and aspirational, visualizing a world of possibilities for subverting structures of power through prefigurative theatre. International development, in contrast, is an industry with endless jargon and acronyms, focused on results and returns-on-investment. It uses more concrete language, yet is nearly indecipherable without additional knowledge of the quirks and terminology of the field. Development draws from the language of business and policy, privileging innovation, efficiency, and reproducibility. The way in which we talk about these things is not only a question of communication, but reflects the character of the fields themselves. Development is driven largely by quantitative

results. Theatre for social change, particularly Theatre of the Oppressed, emphasizes process, and values qualitative changes for individuals and communities.

Yet despite the challenge of translating between the humanistic prose of theatre for social change and dense "policy-speak," over the last few decades theatre has become a widely used tool for international development in many areas of the world. Theatre for development includes a variety of performance methods and practices that aim to communicate or foster dialogue in a development context. While international development began as the United States and other Western nations shifted the nature of their involvement with less-developed countries to provide dedicated economic aid, it has since expanded to include not only economic change, but also issues including conflict and human rights, education, public health, and preservation of cultural heritage. Theatre for development projects may deal with any of these topics as a tool for dissemination of information or mobilizing communities.

In this project, I look specifically at Forum Theatre, the keystone technique of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed. Theatre of the Oppressed is a set of theatrical games and performance forms that aim to engage and empower people within a society. Forum Theatre originated as a form of political theatre in Latin America and has since been adapted as a development and educational tool all over the world, including widespread use in Africa. I investigate the efficacy of forum theatre as a tool for development communication as well as the ways in which theatre engages dialogue around issues of international development, specifically in the Anglophone East African countries of Uganda and Kenya. This project will be a

multi-sited inquiry into the use of theatre for development utilizing ethnographic and archival methods.

Forum Theatre is an interactive method originally conceived as a way for citizens to enact change on stage as a kind of rehearsal for enacting change in real life. In a development context, Forum Theatre and other Theatre of the Oppressed methods are used to give community members the opportunity to engage in dialogue and consider potential action towards achieving change. While issues such as access to education, sanitation, or public health may seem less political than the overt oppression tackled by Boal's work in Brazil, there is still a political dimension to these programs, and the interests and support of multiple government entities and/or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) may be represented even in a single program. At its best, theatre for development can inspire dialogue and forge community, but it is also capable of didactic, one-sided communication that can reinforce existing systems of power. Undoubtedly, there are theatre for development projects that fall at all points along that spectrum, and even participatory methods can potentially hide more direct messages under the guise of open discussion.

Liberation and Material Needs

My interest in theatre for development began with a (perhaps naive) desire to see how theatre was being used to improve lives in the developing world. However, the contradiction inherent in the use of a "radical" method in service of large-scale international development projects funded by the United States government quickly became apparent, and soon became the most interesting part of the picture. Hinted at by the linguistic differences described above, the critical inconsistency between the

aims of development and Theatre of the Oppressed is that of who holds power. Theatre of the Oppressed is intended to place control in the hands of the less powerful. While the success of this in practice may be debatable, the intention is clear. Simply put, Theatre of the Oppressed is meant to be about liberation; development is focused on meeting material needs, which often ultimately reinforces existing power structures both of government over its people, and internationally between donor countries and developing nations.

At first glance, it would seem that improving infrastructure, providing economic opportunity, improving health outcomes, or any of the other goals of development are well intentioned and could only benefit the communities they serve. However, development continues the pattern of colonial patronization and dependence, and in some cases serves an overt political purpose for the donor country.[1] Theatre of the Oppressed, and its basis in Freirian critical pedagogy, are indeed concerned with the physical, social, and economic well being of the oppressed. But, its first priority is to empower people, thereby enabling them to meet their own needs (or demand that they be met). International development, in contrast, is a modern offspring of the West's hierarchical relationship with the Global South, one predicated by colonialism, charity, and evangelism. Donor countries or organizations transfer money, resources, and "knowledge" to less-developed regions. National and local governments in developing areas facilitate this flow, and reinforce their own relative power in the process. International development endures continuing

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[1] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."

criticism as neoliberal, neocolonial, and imperialist (not to mention ineffective and self-perpetuating).

To illustrate how theatre's capacity to empower can be commandeered by the powerful, in one Forum Theatre for development performance I observed in an impoverished area of Kampala, Uganda, the local city councilor took over the discussion and started interacting with the characters as himself, a government official. The play was about problems with waste removal and sanitation, and through community research the theatre group had found that the garbage collectors contracted to collect trash from the area had been asking residents for additional money. Most of the residents refused to pay, and therefore trash was piling up in drainage ditches and roadways. The play began with Mama Naj, a restaurant owner who was failing to keep her establishment clean. The city councilor entered the drama and gave an extended speech, threatening the character of Mama Naj with closing down her restaurant. While the actors had been focusing on the obstacles Mama Naj faced to proper disposal of garbage, including government corruption, the city councilor instantly turned her into a villain and either missed the entire point of the narrative, or worse, actively used his opportunity to speak to turn the other characters and the community members they represent against her.

In an instant, the boundaries between the experimental social space of the play and the real public space of the city were blurred, and the empowerment of the citizens to test potential solutions was hijacked by the intervention of a government representative. It illustrated clearly both the power of interactive theatre and its susceptibility to becoming a tool of the powerful. This vulnerability factors into the

use of theatre for development on a larger scale, as projects funded and organized by international organizations proliferate. There are movements both within and outside the development world to advocate for greater empowerment and local control, including the incorporation of participatory theatre; however, these still exist within the overall system of the West using their greater resources to act upon the South. The question is, as one tool in use by U.S.-funded development projects, could Forum Theatre be part of the solution from within? Or, is it ultimately being coopted as another way to reinforce the status quo? Is forum theatre still functioning in a similar way to its original (political) intention in this context, and if not, how has it been adapted to the purpose of development engagement and communication? How do practitioners and organizations that use Boal-influenced theatre for development goals balance the unequal power relationships inherent in international development with the mandate of Theatre of the Oppressed to disrupt these structures.

Figure 1.1. A volunteer with the Shaking up the World Project looks over the pile of trash gathered from an intersection in Kawempe District, Kampala, Uganda. Photo by author.

Figure 1.2. A city councilman enters the play as a "spectactor" and lectures the character of Mama Naj as audience members look on. Photo by author.

The tension between these aims is visible more in the planning of projects than in their eventual performance. While development workers at U.S.-based NGOs worry about the messages being transmitted and about actors "getting it right," in the end the nature of performance, particularly that which is devised or improvisational, means that control is ultimately in the hands of the performers. There is potential space for subversion and resistance, but also for propaganda and didactic communication disguised as dialogue. The question here then is, is Theatre of the Oppressed changing development through community participation and dialogue, as is the hope of its proponents? Or, is the global development machine appropriating Theatre of the Oppressed, rendering it harmless to the status quo of power in the developing world? As Kidd and Byram put it, theatre for development has the "capacity for both - authentic popular expression and raising critical class

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consciousness, on one hand, and - disseminating dominant class ideas and inducing acceptance of the status quo, on the other."[2]

The purpose of international development hinges on the transfer of resources from richer nations to poorer. But as the system operates currently, with the contribution of funds comes varying degrees of control of the structure, strategy, and goals of development programs. The participatory development movement, which arose in the 1970's (discussed in detail in chapter 2) was viewed as a potential counter to this top-down control, and it was this movement that opened the door for Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre as communication and engagement methods. Forum Theatre aligns with the movement towards grassroots involvement in development initiatives over the past few decades.[3] However, despite the widespread adoption of participatory development methods, now considered a required component of any project, the actual effect has been minimal particularly in programs that are funded and designed by Western organizations.

Specific Focus and Boundaries

This study will trace two of these projects from their funding source at USAID to their performances in Uganda and Kenya, providing a transnational picture of the flow of resources, ideas, and manpower as it relates specifically to theatre for development. These programs represent contemporary theatre for development toward public health goals in English-speaking East Africa, specifically that which overtly claims or demonstrates influence from Theatre of the Oppressed. While

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[2] Kidd and Byram, "Demystifying Pseudo-Freirian Development: The Case of Laedza Batanani," 91.

[3] Cornwall, *Beneficiary, Consumer, Citizen: Perspectives on Participation for Poverty Reduction*, 17.

theatre for development is used throughout the developing world, I am choosing my particular geographic focus because of the unique development challenges in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the ways in which Theatre of the Oppressed resonates with traditional African performance.

It is worth noting that while my study focuses on projects funded and instigated by the government of a richer nation, in this case the United States, there are many other ways in which development is planned and funded. Private foundations and corporations also fund projects through non-governmental organizations, with varying degrees of control over the planning. For-profit development companies (for example, Chemonics International) bid on government contracts and grants to execute development projects. Governments of developing nations and civil society organizations within countries also engage in and promote development. The priorities of a project might be very different if funds and oversight are coming from within the nation rather than from outside interests. Overwhelmingly, however, the industry of development is dominated by Western and international donors transferring money and expertise to developing nations, and my choice to focus on USAID projects allows me to take a specific look at the role of the U.S. in funding and facilitating theatre for development.

I have chosen to limit my case studies to public health programs, not only to allow for more relevant comparison but also because I believe the issues I identify in the use of Forum Theatre for development are particularly apparent in a health context. The juxtaposition between the supposedly objective, scientific, quantitative-focused worldview of public health and the attention to individual and community

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desires and self-determination of Theatre of the Oppressed is both problematic and fruitful, as it has resulted in innovations of the form (as in the case of Magnet Theatre, see chapter 4).

It is not my aim to compile a comprehensive history of the theatre for development movement, or to conduct an in-depth ethnographic study of one project. Nor do I intend to devise concrete recommendations for theatre for development, either for aid organizations or practitioners, although I believe this study could be very useful in developing or revising such best practices. I anticipate that this study may be useful to both development professionals and theatre artists and scholars, particularly through my approach which emphasizes connecting layers of the development process that tend to appear somewhat disconnected. The development establishment often ignores the theoretical aspects of global inequality, while the bureaucratic reality is rarely treated thoroughly by scholars of the postcolonial world. Likewise, the theatre professionals or volunteers who work on theatre for development projects are often brought in toward the end of a project and given only a cursory briefing on the background of the issues to be addressed and the desired outcomes. This project examines the possibilities for greater avenues of communication and shared language between development professionals and theatre artists when engaging in theatre for development.

Development in Uganda and Kenya

Both Uganda and Kenya were under British control during the colonial period, Kenya as a protectorate until 1920 and then a colony, and Uganda as a British

protectorate from 1894 until independence in 1962.[4] Economist Miatta Fahnbulleh attributes the progression and difficulties of development in Kenya to two "colonial legacies." First, "colonial underdevelopment," in which colonial governments undermined existing social structures and disrupted the local economy, while implementing only minimal infrastructure improvements to support their international trade and settlement goals. This essentially stopped any ongoing indigenous economic development while failing to replace it with any other form of progress or improvement.

Second and somewhat related is what Fahnbulleh calls the "policy inheritance" of colonial states. Colonial governments instituted "State intervention in the productive sectors and administrative controls of the market." During decolonization, the new Kenyan government maintained many policies from colonial rule. Fahnbulleh explains, "This period not only established a policy of state intervention to facilitate industrialisation, it also created a policy framework for industrial development that would survive into Independence."[5] Uganda, as a protectorate, experienced less direct disruption through displacement by British settlers and the accompanying (unequally deployed) infrastructure developments, but overall was subject to the same underdevelopment and policy holdovers.

Put more broadly by Moses Onyango, "the argument that the British colonialist came to this land and drew boundaries, introduced political and economic

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[4] As a colony, Kenya experienced more direct control from Britain, as well as more organized and significant migration of British colonists than Uganda did as a protectorate.

[5] Fahnbulleh, "In Search of Economic Development in Kenya: Colonial Legacies & Post-Independence Realities," 35–36.

systems and created a state called Kenya that was formless is not true. They instead argue that pre-colonial African communities had their own way of dealing with crime, deviance, conflict and so on. They, in reality, argue that the coming of modernity forced Africans to be apathetic about their abilities, knowledge and skills. In the process of modernizing Africa, the Africans lost their identity and development path."[6]

Like most post-colonial states, Westphalian boundaries in Uganda and Kenya were drawn arbitrarily with little to no regard for existing social, cultural and linguistic groups. This has been a source of political and cultural tensions as well as logistical issues such as common language. In the realm of development, these issues must be considered when designing and scaling innovations, as different regions in the target country will have different problems as well as livelihoods, values, and languages. In theatre for development the problem of language is particularly relevant if companies from one area are producing a play to be performed for audiences in another region, as Rafiki theatre does often (see Chapter 5). Kenya is largely Swahili-speaking, and both Swahili and English are official languages and today one or both are spoken by most people. In Uganda, Swahili and English are also official languages, but local languages are used much more frequently and in Kampala most people speak the local language of Luganda.

Early development scholars proposed the "modernization theory," which posits that in order to become "developed," less-developed countries must follow the same path that lead to the modernization of more-developed countries. This theory

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[6] Onyango, "Postcolonial Politics in Kenya," 193.

suggests that there are universal and "natural" stages of societal development, and less-developed nations are simply not as far along the "path" of development. For example, the modernization theory would indicate that a developing country would need to undergo an industrialization phase similar to that experienced in the west in order to achieve economic development. This early theory is influenced by the colonial view of Africa and other colonial societies as backward or primitive, and has contributed to a continued sense that development is ultimately working toward reforming society and economics in developing nations into versions of those in the West.[7]

In Uganda and Kenya, development has become a buzzword in all areas of policy, not just social and economic, and the arts and performance are a highly visible location in which the identity of a nation is both formed and conveyed. In Uganda, cultural policy, including the mandates of the National Theatre, are set by the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social *Development*, and the National Theatre's vision statement calls for "A vibrant institution guided by unity in diversity, integrity and *relevance to national development*, nourishing, celebrating and promoting art and culture." In this sense, it is easy to see how "development" has expanded to include the ways in which these nations are establishing their national identity post-independence, socially and culturally as well through establishing infrastructure and economic growth. As a term, as a process, and as a goal, "development" has come to encompass a whole paradigm of African life, and it has come to be a crucial part of national identity.

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[7] Onyango, 183.

Figure 1.3. The Ugandan National Theatre. Photo by author.

Figure 1.4. A sign outside the National Theatre in Kampala advertises an impromptu Theatre for Development (TfD) Workshop. Photo by author.

Figure 1.5. Participants await the start of a Theatre for Development Workshop outside the National Theatre in Kampala, Uganda. Photo by author.

In his book *Hybrid Cultures,* Nestor Garcia Canclini connects hybridity of postcolonial cultures with the idea of "entering modernity." Canclini urges us to look at the way blending occurs in cultures in new ways, and his specific focus on Latin America demonstrates that hybridity is not limited to blending of cultural and religious traditions, but also includes the complex mixing of the traditional and the modern.[8] This example also works well when looking at post-colonial Africa, particularly in the ways outside development interests strive to assist (or push, depending on your perspective) African nations into a particular vision of modernity. In Uganda in particular, development seems to be the force around which everything revolves, and as a concept has expanded to include many ways of advancing progress

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[8] Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Exiting Modernity*, 153.

or "modernizing" nations, both by internal government agencies and grassroots nongovernmental organizations, and external actors such as the UN and international NGOs.

Uganda is in many ways exemplary as a development subject. Like many Sub-Saharan African nations, Uganda is classified as a Least Developed Country and receives a large amount of aid from governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere in Europe, as well as NGOs.[9] Uganda has dealt with, and is still dealing with, a wide range of development issues, including one of the highest AIDS rates in the world, conflict and human rights abuses (particularly in the Northern region), and extreme poverty, providing a wide range of "test cases" in order to look at the effectiveness of forum theatre across a wide range of issues. However, Uganda has also set ambitious development goals for itself and made great progress in certain areas including slowing the spread of AIDS and relieving poverty.[10] In addition, though there are areas of conflict and instability in the country, the capital city of Kampala and surrounding areas are quite safe, which has led to a wide range of development programs (including theatre for development) conducted by NGOs with participants from both the local population and foreign employees and volunteers, leading to a wide range of intercultural exchange through such programs.

Kenya today is in some ways further along the perceived "path" to development as compared to Uganda. It is the largest economy in East Africa, and USAID highlights the nation as a leader in information and communication

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[9] UN Office of the High Representative For The Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, "About LDCs."
[10] Kavuma, "Uganda and the Development Goals."

technology, transportation, and mobile money systems.[11] The country has reached a point of relative political stability including peaceful elections. It faces many of the same problems as Uganda, however, including high rates of HIV/AIDS, problems in maternal and child health, the spread of malaria, and poverty and income inequality. The United States' foreign aid strategy in Kenya also emphasizes working with Kenya to combat the threat of violent conflict and extremism from neighboring Somalia.[12]

International development is an academic and professional field, and the state of the field is reflected in its professional education. A graduate degree in International Development will include studies in economics, political science, ethics, and international security, and qualify a graduate to work for think tanks, NGOs, and multilateral organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, or the International Monetary Fund. As an example, the International Development program at the University of Maryland College Park says of their program, "Our courses seek to understand and confront severe deprivations such as economic stagnation, poverty, unhappiness, food insecurity, political repression, ethnic/religious conflict, population displacement, and HIV/AIDS. Students acquire the tools and skills required to measure accurately the effects of interventions on development outcomes, as well as to navigate the often acrimonious debates about the effects of globalization."[13]

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[11] UN Office of the High Representative For The Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, "About LDCs."
[12] USAID, "USAID Kenya Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2014-2018."
[13] University of Maryland School of Public Policy, "International Development Policy."

Development, then, is about *intervention*. Whether it is by the Ugandan or Kenyan government, small domestic NGOs, governments of other nations, international NGOs, or large multilateral institutions (or quite often some combination of these), development is a process of redistributing capital and/or (less often) manpower to make some sort of economic or social change. In this definition, we must next ask the question: "who is developing whom?" The subject "who" varies, and can be internal or external, large or small, governmental or independent and includes both those who provide capital and oversight and those who organize and implement the actual work "on the ground." The object, "whom" may be a small group, a community, or a whole country. But regardless of their objective circumstances, by virtue of being the object of development intervention, they are automatically "in need," "lacking," and worst of all, victims.[14]

Thinking and Writing about Development and Theatre

To return to the problem of language, one of the most problematic aspects is how we talk about development, the developing world, and the people and communities affected. To start, what is development, and how should we conceive of it? Development can undoubtedly be seen as a global industry. In his book *How the Aid Industry Works,* development practitioner and scholar Arjan de Haan figures the total industry at approximately 160 billion dollars a year (with aid to Africa making up one-third of that amount).[15] Universities offer professional master's degrees in International Development, preparing students to work for entities such as the World

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[14] Wickstrom, *Performance in the Blockades of Neoliberalism: Thinking the Political Anew*, 107.

[15] de Haan, *How the Aid Industry Works: An Introduction to International Development*, 21.

Bank, the International Monetary Fund, USAID, and countless non-profit and for-profit development organizations. According to Graham Hancock in *Lords of Poverty,* development is

> a fantastically complex, diversified and devolved industry ... financed largely by the official aid of rich countries, mandated to promote 'development' in the poor ones, it is an industry that employs thousands of people around the world to fulfill a broad range of economic and humanitarian objectives. The Wall Street Journal once referred to it as 'the largest bureaucracy in history devoted to international good deeds'. I prefer to think of it as 'Development Incorporated.'[16]

For some, international development feels like a movement or even a calling. Certainly there are many who start out in development with a deep sense of obligation to make the world better. The origin stories of many NGOs involve a group of volunteers taking up a cause because they believe in it, rather than as a part of an industry. For organizations that fundraise from individuals, whether large-scale donors or crowd-funded by many people giving small amounts, expressing the NGOs mission as a quest to make a difference in the world is essential to getting people to donate.

Despite these positive intentions, development continues to be an imperialist political force. USAID is clear about its role in international policy, advancing national interests through humanitarian aid.[17] And the ways in which development reinforces neocolonial and neoliberal power are well documented and critiqued.[18] James Ferguson calls development a "machine," and uses the framework of Foucault's bio-power to explain the "development apparatus" in the same terms as the

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[16] Hancock, quoted in Powell and Seddon, "NGOs & the Development Industry."
[17] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."
[18] Escobar, *Encountering Development*; Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*.

prison, the clinic, and the asylum. While perhaps originally designed for another purpose, in this case improving economic and living conditions in the developing world, the unintended "side effects" have become the main "instrumental effects," reinforcing the status quo of global economic and political power.

How shall we refer to countries and communities that are the "targets" of development, and those that are doing the "developing"? The term "third world," originally referring to states that were economically aligned with neither the United States nor the Soviet Union during the Cold War, is somewhat outdated. Separating between West (the US and Western Europe) and East (everyone else) is not accurate geographically. For the developing world, the "South" or "Global South" is a newer solution, though not entirely accurate; many developing nations are in the Northern Hemisphere, and there are exceptions such as Australia in the South. Arturo Escobar notes that these terms help shape and maintain "spatial power" and that "The social production of space implicit in these terms is bound with the production of differences, subjectivities, and social orders."· [3] Newer terms used in the development industry intended to be more precise include the United Nations Classification of "Least Developed Countries," and the OECD's version "net recipient countries" (those that receive more money in aid than they give, as opposed to "net donor countries" that give more than they receive). These identifiers highlight the economic differences and the transnational flow of resources from rich to poor countries.

Most problematic to me in the context of an academic study of development and global public health is the language used to refer to those who are the object of development: the "target" communities and populations, the quantification of people,

and the quality judgment of behaviors. Public health programs in particular refers to "target populations" to specify the particular geographic and demographic group the project is meant to help, for example certain interventions in the FACT program "target" young married couples. The humanity of the people affected by such programs becomes erased as they are distilled into statistics for program evaluations and reports. Outcomes in public health are viewed in large-scale statistical terms, meaning that the individuals affected become just one of many successes or failures counted in the overall evaluation. The "medical gaze" as described by Michel Foucault in *The Birth of the Clinic* dehumanizes the "targets" of the programs, and regards health behavior and outcomes as "good" or "bad" with little to no regard for cultural context. While the goal of helping people achieve better health is admirable, in the process people become "targets" and statistics, either complying with the aims of the program or resisting the desired behavior change. Programs that are designed to educate people in order to change their health behaviors therefore label behaviors as such even though there are other factors that impact individual behavior choices.

In the publications of USAID and large NGOs, actions and accomplishments (and even authorship) are attributed to organizations, not individuals. This is not unusual for government agencies, and lack of personal attribution makes it hard to place blame or responsibility. Just as members of the communities affected are depersonalized, so are those making the decisions that affect them. It is difficult to know how to react or counter negative aspects when one cannot identify the source. I have attempted as much as possible in this work to counter this tendency, attributing

actions to individuals rather than agencies and acknowledging the human aspect of both "developer" and "developee."

Reading any publication by a development organization, one quickly notices the abundant use of acronyms. The obvious benefit of using acronyms is succinctness and efficiency when addressing reports to those already versed in the language and practices of development. The use of acronyms and jargon also has the (intended or unintended) effect of portraying the organizations and the field as a whole as specialized, insulated, and inaccessible to non-professionals. This was a challenge for me as a theatre scholar trying to familiarize myself with the language and vocabulary of development, and often the only way to decode the material was to ask someone familiar with the industry.

Some acronyms have been adopted and used across organizations (such as BCC for Behavior Change Communication, see chapter 4), while others are adopted by an organization for some element of their own work and never make their way into the larger development vocabulary (FAM for fertility awareness methods, see chapter 3). In the list of abbreviations for this dissertation, I have included the relevant acronyms for this work that may be included in quotations, even if I am not using them regularly in my own text.

The tendency to use acronyms has made its way into theatre for development, perhaps in an attempt to imbue theatre-based methods with the same appearance of standardization.[19] In addition to abbreviation, the decision to use a particular term and whether to capitalize it is relevant to many of the overlapping categories in this

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[19] This tendency seems to be slightly more common from UK-based scholars, and follows the pattern of other applied theatre categories like TIE (Theatre in Education).

dissertation. Theatre for development is often abbreviated as "TfD," and the majority of theatre scholars and development practitioners I have encountered capitalize it whether or not it is abbreviated. While the abbreviation "TfD" is useful for ease of reading, I strongly disagree with the practice of capitalizing the term "theatre for development." Capitalization here implies standardization and proprietary ownership. Theatre for development is a term that means exactly what it says: theatre in service of development. While development is a nebulous concept, it has meaning and can be pursued by any stakeholder in the area to be developed. The implication that "Theatre for Development" is a standardized practice that requires specific knowledge reinforces the conceptions that both theatre and development are only valid when executed by professionals. In the case of international development, this flies in the face of the ideals of participatory and grassroots development that development organizations have claimed to embrace and promote since the 1970's.

Also important for this study are the terms Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed. For both of these, I have opted to capitalize the terms as they are attributed to one person, Augusto Boal, and codified in his published writings. Theatre of the Oppressed refers to a whole collection of exercises and performance techniques developed by Boal, as well as the philosophy on which he based his theatre practice. Forum Theatre is one method from Theatre of the Oppressed, considered by some to be the keystone or culmination of Boal's philosophy. It puts into practice the theory that in order to facilitate social change theatre must not present answers or even questions to an audience, but provide an opportunity for the audience to enact the answers themselves. While both programs I look at in this

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dissertation use Forum Theatre and indeed that was a requisite for my study, my analysis also looks at the ways in which they use other elements of Theatre of the Oppressed including Boal's underlying philosophy. I use the term Forum Theatre when I am talking specifically about the structured participatory performance, and Theatre of the Oppressed when I am referring to other techniques as well or to the theory of Theatre of the Oppressed. While I have capitalized both, I have chosen not to abbreviate (though when present in quotations I have left the abbreviations as used by the author).

Finally, the terms applied theatre, theatre for social change, and community performance appear in this work periodically as overlapping or related fields to theatre for development. I examine the literature related to these terms below. As an aid in visualizing these fields and how they relate, I have provided a figure illustrating the "umbrella" of applied theatre. Theatre for social change is often used in place of applied theatre, but has a slightly different meaning. While applied theatre refers to theatre in non-traditional settings meant to encourage some political, social, or individual benefit, theatre for social change might also include theatre in traditional settings with an overt political or social agenda. Community performance is closely related to theatre for development, and the closer a particular theatre for development program or performance is to being community led and participatory, the more it could also be defined as community performance.[20] From a U. S. perspective, the location of any applied theatre or theatre for social change performance in the developing world could be construed as theatre for development, in part because the

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[20] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 183.

definition of development has expanded to include the pursuit of nearly any social good in the Global South.

Literature and Concepts from the Field

This study is grounded in performance studies, not only in its treatment of discrete theatrical events but also in the analysis of how the various organizations and stakeholders perform through their development efforts. On the donor side, nations and NGOs perform power and generosity through their assistance. Recipient countries perform progress and national identity through national development policy, international cooperation, and general veneration of development. Individual citizens of developing countries perform their commitment to development and national pride through volunteer work, wearing or displaying development messages, and of course, through performative development projects including theatre. The following sources have influenced the theoretical lens of my project.

Richard Schechner's study of ritual and theatre, particularly the efficacy-entertainment braid, is important for my analysis of desired and actual results in theatre for development (Ch. 6). Schechner lays out a continuum between performances that transform audiences or participants, such as coming of age rituals, and those that transport audiences through entertainment but return them unchanged at the end. Applied theatre, including theatre for development, by definition aspires toward the transformative, though different performances can be located at different points along the continuum. The mapping over of the ritual end of the spectrum with theatre for public health and behavior change is both useful and imperfect, and in

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Chapter 6 I grapple with the ways in which the model can be used to better understand the results sought and achieved through theatre for development.

Dwight Conquergood's important 1988 article "Health Theatre in a Hmong Refugee Camp" offers an anthropological framing of a theatre for health program led by the author himself. Conquergood emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness and relevance and soliciting input from community members, particularly elders to ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of the performance. He notes the difference between opening a dialogue and presenting didactic messages. His project challenged the prevailing views of other expatriate development workers who saw the camp residents on a "Difference-Disorder-Dirt-Danger Sliding Continuum," whereby perceived difference is interpreted as disorderly and unclear, unclean, and ultimately dangerous. In creating the performances with his troupe, he examined the underlying reasons for the sanitation conditions in the camp and created performances that addressed those reasons in a way that acknowledged and honored the experiences of the refugees. Also of note is the fact that the character of "Mother Clean" was especially beloved by the community and was continued even after Conquergood's exit from the project.

Other literature that has been essential for my study can be divided into three categories 1) applied theatre and theatre for development, 2) African theatre, and 3) concepts and critiques in international development. These three bodies of knowledge correspond to the three historical developments discussed in chapter 2: the contemporaneous rise of participatory development and Theatre of the Oppressed, which converged with postcolonial theatre in Africa to create circumstances in which

Theatre of the Oppressed was embraced by African theatre artists, community leaders, and eventually the development industry.

Applied Theatre and Theatre for Development

The field of applied theatre has been organized relatively recently to include instances of theatre and theatrical activities with a primary intention other than aesthetic or entertainment. While there are instances of theatre used for such purposes throughout history, writings on the theory and practice of these methods did not appear for the most part until the twentieth century. Philosophies such as Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, developed in the 1960's and published in the book by the same name in 1979, and Jacob Moreno's theories of sociometry and psychodrama, first introduced in the 1930's, are regarded as foundational to applied theatre. These theories suggest ways in which theatre and dramatic activity can be employed to have a real impact on individuals and communities, and scholars first began writing about these methods as a distinct category under the heading of "applied theatre" in the 1990's.[21] Definitions of applied theatre (or applied drama) vary slightly among scholars. Helen Nicholson, in her 2005 book *Applied Drama: The Gift of Theatre*, defines the term to mean "forms of dramatic activity that primarily exist outside conventional mainstream theatre institutions, and are specifically intended to benefit individuals, communities, and societies."[22] ・In the introduction to their *Applied Theatre Reader*, published in 2009, Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston emphasize that applied theatre is "responsive to ordinary people and their stories, local settings, and

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[21] Nicholson, *Applied Drama: The Gift of Theatre*, 2.
[22] Nicholson, 2.

priorities."[23] They go on to include location in their definition, saying that applied theatre usually (though not always) "happens in informal spaces, in a variety of geographical and social settings: schools, day centers, the street, prisons, village halls…or any other location that might be specific or relevant to the interests of a community."[24] The types of theatre for development projects I examine in this project are generally presented outdoors in the community, for example at an intersection or on the lawn at a market, inviting community members to experience stories that reflect their experience in the relevant space.

In addition to theatre for development, applied theatre includes educational theatre, drama therapy, community performance, theatre for peace and conflict resolution, prison theatre, theatre with seniors or the disabled, and other related endeavors. In Figure 1.6 I have illustrated what I call the "umbrella" of applied theatre. Along the top of the umbrella are four of the major objectives of applied theatre, arranged from their scope of intended impact from society (widespread impact) to individual (narrow impact). Examples of applied theatre are arranged on an up and down axis representing the range from transformative to didactic. Here I have adapted the definition of transformative from Schechner's entertainment-efficacy braid, indicating methods that have the potential to change behavior or social circumstances. At the didactic end of the spectrum are methods that are intended to raise awareness or educate in the traditional sense (rather than through critical inquiry).

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[23] Prentki and Preston, *The Applied Theatre Reader*, 9.
[24] Prentki and Preston, 9.

The "Umbrella" of
Applied Theatre

Development
Education
Community Building
Therapy

Transformative

Didactic

Society

Individual

Forum Theatre

Sociodrama

Psychodrama

Creative Dramatics

Role Play

Theatre Games and Improvisation

Participatory Development Theatre

Community Performance

Playback Theatre

Health Theatre

Theatre in Education

Inclusive Theatre Companies

Political Theatre
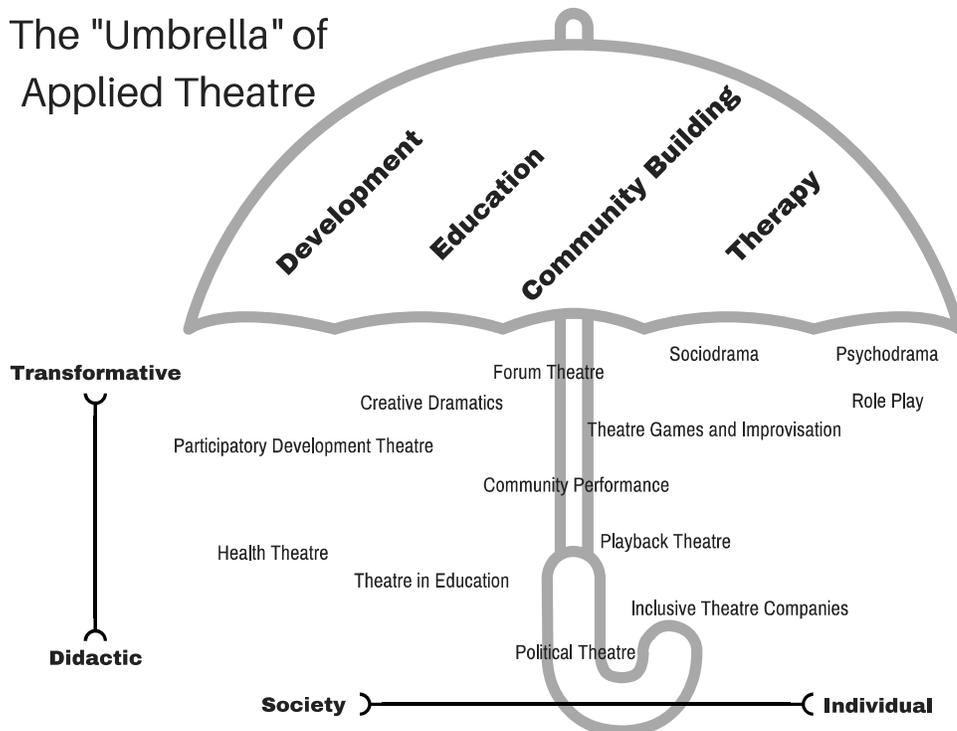
Figure 1.6.: The "Umbrella" of Applied Theatre. Image by author.

The theories from each of these areas overlap and inform one another. For example, community performance, as discussed thoroughly in Jan Cohen-Cruz's *Local Acts*, has a great deal in common with community-based or grassroots theatre for development, and is in fact the preferred term used by some practitioners of such projects. In development theatre projects that deal with sensitive social issues such as stigma of disease or conflict resolution, theatre for development may also contain therapeutic goals.

Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, originally published in 1979, is the foundational text for Forum Theatre and related techniques, as well as the underlying philosophy in Boal's work. Forum theatre was originally developed as a political form of theatre to give voice to the interests of oppressed people. Since its invention it has been adapted beyond its original form for many different social change goals.

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Boal himself shifted his focus multiple times throughout his life, finally focusing on therapeutic aspects in his book *The Rainbow of Desire* (1994). Theatre of the Oppressed is an important influence on theatre for development, and nearly all theatre for development is at least peripherally informed by the philosophy. In fact, I have encountered multiple people in the field who conflate the two or use the terms interchangeably. The problem of reconciling the overt bottom-up political intentions of Theatre of the Oppressed and the top-down (and West-East) structure of international development forms the primary theoretical lens for my project.

Volumes specifically presenting examples of theatre for development help to trace the history of such projects. L. Dale Byam's 1999 book *Community in Motion: Theatre for development in Africa* presents several case studies of theatre for development projects, all focused on demonstrating the ways in which the programs engage in Freirian pedagogy, which Byam argues has much in common with indigenous African education, culture, and performance.[25] This analysis seems rather limited, but the book retains its value in its compilation of examples. In addition, the 1999 anthology *African Theatre for Development* gathers several essays on theatre for development projects and issues; however, the book contains only ten essays to represent the entire continent, and unfortunately leaves some regions out entirely, including Anglophone East Africa.

Ross Kidd and Martin Byram's account of the *Laedza Batanani* program in Botswana is the earliest account of a self-defined theatre for development program in Africa. Their essay "Demystifying Pseudo-Freirian development. The case of Laedza

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[25] Byam, *Community in Motion: Theatre for Development in Africa*, 17.

Batanani" (1982) provides an important first-hand account of the program as well a careful critique of their own work reflecting on how theatre fit into the goals of the program and lessons to be applied to future theatre for development endeavors. The aforementioned "Health Theatre in a Hmong Refugee camp" by Dwight Conquergood (1988) cites Kidd and Byram's work as one of the important precursors of his own project in Ban Vinai refugee camp. Conquergood's work provides a contrast to Kidd and Byram in that the latter were developing their work within a set development program with predetermined goals whereas Conquergood approached his use of performance in the camp with more artistic leeway.

Laura Edmonson's essay "Confessions of a Failed Theatre Activist" speaks to many of the concerns of my own work, particularly as it addresses the interventions of U.S. and European practitioners and agencies. Edmonson writes from her perspective as an American theatre practitioner participating in a program to bring theatre activities to former child soldiers in Northern Uganda. Upon observing and reflecting on the work of herself and her fellow visiting artists and their partnership with local students, Edmonson identifies the problems she observed with artists entering into a community that may not truly want them there. As a starting point for potential solutions, she cites Sonja Kuftinec's call that "ethical activism needs to wrestle with the politics of when to do less and listen more."[26] She draws on philosopher Emmanuel Levinas's idea of "radical passivity" to suggest that artists

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[26] Kuftinec, cited in Edmonson, "Confessions of a Failed Theatre Activist," 46.

position themselves in a place of responsibility to the other and counter the impulse to "do something" without critical reflection.[27]

Particularly important to my study are two articles specifically addressing the use of Theatre of the Oppressed as theatre for development in Africa. Nigerian playwright and professor Awam Amkpa argues in his essay "Reenvisioning Theatre, Activism, and Citizenship in Neocolonial Contexts" (2006) that theatre for development (specifically based in Boal) is anti-colonial, and therefore beneficial in cultivating participatory development. Taking an alternate view is Jane Plastow's 2009 article "Practising for the revolution? The influence of Augusto Boal in Brazil and Africa," which is cautiously critical of the indiscriminate use of Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum theatre in Africa without regard to its appropriateness for particular situations. She also provides both historical context and specific accounts of the transportation of Boal's techniques to Africa for development use.

In her article "Searching for the Marxist in Boal," (2010) professor of education at Trinity College Dublin Carmel O'Sullivan, presents a thorough inquiry of the actual ideology informing Boal's work; she concludes that Boal's

> inadequate attempts at (Marxist) theorising openly contradict his practice, and are thus so misleading and vague as to be destructive and manipulative. It would appear that he has fared well from being associated with the ideas of Brecht and Marx, who devoted their lives and careers to the cause of the socialist revolution. He adds little or nothing to existing theory or practice.[28.]

Post-Colonial Theatre Studies and African Theatre

In my effort to answer questions about the popularity and effectiveness of Theatre of the Oppressed and theatre for development in Africa, I look at the

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[27] Edmondson, "Confessions of a Failed Theatre Activist: Intercultural Encounters in Uganda and Rwanda," 46.
[28] O'Sullivan, "Searching for the Marxist in Boal," 95–96.

development of East African theatre more broadly through a post-colonial lens. Scholars of African theatre typically view colonization as a defining moment, dividing its history into pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial terms. The question of pre-colonial African performance and whether it can rightly be called "theatre" is a major question in this literature, as well as the significance of the connection between pre-colonial and postcolonial theatre.

Three specific ethnographic studies of African popular performance have influenced my research thus far both methodologically and theoretically. Karin Barber, Catherine Cole and Kelly Askew each look at particular forms of plays and musical performance in Nigeria, Ghana and Tanzania, respectively. The African art forms studied by each of these authors have certain aspects in common (such as the importance of language and the improvisational, collaborative nature), which I anticipate will also inform the theatre I encounter in my study of community-based performance for development. While I am cautious of drawing careless connections between African regions and different African cultures, there are connections to be drawn particularly in the case of popular twentieth century forms of performance informed by pan-Africanism and post-colonialism.

While Karin Barber explicitly separates the type of Yoruba popular theatre she is examining in *The Generation of Plays* (2000) from applied performance in the form of community theatre or theatre for development, there are many connections to be made between the two, particularly in the ways in which they combine remnants from traditional African performance, colonial influences, and contemporary global conventions. The focus on popular theatre and its accessibility is an important

concept in African performance. While many nations and regions in Africa have significant literary theatres, popular theatre like the Yoruba troupes studied in *The Generation of Plays* bear a more direct connection with pre-colonial performance. While no form is completely untouched by colonial influence, popular and community performance are equally indebted to traditional African performance.

Drawing from traditional African theatre as well as colonial performance and American influences, the Ghanaian concert party theatre discussed in Catherine Cole's book is not applied theatre, nor is its primary purpose to delve into social or political issues. However, these topics were often incorporated into Concert Party performances simply because they were of interest to the community. Without being intentionally educational or didactic, these popular performances provided an opportunity for communities to confront and discuss issues, as well as take part in relevant communal entertainment on a local level.[29] For the most part, like Yoruba theatre and Ghanaian concert party, much of the early postcolonial theatre in Uganda could be classified as "popular theatre" or "community theatre."[30] This category overlaps with theatre for development, but also includes many other forms. In his important study of theatre for development in Africa, L. Dale Byam cites Concert party theatre as an influence on early Theatre for development projects in Botswana (considered by many to be the first true instance of Theatre for development).[31]

In her 2002 book on music and dance in post-colonial Tanzania, Kelly Askew contrasts postcolonial nation-states with prevailing conceptions of what constitutes a

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[29] Cole, *Ghana's Concert Party Theatre*, 3–6.
[30] Kaahwa, "Theatre and Human Rights in Uganda," 97.
[31] Byam, *Community in Motion: Theatre for Development in Africa*, 39.

nation, including the work of Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities*. Askew's main critique of Anderson is that while he acknowledges that nationalism is a "cultural artifact," he attempts to apply his theorization of European nationalism universally without accounting for cultural differences. This critique of Anderson and its failure to account for the heterogeneity of postcolonial states is critical to any study of culture in Africa. Askew states that

> "such models do not apply to most modern states, much less postcolonies like Tanzania and Kenya, where boundaries were arbitrarily set without regard to the communities they sundered and within which a multitude of ethnic groups continue to maintain their respective social identities."[32]·

This is certainly true in Uganda as well, where the successful establishment of a centralized government met with much difficulty due to grappling between ethnic and regional groups. In recent years, much effort has been made by government and cultural organizations to incorporate, highlight, and celebrate the cultures and contributions of the various ethnic groups, both for the benefit of Ugandans and in creating a comprehensible national identity for outsiders.[33]

Beyond the direct critique of Anderson, I find Askew's further discussion of the ways in which a post-colonial revival of African culture helped to drive nationalism in Tanzania to be relevant to my research. While Uganda was united by the British rather than after independence, like many other countries it struggled to create an identity and political stability as one nation containing diverse ethnic groups. Askew explores how performance was used to help create a sense of national identity and nationalism in the wake of bringing together the two separate countries

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[32] Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania*, 9.
[33] Marhoum and Samper, "Uganda - Ethnic Groups."

of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. As in Tanzania, official cultural policy in Uganda is quite influential in both cultural production and development.

In her 2001 dissertation on Human Rights Theatre in Uganda, Jessica Kaahwa presents a survey of Ugandan theatre history and makes the case that efficacious political and educational theatre is indigenous to Sub-Saharan African theatre and existed before the influence of both colonialism and international development. Kaahwa presents a broad historical account of the use of theatre for human rights during the period leading up to and after Uganda's independence from Britain and views this development not as an exclusively foreign import but as (at least to some extent) a natural outgrowth of pre-colonial African performance. Dr. Kaahwa's work, as well as our ongoing conversations, provide important background and local context for my own study. As a professor at Makerere University she is closely connected to the theatre scene in Kampala, which is at the center of both applied and aesthetic theatre in Uganda.

Post-colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics (1996) by Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins focuses on the process of decolonization and nation building through the dramatic canon. The authors explore the ways in which dramatic texts resist colonial and imperialist power, and contribute to an understanding of the historical postcolonial theatre in East Africa. Another useful work dealing with pre-colonial and postcolonial performance is Joachim Fiebach's 1999 article "Dimensions of Theatricality in Africa." In this piece, Fiebach argues that the division between theatrical performance and performance of the everyday, and its eventual deconstruction, do not apply to African performance historically or today. He states,

"theatricality not only appears as a defining characteristic of artistic [performance]…but as an essential dimension of sociocultural and political praxis, at least to a large extent. In any case, it is a defining characteristic of the wide range of cultural performances that are often constituents of sociopolitical processes."· While Fiebach is somewhat guilty of the common practice of lumping African cultures together, his geographically broad range of examples support his argument. I believe that this notion of African theatricality in social life is an important factor in the popularity of Theatre for development throughout the continent and in East Africa specifically.

Discourses of Development and Post-Colonial Critique

In the area of development literature, I draw upon the work of several scholars and critics who present the global system of development in a theoretical perspective. Though the professionalized and jargon-heavy field of development and the academic area of postcolonial thought both deal with many of the same topics, in the words of political scientist Christine Sylvester "development studies does not tend to listen to subalterns and postcolonial studies does not tend to concern itself with whether the subaltern is eating."[34] · Similarly, James Ferguson asks us to consider "why statements are acceptable in 'development' discourse that would be considered absurd in academic settings, but also why many acceptable statements from the realm of

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[34] Sylvester, "Development Studies and Postcolonial Studies: Disparate Tales of the Third World," 703.

academic discourse - or even from that of common observation - fail to find their way into the discursive regime of 'development.'"[35]

Four trends in International Development have been particularly influential on the proliferation of theatre for development in the past three decades; 1) the "rights-based" approach to development, 2) scalability and sustainability, 3) the participatory development movement, 4) the push for evidence-based approaches through monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Understanding these trends has been important to my inquiry into the popularity, usefulness, and challenges of using theatre for development. International development organizations and funders follow these trends, and their choice to use certain methods such as theatre for development reflects the ways in which those methods exemplify the prevailing philosophy. First, the rights-based approach has shifted the focus of development from economic factors to a broader range of goals including gender equality, education, and labor rights. Peter Uvin provides a succinct account of the rights-based development movement in his article "From the Right to Development to the Rights-Based Approach," published in *Development in Practice* in 2007.

Forum Theatre for development also finds itself caught in the space between development's demand for scalability and sustainability on one hand and innovation on the other. Scalability refers to the potential of a project to be recreated in a larger geographic area, and sustainability means the likelihood a project can be conducted in a community in the long-term. Both of these considerations are required by funders, and yet most projects are never actually "brought to scale." Innovation is a major

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[35] Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, 70.

buzzword in development today, with Sarah Murray of the Financial Times calling its rapid popularity a "fever."[36] Funders consistently emphasize the desire to support innovative approaches that are also scalable and sustainable. The dilemma here is that if funders privilege innovation, there is less funding available for approaches that have already proven successful. Much has been written on the failure of many programs to be brought to scale, yet the problem persists.[37]

Perhaps most importantly, the participatory turn in international development, which first appeared in the 1960s and 70s and then rose in popularity in the 1990's has been particularly conducive to the use of theatre for development.[38] In his 2007 article "Participation: The Ascendancy of a Buzzword in the Neoliberal Era," Pablo Leal looks at the rise of the term and how it has been used to pay lip service to the idea of empowerment in target communities. In Leal's analysis, the participation movement removes power from the state in underdeveloped locations in the name of empowering citizens "from the bottom up," but in reality, transfers it to multinational entities like corporations, financial institutions, and NGOs without actually changing power structures on the ground. This dynamic likely applies to some projects that utilize theatre for development; however, I am also curious if the use of locally-conceived participatory theatre also provides an opportunity to subvert the neoliberal power structure in some small way, at least on a local level.

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[36] Murray, "Innovation Fever Breaks out as Development Landscape Shifts."
[37] Hobbes, "Stop Trying to Save the World: Big Ideas Are Destroying International Development"; Murray, "Innovation Fever Breaks out as Development Landscape Shifts"; Ramalingam, "Development Innovation: Fad, Silo or Catalyst?"
[38] Stiefel and Wolfe, *A Voice for the Excluded: Popular Participation in Development: Utopia or Necessity?*, 19.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is the process by which development initiatives are observed, analyzed, and reported on to stakeholders including those that fund the projects. Rick Davies, in his article about monitoring and evaluation in *The Companion to Development Studies* (2002)*, cites the increase in the number of organizations providing development aid over the 1990's as the reason for a "growing concern about identifying the achievements of NGOs"[39] and a proliferation of methods for doing so. NGOs must constantly prove that they are producing successful outcomes in order to secure further funding. USAID requires statistics to demonstrate their accomplishments to lawmakers and taxpayers. Today, monitoring and evaluation are built into the program design. Reporting accomplishments in a meaningful way requires setting realistic and well-defined objectives, collecting baseline data, and clearly defining and planning for how program information will be monitored and collected. While both quantitative and qualitative data can be used for monitoring and evaluation purposes, the clarity and ease of use of qualitative information can put community-based participatory methods like theatre at a comparative disadvantage.

Methodology

In my attempt to trace development theatre programs from Western development agencies to their implementation on the ground in East Africa, I employed a multifaceted approach consisting of interviews, short-term participant observations, and publications, reports, and manuals from the various organizations involved with each project. I designed my approach to gain a picture of the flow of

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[39] Davies, "Monitoring and Evaluating NGO Achievements," 523.

money, influence, and information throughout the structure of the international development system. The exact relationships between organizations and other stakeholders contributing to specific initiatives vary, but for the purposes of my project, I divide these organizations into three tiers.

At the top of Figure 1 are the entities with the most money and influence: international and multilateral organizations (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations agencies) and National Government Agencies (USAID in the United States). From a monetary perspective, private foundations[1] such as the Gates Foundation can be as influential as national and international agencies (though generally focused more on specific issues).[40] For this study, I looked exclusively at projects funded by USAID, in order to focus on the transnational aspects of US foreign policy and development aid. In this dissertation, I have chosen to look specifically at two programs: the Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation (FACT) project administered by Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health, and the AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance (APHIA) Plus program administered by PATH.

I have traced the "life cycle" of theatre for development projects here in two ways. I examined the work of several large NGOs before finding the two that met my criteria, including conducting theatre-based work in Uganda and/or Kenya, and receiving funding from USAID. I then began my inquiry with the primary

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[40] While in the United States the distinction between a foundation and an NGO is technically based on tax status, the term foundation more generally refers to entities that fund projects implemented by other organizations (NGOs, government agencies, etc.). This distinction is not cut and dry, however, and some foundations develop programming either directly or by contracting specific jobs or granting funds with very strict guidelines about how they are to be used.

implementers of the projects: PATH and IRH respectively. I then conducted interviews and reviewed organization publications to trace how the projects were planned, staffed, and implemented in the respective target communities. Each of these projects involves several organizations in addition to USAID and the prime, including additional international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work with the prime (known as implementing partners) and theatre companies, community groups, or individual volunteers on the ground. In the following section, I will review my methodological approach to each level of the diagram as I have organized it (Figure 1.7).

	Project	APHIA Plus	FACT
Government and Multilateral Agencies	**Funder(s)**	**USAID**	**USAID**
International NGOs	Prime/Primary Partner → Implementing Partners	PATH → Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS, Jhpiego, World Vision	Georgetown IRH → Save The Children, ICRW
In-country Agencies and NGOs	Local NGOs, Community and Civil Society Organizations (Including Theatre Groups)	Local Theatre Groups, Healthcare Providers	ECCDs, Rafiki Theatre, Healthcare Providers

Figure 1.7. Flowchart of USAID funded projects. Image by author.

Top Level: USAID

I focus here on USAID funded projects and investigate how the agency's overt mission of protecting US interests plays out through participatory theatre for

development. USAID gives money to large international NGOs (such as CARE, PATH, World Vision) through specific projects. In some ways, this process is more similar to bidding on a government contract than applying for a grant.

At this level, I have focused on USAID policy, conducting research primarily through the agencies own publications. As a U.S. Government agency, the reports, publications, and other documents created for each division and program should be available to the public. In reality, finding the specific reports I needed was a challenge. Navigating the online archives had a steep learning curve and I eventually developed a better sense of where and how to find particular reports and documents. It was clear that while USAID's records were technically available to the public, they were not intended *for* the general public.

I also researched best practices and how-to guides for applying for USAID funds, approaching the subject from the perspective of a potential grantee. In my interviews with NGO project managers Danielle McCadden of Georgetown IRH and Olouch Madiang of PATH, I asked about their perspective on the USAID funding process and working with the organization. I asked each of them to explain the funding process from their perspective, and how the application process works at their organizations.

International Non-Governmental Organizations: PATH and Georgetown IRH

These international NGOs are involved both in financial support of projects as well as planning and implementation, so their missions and priorities are reflected in multiple ways through their operations. These organizations are responsible for implementing the projects according to USAID guidelines; it is their personnel who

are involved with the selection and assistance with specific methods, including theatre, that will be used in a particular project. I was able to interview the people at these organizations who are directly responsible for the decision making in project management, funding, and monitoring and evaluation of the two projects. I interviewed Olouch Madiang at PATH, as well as former PATH employees C. Y. Gopinath and Megan Wysong. In addition to interviews at this level, I researched reports, grant information, and other publications. At Georgetown IRH I conducted several interviews with Danielle McCadden, FACT Project Manager for Georgetown IRH. I was able to participate in a three-day planning retreat in October 2015 in Washington DC with the main program staff from Georgetown IRH and the implementing partners Save the Children, The International Center for Research on Women, and the Population Media Center and had informal conversations with Shannon Pryor, Maternal and Newborn Health Specialist for Save the Children, Virginia Williams, an independent consultant working on the program, and Rebecka Inga Lundgren, Director of Research for Georgetown IRH. For both programs, I reviewed training materials, project planning documents, and evaluations and reports (see appendix for examples).

For USAID funded projects, documentation *should* technically be easily accessible as information on the agencies activities and spending is required by law to be available to US citizens. However, the USAID documentation only provides a small part of the picture; the cooperating organizations each have their own system of reports and documentation. Internal and external NGO publications reflect how the organization wants to portray their work, and the importance they ascribe to their

various initiatives. Annual reports, for example, demonstrate how the organizations present their work and accomplishments to donors and supporters (or in the case of USAID, the US taxpayers). The most interesting documents for my research have been publications that are intended to teach or otherwise convey Theatre of the Oppressed techniques to local NGOs. In the case of the APHIA Plus project, smaller local theatre troupes are trained by PATH to conduct Magnet Theatre, and provided with materials to help them utilize the technique on an ongoing basis even without oversight from PATH. One of my important research questions deals with the dissemination and adaptation of Theatre of the Oppressed techniques throughout East Africa through various organizations and practitioners. This is often done through workshops and trainers who work as consultants, but it is also common for aid organizations to publish handbooks or other materials to be distributed to those interested in applying Forum theatre or other methods to development work. The documents that are distributed for this purpose are loaded with indications of how the institution believes theatre for development works, and what its value is.

Local: Rafiki and TEARS

The third tier, consisting of local NGOs and civil society organizations[41] (CSOs), is where the actual theatre performances are developed and implemented. At this level, I conducted a short-term participant observation with one such group, Rafiki Theatre based in Kampala, Uganda at a one-day workshop and rehearsal in

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[41] Civil society organizations are local groups organized around social, political, or other affinities. Community interest groups, religious groups, artistic groups, and other local organizations that do not fit the category of NGO or non-profit fall into this category.

August 2015.[42] I also visited the office of TEARS (Theatre for Enhancement and Acceleration of Researched Solutions), one of the Magnet Theatre groups formed by PATH, which has gone on to do its own work as well as continue to partner with PATH. These in-person visits were supplemented by the many videos published online by Rafiki, TEARS, and PATH of their current and previous work.

Formal interviews also factored heavily into my research methods at this level. I interviewed the leadership of the theatre groups, Hussein Maddan, Director of Rafiki, and Raphael Okumu, one of the founding members and current Executive Director of TEARS. Here too I paid particular attention to what messages and priorities were conveyed from above through the NGO partners. I examined the mission of the project as it was conveyed to those working on it directly, whether that mission came from the NGOs coordinating the work or from larger granting agencies. I also conducted interviews with seven members of the Rafiki Theatre company, inquiring specifically into the experience of local participants in engaging in development and what that means to them. I was curious about the motivations of participants, especially about their own understanding of development and their motivation to work on development related projects. Through these methods, I examined how Forum Theatre has been adapted from its origins as a "bottom-up" political tool and how it now serves both grassroots development interests as well as those of international aid organizations.

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[42] This is in addition to two other theatre for development workshops I participated in, one conducted by the National Theatre and one by an additional NGO not directly included in this study. These were helpful in forming my overall picture of the TfD field in Uganda.

Chapter Breakdown

This dissertation is in essence an origin story of how Forum Theatre became (and becomes anew with each project) a tool of global development. It intertwines international journeys historical and ongoing with Africa's cultural legacy and the disruption caused by colonialism. Chapter two begins with the birth of both Theatre of the Oppressed and international development, both of which came of age in the mid-twentieth century. It examines the circumstances that brought Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre to Africa in the 1980s, as well as the history of international development, in order to explain the dramatic rise in popularity of the use of forum theatre by development organizations. I argue that the proliferation of the method happened for three major reasons: 1. The postcolonial climate and push for empowerment in the arts and informal education 2. The affinity between Forum Theatre and African performance aesthetics, and 3. The rise of participatory development methods as a necessary component of development interventions. I draw on Augusto Boal's own autobiographical work as well as the work of African theatre historians in order to piece together the transnational spread of Boal's work and its adoption by civil society organizations and eventually by Western development organizations. Chapter two forms the foundation from which we can understand the state of theatre for development and the role of Forum theatre therein today.

Chapter three traces the movement of resources, knowledge, and influence across oceans and continents as it occurs in the implementation of a Forum Theatre for Development project. I also look at how these exchanges contribute to the ways in which the US "performs" generosity, benevolence, and global power through international aid. Chapter four looks closely at the meeting of international

development and theatre for social change. Development, specifically public health, uses communication methods based in advertising, which are arguably manipulative and concerned only with end results. In contrast, the critical pedagogy of Paolo Freire, on which Theatre of the Oppressed is based, privileges empowerment of the learner to make their own decisions.

Chapter five zooms in on the individuals and local organizations that actually create the Forum Theatre plays. I look at three examples: one a professional Theatre for Development group, one an NGO that establishes and trains groups of amateur actors, and one a project that recruits members of the target community for a short series of performances. Through the training methods and experiences of these three groups, I open up some of the ways in which theatre for development affects participants and the cultural environment of different regions in Uganda and Kenya.

In Chapter 6, I look at the concept of "results" and reception from the perspectives of both theatre and development. I compare the pervasive emphasis on evaluation and reporting in international development with the prevailing belief in theatre that audience experience is inaccessible (and thus irrelevant). I suggest that perhaps aesthetic theatre could in this case draw on the practices of theatre for development to expand the understanding of meaning and emotion an audience takes away from a performance.

In his autobiography, Boal says of Theatre of the Oppressed:

"The TO did political events, it was politics; it withdrew into the intimacy of internalised oppressions, it was psychotherapy; in schools, it was pedagogy; in the cities, it legislated. The TO superimposed itself onto other social activities, invaded other fields and allowed itself to be invaded."[43]

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[43] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*, 316.

Boal's metaphor of invasion is intriguing in this case, bringing to mind critiques of development (and theatre for development) as insensitive to local circumstances or simply unwanted.[44] And perhaps also of the local voices of those participants who enter into dialogue, however small scale, with the organizations and agendas at work in development programs with the effect of "invading" the development machine in some way.

Informed by performance studies, applied theatre, development theory, African performance history, and postcolonial critique, this work traces two case studies from their funding source at USAID in Washington, DC through the international exchange of resources, the planning and implementation of programs, training and performance experiences of actors, and finally the feedback loop returning "results" and deliverables to foreign funders. This dissertation offers a narrative of how Theatre of the Oppressed "invaded" development, and how it is "invaded" by development and embraced, adapted and used as it continues to occupy space as a tool in the field.

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[44] See Edmondson, 2011.

Chapter 2: Theatre of the Oppressed: From Brazil to Africa

> When all is said and done, who am I? What use am I? Instructions for use. The Theatre of the Oppressed - Where did it come from, where is it going? It exists on the four corners of the earth, but in which of those corners was it born? Where did it pass its childhood?
>
> It seemed unnecessary to me; after all, this method can be used in Calcutta and Ouagadougou, Paris, New York and London; what difference does it make to know that the lengthy birth began in Brazil, that the child grew into its body in the three Americas, before it spread through Europe and into Africa and Asia? – Augusto Boal, Hamlet and the Baker's Son

The use of Forum theatre as theatre for development in Africa occurred at what I identify as a convergence of three overlapping global developments. The first is the participatory development movement beginning in the 1970s, in response to post-colonial criticism, which opened the door for strategies that engaged the community including theatre. Second, at the same time in Latin America, Augusto Boal was developing the methods that make up Theatre of the Oppressed, including Forum Theatre. These spread throughout the world aided first by Boal's exile from Brazil, during which he lived first in Argentina and then in France, and later by his extensive touring to present workshops on his techniques. These two developments were brought together with the third, African postcolonial theatre, in several projects in Africa in the 1980s when artists and academics first began using Theatre of the Oppressed on the continent. Community organizers and development workers soon took up Theatre of the Oppressed techniques, particularly Forum Theatre, co-opting and transforming the existing tradition of instructional theatre established by colonial authorities and riding the wave of the participatory development movement to quick popularity. The result is a form of applied theatre that appeals to both target populations and funders, yet contains inherent contradictions.
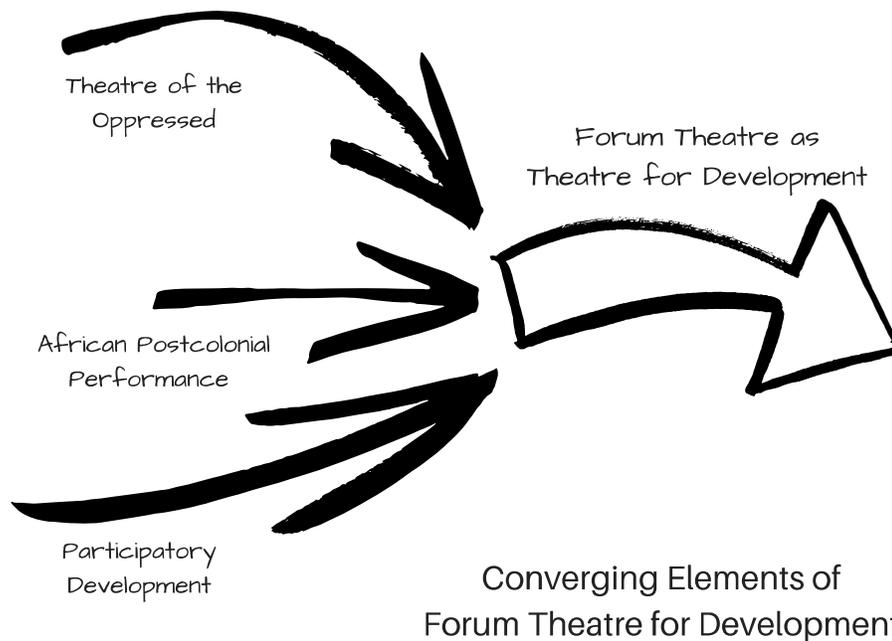
Figure 2.1. Converging Elements leading to Forum Theatre for Development. Image by author.

Forum theatre and other Theatre of the Oppressed methods have proliferated in African theatre for development, to the extent that they are conflated or used interchangeably by some practitioners and development professionals. This chapter examines each of the contributing developments; first, the history of international development globally from World War I through the participatory development movement; next, the development of Theatre of the Oppressed and its introduction in Africa; and finally, the colonial and post-colonial practices of instructional theatre, both didactic and participatory. I then examine the earliest examples of Forum Theatre for development as they grew out of these antecedents. I draw on Boal's own autobiographical work as well as the work of African theatre historians in an attempt to piece together the transnational spread of Boal's work in the 1970s and 1980s, and

its adoption by civil society organizations and eventually Western development organizations in Africa.

International Aid and the Emergence of Participatory Development

Economic Development and United States Interests

The modern global concept of international development has its roots in the United Nations Charter, ratified in 1945, which calls for international cooperation toward

> a) higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development; b) solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems; and international cultural and educational cooperation; and; c) universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.[45]

This was followed in the United States by a shift in foreign policy laid out in the Truman Doctrine that originated the United States' vision of international development. Development scholars often point to an excerpt from Truman's 1949 inaugural address as the beginning of the modern approach to international aid:

> More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate, they are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. For the first time in history humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people [. . .] I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. [. . .] What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing. . . Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge.[46]

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[45] The United Nations, "Charter of the United Nations."
[46] Truman, "Truman's Inaugural Address."

In contrast to prior international aid, this new paradigm emphasized both the moral imperative to mitigate poverty and its effects and the benefits to the United States' security and economy of doing so. Here, poverty and lack of economic development in the "third world" is framed as the problem, and the export of Western industry and education are the keys to solving it. But for the United States this is also the birth of international development as foreign policy and foreign influence. The push to help the poor and mitigate the "threat" they pose comes as part of the same doctrine that urges intervention against communist and authoritarian regimes.[47] From its inception, United States foreign aid has been openly tied to a global political agenda. Between 1948 and 1961, United States global development aid still primarily focused on the recovery in Europe and preventing the spread of Communism through the Marshall Plan (later transferred to the Mutual Security Administration), and the formation of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), which was later renamed the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and is still a major player in international development today.[48]

I am focusing here on the United States and the United States Agency for International Development not only because USAID-supported projects are the focus of my research, but also because it was these changes in United States government policy and the dominance of the United States in the world economy that set in motion the modern form of global aid for the rest of the world.[49] USAID is the government agency that allocates and oversees the majority of foreign aid given by

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[47] Truman, "Truman Doctrine."
[48] The George C. Marshall Foundation, "History of the Marshall Plan."
[49] Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 3–4.

the United States, and it is the primary funder for both the case studies presented in the following chapters. USAID was formed in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. President John F. Kennedy said of the agencies' necessity: "There is no escaping our obligations: our moral obligations as a wise leader and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations – our economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people, as a nation no longer dependent upon the loans from abroad that once helped us develop our own economy – and our political obligations as the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom."[50] Here, we see trends that show that international development in Africa begins where colonialism leaves off. The majority of sub-Saharan nations gained independence in the 1960s (Which USAID's history summary proudly calls "the decade of development."). For much of Africa, the only distinction between colonial oversight and "development assistance" in its early stages is the formality of the relationship. The colonial project in Africa was often justified by characterizing indigenous people as uncivilized, backward, childlike, and in a religious sense, heathens to be converted, saved, and civilized.[51] The colonizing Europeans and the "aid" they implemented were thus framed as a civilizing force, the guidance of a parental figure, or even an act of salvation. Assistance that immediately followed independence was of course informed by the colonial relationship, and continued to be framed in this paternalistic way.

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[50] USAID, "USAID History."
[51] Keim, *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*, 44–45.

Figure 2.2. President John F. Kennedy speaks to USAID directors and deputy directors on the White House lawn, June 8, 1962. Robert Knudsen/USAID.

The Participatory Development Movement

In the first major change leading towards the possibility of theatre as a development method, the move toward participatory development began in the early 1970s in response to Marxist and post-colonial criticisms of 1960s-era international development as top-down, disempowering, and Euro-centric. Starting with small NGOs and local organizations, planners began incorporating the participation of the community into development interventions in an attempt to empower people at the grassroots level.[52] Like Theatre of the Oppressed, participatory development counts among its influences the work of Paolo Freire, and in fact Freire worked on several participatory education and development projects in Africa during the decade.[53]

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[52] Mohan, "Participatory Development," 50.

[53] Leal, "Participation: The Ascendancy of a Buzzword in the Neo-Liberal Era," 541.

In its early stages, participatory development was regarded as a radical departure from the existing development paradigm. Those arguing for the shift sought to mobilize communities and counter hegemonic power and economic-focused development. For the first time community members themselves could be engaged in meaningful ways in all areas of the development process: examining and researching problems in their own communities, planning possible solutions, implementing changes, and evaluating the results. Theatre for development is one example of a participatory method, and the earliest experiments in theatre for development (discussed later in this chapter) were direct attempts to transform development efforts through community participation. Other participatory methods include community mapping, participatory poverty assessment, community arts projects and visualization, and community discussion groups.[54]

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[54] For more examples and descriptions of individual participatory development methods, see Institute for Development Studies, "Participatory Methods," www.participatorymethods.org.

Figure 2.3. Community Members raise their hands to participate in a discussion. PATH.

In Wolfgang Sachs's *Development Dictionary*, Iranian diplomat and development scholar Majid Rahnema identifies four intended functions of participatory development as it was originally conceived:

> In *cognitive* terms, participation had to regenerate the development discourse and its practices, on the basis of a different mode of understanding of the realities to be addressed. It expressed the belief that the cognitive bases of conventional development not only belonged to an irrelevant *episteme*, representing an ethnocentric perception of reality specific to Northern industrialized countries, but were also no longer able to serve the objectives of a sound development. They had to be replaced by a different knowledge system, representing people's own cultural heritage, in particular the locally produced *techne*. Popular participation was to carve out a new meaning for, and a new image of, development, based on different forms of interaction and a common search for this new 'popular' knowledge.
> The *political* function of participation was to provide development with a new source of legitimation, assigning to it the task of empowering the voiceless and the powerless, and also, eventually, of creating a bridge between the establishment and its target populations, including even the groups opposing development.

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The *instrumental* function of the participatory approach was to provide the 're-empowered' actors of development with new answers to the failure of conventional strategies, and to propose new alternatives, with a view to involving the 'patients' in their own care.

Finally, in *social* terms, participation was the slogan which gave the development discourse a new lease of life. All institutions, groups and individuals involved in development activities rallied around the new construct in the hope that the participatory approach would finally enable development to meet everyone's basic needs and to wipe out poverty in all its manifestations.[55]

These admirable aspirations have been largely unrealized. Rahnema acknowledges some isolated benefits in the form of renewed enthusiasm for grassroots projects and forms of traditional knowledge in place of "imported and irrelevant technologies."[56] As participatory development proliferated and was adopted by even the most mainstream development organizations, different understandings of "participation" formed. A "transformative" view considers mainstream development generally harmful, and sees popular participation as a way to reorient development toward positive social change. Alternately, the "instrumental" view sees participation as a way to make typical development projects more effective, essentially using community involvement to better accomplish the same outcomes.

Structures of power are central to development, and top-down economic-focused development strategies reinforce existing structures of power through systems of control and dependence.[57] International Development scholar Giles Mohan reminds us of the inherent conflict in participatory development:

"Participation involves struggle whereby the powerful fight to retain their privileges. Even many supposedly pro-participation development agencies show a marked reluctance to release control. Participation is conflictual whereby the less powerful must struggle for increased control over their

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[55] Rahnema, "Participation."

[56] Rahnema.

[57] Escobar, *Encountering Development,* 8.

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lives."[58]

Majid Rahnema complicates this with the observation that the participation paradigm, and the idea that developers need to grant the option to participate, assumes that the target population has no power to begin with.[59] Rather than relocating power to the grassroots level, the move toward participatory development has in most cases simply engaged target populations in the exertion of existing power structures.

Political economist and development scholar Pablo Alejandro Leal argues that as participation was taken up by Western institutions and NGOs it "achieved buzzword status," exploding in popularity in the 1980s and 1990s. Like so many counter-hegemonic practices, at this point participatory methods were coopted by large-scale institutions and often used as a way to pay lip service to giving voice to those in affected communities.[60] This is even less surprising considering Mohan's argument that

> Despite these differences [of the definition of participatory development], there has been a growing acceptance regarding the importance of local involvement. Underlying this 'consensus' is the belief in not relying on the state. So, it might not be coincidental that PD gained popularity around the same time as the neoliberal counter-revolution of the 1980s with its discourse of self-help and individualism.[61]

In the 1990's, the development field also saw a movement towards "rights-based" development, which expanded the definition and focus of development beyond economic and technological advancement to include human rights and the concept of "a good life." Peter Uvin explains this shift in his article "From the Right

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[58] Mohan, "Participatory Development," 53.
[59] Rahnema, "Participation."
[60] Leal, "Participation: The Ascendancy of a Buzzword in the Neo-Liberal Era," 540.
[61] Mohan, "Participatory Development," 50.

to Development to the Rights-Based Approach: How Human Rights Entered Development," attributes this shift to three factors; the "missionary zeal" that proliferated after the end of the Cold War, the placement of blame for the failure of prior programs on corruption and poor governance, and the push to define development beyond an economic function.[62] The eight Millennium Development Goals, adopted in 2000 and intended to be accomplished by 2015, illustrate this shift. They include Public Health, Gender equality, and education, as well as fighting poverty.[63]

As international development has proliferated into a global industry, critiques of development have responded, with perspectives from both inside and outside the field. In his 1990 book *The Anti-Politics Machine*, James Ferguson uses an anti-poverty program in Lesotho as a case study arguing that international development has by and large been a failure since its inception. Ferguson's work is one of the first to formulate the idea of development discourse and unpack the ways in which that discourse affects how development initiatives are implemented. In particular, he demonstrates that despite the failure of the development projects to accomplish their goals and, in the specific case of the Lesotho project, the almost absurd disregard for the social, political, and economic realities of the community, the implementing organizations are able to portray them as successes and reproduce the same efforts.

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[62] Uvin, "From the RIght to Development to the Rights-Based Approach: How 'Human Rights' Entered Development," 597.
[63] Millennium Project, "Goals, Targets, and Indicators."

Failed development initiatives therefore actually reinforce their own necessity and create a cycle of dependence.[64]

Political anthropologist Arturo Escobar, writing in 1995, argues that the "third world" and its problems, which development seeks to "solve," were actually created by the rise of development discourse after World War II. He likens this to the way in which the East is defined by the West through Edward Said's concept of Orientalism. Escobar takes it as part of his project to suggest alternatives to the pervasiveness of development as a discourse. He acknowledges the difficulty of this task, and expresses frustration that development professionals and scholars "continually fall into the trap of not saying anything new because the language does not permit it."[65]

More recently, Thomas W. Dichter, a veteran of the international development industry for many years, begins his book *Despite Good Intentions* with eye-opening statistics and a sweeping cost-benefit analysis from the last 50 years of the international development process asking the question, what has actually been accomplished in that time?

> Why has an industry that since 1960 has spent over $1.7 trillion on development assistance, by any commonsense cost-benefit calculus, produced negligible results (if not made things worse)? No other large-scale publicly funded effort of such duration could have got away with such poor performance, certainly not in the private sector or even in the ranks of government. Yet all the players in development assistance are still in business. Not only are all the organizations that were formed to help the emerging nations develop and to alleviate the plight of the world's poor still functioning (and in some cases thriving,) but more and more organizations, big and small, have been founded along the way as well.[66]

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[64] Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, 8.
[65] Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 219.
[66] Dichter, *Despite Good Intentions: Why Development Assistance to the Third World Has Failed*, 2.

Dichter ultimately argues for minimal development intervention, limited to lifesaving medical and peacekeeping measures and financial assistance.[67] This call is largely unheard in the development industry today, however. In 2015, the UN published a replacement for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are more ambitious and even broader in their definition of development. There are seventeen SDGs, more than twice the MDGs, with 169 narrowly specified targets decided within the larger goals.[68] The current trend in the field is quite the opposite of Escobar's and Dichter's suggestions, with the industry generally continuing to grow and diversify.

Today, definitions of international development are broad and wide-ranging, encompassing any and all of these previous priorities. Despite the ongoing evolution toward local participation and empowerment, the paradigm of development remains problematic. The worldview of international development is based on a modernist teleological view of progress, in which nations exist at different points on the scale of development. Developed countries are seen as more advanced on the scale, and less-developed or developing countries are working to get to where developed countries are.[69] There are many things wrong with this view, the most obvious being the arrogance of placing Western society as the model for the rest of the world. As ecological concerns in particular become more urgent, the impossibility and unsustainability of developing the rest of the world in our image is clear.

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[67] Dichter, 286–94.
[68] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Sustainable Development Goals."
[69] Schuurman, "Modernity, Post-Modernity, and the New Social Movements," 187.

The emergence of theatre for development was facilitated by the trajectory of trends in international development starting in the 1970s. In particular, the embrace of participatory development by mainstream development organizations and funders made participatory theatre an attractive option for many programs. While aid organizations and critics grappled with the push for participatory development, in part based on the work of Paolo Freire, director Augusto Boal was also employing Freire's work in developing the technique that would shortly become a widely used method in theatre for development.

Theatre of the Oppressed: History and Ideology

Boal's Formative Experience

Boal attributed his interest in socially engaged theatre to his formative experiences. He came from a middle class family, born in Rio de Janeiro to Portuguese parents. In his autobiography, he describes examples of inequality and political unrest he witnessed as a boy. He was especially disturbed by the willingness of adults around him to change ideological loyalties with the shifting political winds in Brazil at the time and oppress others for the sake of relative safety or power.[70]

At the encouragement of his father (and because of a crush on a classmate), he took the entrance exam for the National School of Chemistry at the University of Brazil and was admitted. While at university, he participated in amateur drama as the "cultural director" for his cohort. The position gave him the opportunity to see plays and meet significant figures in the Brazilian theatre scene. In 1953, he moved to New York City in the hopes of studying playwriting with John Gassner, while

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[70] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*, 90.

simultaneously continuing his scientific studies at Columbia University to satisfy his father. There he had encounters with literary and theatre artists, notably those associated with the Harlem Renaissance including a friendship with Langston Hughes. At the end of his time in New York, he directed performances of two of his plays, *The Horse and the Saint* and *The House Across the Street*.

Boal names as his biggest theatrical influences Bertolt Brecht and Constantin Stanislavsky. While we often see these two figures as representatives of contrasting styles or even contradictory philosophies of theatre, theatre scholar and Boal biographer Frances Babbage explains that Boal, influenced by Gassner as his mentor, drew selectively from the work of both in a way that countered what Gassner saw in the theatre at the time as an "unresolved conflict between realism and what he termed 'theatricalism,' or anti-realism."[71] Boal himself explains in his autobiography that "Stanislavski, contrary to what certain ill-informed Brechtians would have us believe, never advocated the emotional orgy. In him, we always perceive the idea that governs the character's action: emotion and reason."[72]

For Gassner, the necessary invigoration of the contemporary theatre was therefore to be achieved by moving beyond false perceptions of realism and theatricalism as opposed polarities towards an integration of the two. Gassner argues that the theatre by its nature exploits both illusion and anti-illusion. Audiences need not, therefore, be given either realism or theatricalism, but can enter into a performance's sense of reality at one moment and, at the next, appreciate an effect that they know to be 'theatrical' rather than life-like. Equally, audiences can

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[71] Babbage, *Augusto Boal*, 7.
[72] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*, 148.

experience something as simultaneously 'theatrical' and 'real'. Gassner sought a creative synthesis. He urged playwrights to consider the full vocabulary available to them, and in so doing to challenge the assumption that certain types of dramatic subject belonged to specific theatrical forms.[73]

This principle is essential in the context of Forum Theatre, particularly in the theatre for development applications examined in this study. Characters and actions in the drama must appear realistic and believable to create a scenario that is recognizable to the community. The dialogue must be natural and advance the action for the sake of economy of time and audience attention. In all other ways, rejection of illusion is not only embraced but is usually the only option, as setting, props, and costumes must consist of whatever is readily available. (In a strange twist of stagecraft, the Brechtian representational style may at times cross over into naturalism when the object available to represent something onstage is the actual object from everyday use. For example, if in a certain drama a bowl is needed for a kitchen scene, the available options probably include miming the bowl, or using an actual bowl borrowed from someone's kitchen. In the second case, the prop may be recognized by audience members as so-and-so's bowl, adding an element of realism and personal connection to the overall distancing effect.)[74]

On his return to Brazil, Boal began work as a director with the Arena Theatre in Sao Paolo, which would serve as his artistic home for many years. From 1956-1971, he wrote, produced, and directed numerous productions at Arena and saw the theatre through changes from primarily doing selective realism, to focusing on

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[73] Babbage, *Augusto Boal*, 7.
[74] Olouch-Madiang, Interview with the author, August 2015.

Brazilian authors, to classics that spoke to current social situations, and finally a series of musicals. In 1965, the military coup ousting President João Goulart served as the impetus for the production that would come to define Arena's future work. *Arena Conta Zumbi* (*Arena Tells of Zumbi*). combined Arena's latest focus on musical theatre with the earlier priorities of producing the work of Brazilian writers, and plays that dealt with current issues in Brazilian life. Due to the increasingly repressive nature of the new regime, Boal and the other artists at Arena chose to address the growing political issues through a musical based on a true story of a colony of escaped slaves defending against attack. Through the allegory drawn from Brazilian history, Arena could draw the current oppressive situation into question in the guise of a patriotic tribute.[75]

Though Boal had not yet formulated his philosophy of theatre for social change and the methods that would make up Theatre of the Oppressed by the time he left in 1971, some early elements did appear in the work of Arena Theatre. The convention of the Joker, which would become an essential convention of Forum Theatre, originated with Zumbi. Some other Theatre of the Oppressed forms started at Arena as well, including newspaper theatre. As the political climate in Brazil evolved, the company at Arena also engaged in conversations of who they wanted to serve, who should be their audience, and who they represented onstage. Boal does not rigorously interrogate the romance with which he and the artists of Arena regarded "the people," but his description indicates a recognition that their desire to connect

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[75] Babbage, *Augusto Boal*, 13.

with working class audiences at this point was more populist idealism than substantive pursuit of social justice.

> Our discussion turned more on the political than the aesthetic. The most urgent question that exercised us was: To whom should our theatre be addressed? Our audience was middle class. Workers and peasants were our characters (in itself an advance!) but not our spectators. We did theatre from the perspective which we believed to be 'of the people' - but we did not perform *for* the people! What was the point of representing working class characters and serving them up, as a pre-dinner treat, to the middle class and the rich?
> We longed for a popular audience, without ever seeing it in flesh and blood. 'The people' was a chimera. The dream was to engage in dialogue with 'the people'...to whom we had never been introduced. The people: we did not define what this was, where it worked, what it ate, how it loved, what it did. We knew what it was not: middle class, our audience. We wanted to be at the service of this mysterious and much loved 'people', but...we were not the people...
> We knew that 'the people' did not go to the theatre. Arena, the new Diogenes, would have to venture out with a lantern in search of the 'people', just as the philosopher went in search of 'Man'...Arena and the People, face to face: what a glorious day that would be![76]

After the military coup, censorship and the threat of violence soon lead to end of the Arena Theatre, and Boal was arrested and tortured in 1971 under the vague charges of "defaming" Brazil. He was held for three months, then released into exile under the guise of a furlough to attend a theatre festival in France.[77]

He spent his initial years of exile in Argentina where he earned his living teaching theatre. Frances Babbage describes the difference between his work prior to exile and after: "In his work with Arena, Boal had presented theatre *for* and *about* the oppressed; he had not created a method that would transfer ownership of the theatrical process. The fully participatory approach he now developed aimed to do

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[76] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*, 174–75.
[77] Boal, 298.

this."[78] Boal began to experiment with Invisible Theatre, a method incorporated into Theatre of the Oppressed. He conducted scenes in restaurants with his students, using conversation about the expensive meals they were served to draw attention to issues of poverty and inequality.[79] In 1973, he travelled to work in Peru, where he developed Image Theatre and Forum Theatre, the other major forms that would make up Theatre of the Oppressed.

Forum theatre grew out of the practice of simultaneous dramaturgy, in which the audience would be invited to change the course of the play based on their experience by describing the plot to the actors. Boal describes a specific instance in which simultaneous dramaturgy gave way to the "spectactor" convention of Forum Theatre In 1973 while working on a literacy project for leftist government in rural Peru: "The real beginning [of Forum Theatre] was when I was doing what I called simultaneous playwriting using people's real experiences. In one of these a woman told us what the protagonist should do. We tried her suggestions over and over again but she was never satisfied with our interpretation. So I said, 'Come onto the stage to show us what to do because we cannot interpret your thoughts.' By doing what she did we understood the enormous difference between our interpreting and her own words and actions."[80]

The project in Peru was based on the work of Paulo Freire (whom Boal had met briefly years earlier in Brazil), and the experience had a significant influence on his developing methods. In 1974, Boal published the written treatise of his theory of

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[78] Babbage, *Augusto Boal*, 21.
[79] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*, 303.
[80] Taussig, Schechner, and Boal, "Boal in Brazil, France, the USA: An Interview with Augusto Boal," 56.

the theatre, *Theatre of the Oppressed,* as well as three other books compiling his theatrical methods. Political unrest in Latin America led Boal and his family to relocate to Europe in 1976. Boal directed and taught in various countries in Europe, until he was offered a lectureship at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1978, where his family settled and remained until 1986.

During this time Boal continued to travel and teach all over the world, and this movement contributed to both the spread of his ideas and some of the changes in his philosophy that occurred over time. In Paris, Boal noted that while outward political and economic forms of oppression were less widespread, people faced other problems that required coping strategies. He coined the term "The Cop in the Head" to distinguish between these internal oppressions and those of the actual police (or other outward physical oppression). As Frances Babbage notes, "It was inevitable that as more people began to practice the method, diverse interpretations should enter in. In addition – and crucially, in informing subsequent developments – techniques that had been designed to combat oppression in a Third-World context were now being applied to a First-World reality."[81] Based on Boal's earlier experiences, I question whether the idea of a "third-world context" is really apt. Yes, Brazil would be considered a third-world country, but in the formative periods of his work, Boal was generally not addressing oppression he himself faced. By his own description, Boal and his colleagues at Arena went looking for "the people" and oppressions to address. And, while he sought to empower the oppressed, the form cannot be said to have developed out of their experience.

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[81] Babbage, *Augusto Boal*, 23.

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Ideology and Personality

While it is clear that theatre of the oppressed and Forum theatre value liberation from oppression, empowerment, and dialogue (among other things), ascribing a specific political ideology to Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre is not entirely straightforward. As Jane Plastow notes, "we are mostly reliant on the words of the man himself, and he is a hugely charismatic showman rather than a careful academic."[82] Parts of his philosophy and even political ideology changed over time, and the collective action of early forum theatre was replaced by the social and personal focus detailed in *Rainbow of Desire*.

Figure 2.4. Augusto Boal speaking at a workshop at Riverside Church in New York City, May 2008. Courtesy of Jonathan McIntosh.

In particular, the connection of Boal's philosophy to Marxism has been the subject of recent debate. Certainly, Boal was driven to empower "the oppressed," and

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[82] Plastow, "Practising for the Revolution? The Influence of Augusto Boal in Brazil and Africa," 296.

initially that meant primarily those who were economically, socially, and politically oppressed. He focused on "the people" and peasants, though in his own writing he speaks of empowerment in terms of political power rather than a Marxist economic view. Boal resisted official affiliation with any political party, stating in his autobiography that he "never joined the PC [Communist Party], but I respected most of those who did." Later in his life as a politician and city councilor, Boal supported the Worker's Party, which as a leftist coalition party was not outright Marxist but had Marxist associations.[83]

For our purposes of understanding the origins of Forum Theatre and its transfer to a development context in Africa, is it necessary to know exactly *how* Marxist Boal was? Do we need to know what Boal's personal politics are in order to examine the application of his methods? There are differences between Boal's own politics (and their changes over his lifetime), those he espoused in his practice, and those found in his original writings on Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre. Are these politics (to the extent they are present) essential or inherent to Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre? Do they conflict with the use of Forum Theatre in Development? And finally, does it matter what politics are put forth by Theatre of the Oppressed as a method for its use in Theatre for Development? The important line of inquiry for my purposes is to what extent the underlying philosophy of Theatre of the Oppressed conflicts with the theory and reality of international development.

Boal's work is certainly influenced by Brecht's Marxist aesthetics, though the importance Boal places on this influence changed over the course of his career. In

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[83] Taussig, Schechner, and Boal, "Boal in Brazil, France, the USA: An Interview with Augusto Boal," 52.

Theatre of the Oppressed, Boal writes extensively on the Marxist materialism of Brecht's "epic theatre," contrasting it with the idealism of Hegel's "epic poetry" (lamenting the unfortunate similarity of titles and preferring instead "Marxist Poetics" for Brecht and "Idealist Poetics" for Hegel).

In the essay "Marxist Theatre," he explains, "what is at stake is who, or which term, precedes the other: the subjective or the objective. For idealist poetics, social thought conditions social being; for Marxist poetics, social being conditions social thought. In Hegel's view, the spirit creates the dramatic action; for Brecht, the character's social relations create the dramatic action."[84] Boal identifies the theatrical innovations presented in his earliest work as a direct continuation of Brecht's application of Marxism.[85] For both Brecht and Boal, action is a product of characters' reactions to their economic and social circumstances, in contrast to the "pure" internal motivation of bourgeois characters preferred by Aristotle or Hegel.[86]

Boal also drew from Marxist pedagogue Paulo Freire, who revolutionized adult education and contributed to critical pedagogy[87] with his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Though Freire is well known as an influential figure for Boal, the two never actually worked together, and met in person only a few times.[88] Freire's most significant contribution to critical pedagogy theory and practice was the identification

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[84] Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, 93.

[85] Boal, 93.

[86] Boal, 178.

[87] Critical pedagogy is a body of educational theory and practice that centers the student as a partner in learning rather than subordinate to the teacher, and is open to alternative bodies of knowledge and ways of knowing beyond the dominant canon. Noted theorists include Freire, bell hooks, Henry Giroux, and Paul Willis.
see J.L. Kincheloe, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction,* Chapter 1.

[88] Agnew and Boal, "Theatre of the Oppressed: Interview with Augusto Boal," 41.

and rejection of the "banking model" of traditional education, in which students are seen as vessels to be "filled" with knowledge by the teacher. This model exhibits a clear hierarchy in the classroom with the teacher holding power over the students. Considering Freire developed his philosophy in the context of adult literacy education with indigenous populations, one can easily see where economic and social concerns relevant to Marxism enter into Freire's reenvisioning of the classroom into a space where teacher and student hold equal power to learn through guided inquiry and praxis to develop a fuller consciousness of their situation in the world.

Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* includes a thorough analysis of class and oppression, but Carmel O'Sullivan, in her article "Searching for the Marxist in Boal," calls into question whether Boal shared Freire's understanding of oppression within a Marxist framework.:

> "Certainly, Boal was aware of the dialectical relationships between things but unlike his contemporary [Freire], whom he respectfully calls his 'last father'... he did not infer the logical dialectical relationship between oppressed and oppressor in his practice. Freire recognised that the oppressed must realise that the oppressor exists in a dialectical relationship with them; that without them the oppressor could not exist."[89]

O'Sullivan goes on to argue that in actuality, Boal's philosophy of theatre as a whole is actually to a degree antithetical to Marxism. The intended result of Forum Theatre, that is the action taken by the spect-actors in "real life" inspired by the performance, is too individualistic to actually be materialist, an essential quality of Marxism. Where Marxism is concerned with the overthrow of the whole capitalist system, Boal is decidedly not. Even in the ideal Forum Theatre scenario, only the oppressed individuals' behavior is affected. Forum Theatre is in fact inherently

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[89] O'Sullivan, "Searching for the Marxist in Boal," 90.

idealistic, hinging on the independent behavior of "spectactors" and therefore in opposition to materialism. She continues with a critique of Boal's apparent pick-and-choose approach to socialism:

> Callinicos (1995, p. 11) insists that one cannot accept Marx's scientific theory and reject his revolutionary politics: the two go together. That is the fundamental point about Marxism--it is, in Antonio Gramsci's words, the philosophy of practice. Gramsci started to unite his ideological stance with a practical approach early in his career, and 'This unification was what enabled him to start creating useful theory for the working class' (Davidson, 1977, p. 82), a process that Boal, sadly, seems not to have understood. His inadequate attempts at theorising openly contradict his practice, and are thus so misleading and vague as to be destructive and manipulative. It would appear that he has fared well from being associated with the ideas of Brecht and Marx, who devoted their lives and careers to the cause of the socialist revolution. He adds little or nothing to existing theory or practice. His buzzword is 'theatre for social change' and apart from its continuous utterance by devoted acolytes, it remains a vacuous phrase, in sharp contrast to its worthy meaning for both Brecht and Marx.[90]

O'Sullivan's reference to "devoted acolytes" brings up the most difficult aspect of parsing out Boal's ideology and that bared out his theatrical methods. Boal, as noted by Jane Plastow, was a theatre practitioner rather than a scholar and a bit of a guru figure to many in the theatre for social change field.[91] He and his surrogates, including his son Julian and his translator Adrian Jackson, carefully mediated and shaped his image as his popularity grew, seemingly with the intention of maintaining the broadest possible appeal and application for his work. In the preface to the 1992 English edition of *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, Jackson claims outright that Boal rejects the labels Marxist and Brechtian, and that "such limiting categories are inimical to the whole spirit of the Theatre of the Oppressed."[92]

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[90] O'Sullivan, 95.

[91] Plastow, "Practising for the Revolution? The Influence of Augusto Boal in Brazil and Africa," 301.

[92] Jackson, quoted in O'Sullivan, "Searching for the Marxist in Boal," 86.

While Boal's association with dogmatic Marxism is tenuous at best, he was an outspoken critic of global capitalism and imperialism throughout his life. In particular, he often criticized the United States political and economic imperialism. He felt his home country of Brazil was too reliant on the US and placed too much importance on their relationship.[93] The United States had in fact helped to install the Military regime that eventually had Boal imprisoned and exiled. In later years, he criticized the US's involvement in wars.[94] He also spoke against the system of international debt by which poor countries are never able to completely get out of debt.[95]

Boal expresses concern with colonialism, though it is more through the lens of observation than activism connected with his work. In his autobiography, he describes his experience traveling in indigenous areas of Latin America for the first time, saying

> "What the Incas in South America forgot to perfect - and in central America, the Aztecs, Mayas, Toltecas, Chichimecas, and other aboriginal peoples were the tools of war. The Spanish and Portuguese invaders had a field day. Neither gunpowder, nor those magical tanks of wars, horses, existed in the Americas; to indigenous eyes, horse and rider seemed like strange animals - inspiring respect and fear. I knew this from reading books; but the impact of seeing these sad faces was enormous! I felt like an invader, an occupier. I felt guilt, though I was not to blame."[96]

While Boal maintains that his focus is always on oppression, his later work indicates a movement toward a social or personal focus. This was somewhat influenced by time in first world. He explains, "The expression 'rehearsal for

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[93] Gonzales, "Famed Brazilian Artist Augusto Boal on the 'Theater of the Oppressed.'"

[94] Goodman, "Augusto Boal, Founder of the Theater of the Oppressed, Dies at 78."

[95] Gonzales, "Famed Brazilian Artist Augusto Boal on the 'Theater of the Oppressed.'"

[96] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*, 118.

revolution,' as I wrote it in my earlier books, sounds as though I were thinking only about bloody revolutions like the French, Soviet, Chinese, or Cuban revolutions. But to change mentalities can also be a revolution, to understand one's self better can be the same."[97] However, Boal does stipulate that some form of transgression is necessary for change to occur.[98]

With this understanding, or perhaps complication, of Boal's relationship with Marxism, we can return to the evolution of international development and its history of Marxist criticism. It is hardly up for debate that development, even that which most heartily embraces "participation," is anti-Marxist and reinforces neoliberal power structures. This has been an ongoing theme in development discourse and responses to such criticism, like the incorporation of Paolo Freire's theories in the participatory movement, have arguably had some positive effect. The question then is, has the use of Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed been adapted to serve the neoliberal agenda, or is it countering that agenda while being used within the same system? From here, we will return to the African continent to explore the earliest uses of theatre for development, both in service of colonial/neocolonial powers and against them, and the eventual arrival of Theatre of the Oppressed.

Origins of Theatre for Development in Africa

Colonial Didactic Theatre

Projects that resembled Theatre for Development in their use of performance to address living conditions were produced even before independence by colonial governments and their proxies in schools, health workers, and other fields.

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[97] Agnew and Boal, "Theatre of the Oppressed: Interview with Augusto Boal," 63.
[98] Agnew and Boal, 63.

Christopher Kamlogera, late professor of Theatre at the University of Malawi says, "As early as in the 1930s, colonial health workers, secondary school teachers, agricultural and community extension workers, were using drama to sell the virtues of modernisation, cash crop productivity, and financial prudence."[99] Some of these programs took advantage of the educational aspects of traditional African dramatic forms. For example, in Uganda the oral tradition of poetic narration of events in the community was originally suppressed by colonial authorities, however "the original Ugandan epic form persisted and flourished, continuing to be a reliable source of information, which the colonial administration ironically turned to during the 1940s for its economic campaigns."[100]

In his 2005 doctoral dissertation, Odihambo Joseph notes that "during this time in the history of Africa [theatre] was used to entrench colonial policies and ideologies. The philosophy of the practice at this time inclined more towards conformism than radical transformation."[101] While I question whether radical transformation has ever really been the focus of Theatre for Development, the point here is that the application of theatre toward colonial goals, primarily spreading ideology and conformity, and secondarily demonstrating the benevolence of colonial hegemony at this time was explicit. The point of these theatrical performances was to encourage and enforce "correct" behavior in line with the aspirations of colonial control. Scholars including Joseph and Mlama label these colonial theatre projects

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[99] Kamlongera, quoted in Mlama, *Culture and Development: The Popular Theatre Approach in Africa*, 68.
[100] Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts," 85.
[101] Joseph, "Theatre for Development in Kenya: In Search of and Effective Procedure and Methodology," 30.

that promote health, education, infrastructure goals as early Theatre for Development.[102] . This is telling of the uncomfortable similarities, particularly from the African perspective, between the colonial project and the development one. Following independence, some African governmental agencies took up this type of theatre-for-hegemony where colonial institutions left off.[103]

Early Postcolonial Outreach Theatre

The University Traveling Theatre movement in the 1960s bridged the gap between colonial theatre and Theatre for Development in East Africa. These groups primarily formed after independence with impetus from expatriate university professors. The first of these, growing out of a history of socially conscious theatre at Makerere University in Uganda was the Makerere Free Traveling Theatre, formed in 1963.[104] Similar efforts were founded at other African Universities shortly after, and the movement was characterized by a primary goal of bringing Western and Western-style theatre to rural areas, rather than specific development-related aims. Mlama critiques the traveling theatre movement identifying several issues with the groups from the perspective of both theatre for development and popular theatre:

> First is the assumption implicit in the idea of "taking theatre to the people" that those people do not have a theatre of their own. Travelling Theatre represented an imposition of outsiders' agendas and analysis. One is reminded of what Cabral observes of undemocratic and non-participatory processes of development. In travelling theatre, too, the peasants were left out of the action, forced into the conventional role of watching someone else's interpretation of the reproduction of their culture of silence. They remained the passive

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[102] I disagree with this label because I think the association with the development industry in the form of multilateral organizations and international NGOs versus the presence of a formal colonial government is an important distinction
[103] Mlama, *Culture and Development: The Popular Theatre Approach in Africa*, 69.
[104] Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts," 102.

recipients of outside ideas, robbed of an opportunity to voice their own thinking. Second, the travelling Theatre was embarking on a futile venture to spread a middle-class type of theatre among the peasantry. The objective was to influence the people to start similar groups all over the country. It did not strike these theatre artists that this was an impossible task due to the alien nature of that theatre and the lack of a base for its possible development that emerges out of a people's way of life and not from a one-day show by a visiting group. The travelling theatre also leaned more towards the provision of entertainment, emulating the bourgeoisie theatre from which it emerged. Like the urban-based theatre movements, it did not bring out the more significant ideological functions of theatre. Little effort was made to use the potential of theatre to analyse problems and to offer criticism. This was contrary to the characters of the popular theatre forms that normally combine entertainment with education and critical analysis.[105]

Mlama draws comparisons between the problematic elements of university traveling theatres and poorly-conducted theatre for development; however, traveling theatre did not share the same goals as theatre for development and so while I would categorize the traveling theatre movement as a precursor for theatre for development due to its structural similarities, I would not consider it theatre for development in itself.[106] The Makerere Free Traveling Theatre received financial support from the Ugandan Department of Planning and Community Development and the British Council, (as well as several corporate sponsors), but the intended impact was cultural rather than social or economic.[107] The influence of the movement on theatre for development is primarily seen in some companies structure and touring model, whereas the content of the traveling theatre plays had little to do with development and has been replaced with participatory and popular forms.

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[105] Mlama, *Culture and Development: The Popular Theatre Approach in Africa*, 65.
[106] Mlama, 65.
[107] Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts," 93.

Theatre for Development

Often cited as the first true theatre for development project, the *Laedza Batanani* project in Botswana first incorporated theatre in 1974. The decision to use theatre as a method of engaging the community and gathering interest was made collectively by Batswana community councilor Jeppe Kelepile and Canadian expatriate adult educators Ross Kidd and Martin Byram. *Laedza Batanani*, loosely translated as "community awakening," was organized by the adult literacy program at the University of Botswana with financial support from the Canadian University Support Organization. The *Laedza Batanani* project was formed in response to a drop in community participation in village leadership, family and social life, and development efforts, particularly among men, caused in part by economic factors that lead Botswana men to seek employment in neighboring South Africa. Because the men were traveling back and forth over long distances to work, families encountered social and economic hardships.

Ross Kidd applied his experience with the work of Paulo Freire to the project, and while the program was operated as part of a literacy program, its purview extended beyond adult education.[108.] According to Kidd and Byram, the intention of the *Laedza Batanani* project was to combat growing apathy toward community participation in rural areas. This goal is not well defined in terms of improving specific and measurable development outcomes, or markers of adult education. However, as part of the effort to engage community participation, the early phases of each cycle of the project enlisted community input to identify more specific social and economic problems that they felt should be addressed; this included social issues

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[108] Byam, *Community in Motion: Theatre for Development in Africa*, 39.

of family and marital conflict and the effect on community and family life of migrant labor and the drift to the towns, as well as health issues of nutrition, sanitation, and communicable diseases. The *Laedza Batanani* project was also influenced by Concert Party theatre, a West African form of traveling popular theatre that had invigorated interest in politics and culture, and the program staff hoped to have similar success at engaging communities through performance.[109.]

The program included early planning meetings with village leaders, followed by actors workshops in which the participants developed plays that dealt with the issues that had been identified. The groups of actors then prepared the production elements and took the plays on tour to surrounding areas. After the presentations, the audience was split into small groups for follow-up discussions. This continued annually for several years, with adjustments being made to increase the reach of the program. Overall, the program was not very effective, as admitted even by its organizers. Though the original concerns were those of diverse members of the community, in reality most of the input came from village leaders rather than the families dealing directly with the circumstances. Kidd and Byram reflect that the project *"started with an inadequate understanding of the power structures within which it was working and an unrealistic expectation of the power of popular theatre."*[110.] Though the program has drawn various criticisms about its effectiveness, it is important as a starting point for the history of theatre for development. Many projects since *Laedza Batanani* have drawn upon its successes and failures, and its

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[109] Byam, *Community in Motion: Theatre for Development in Africa*; Cole, *Ghana's Concert Party Theatre.*
[110] Kidd and Byram, "Demystifying Pseudo-Freirian Development: The Case of Laedza Batanani," 103.

combination of western influence and grassroots organizing provides a paradigm through which to view later projects.

Laedza Batanani fit into the participatory trend in the development field at the time, utilizing theatre as a tool to engage the community. Kidd and Byram describe the situation at the time saying, "Paulo Freire has become a household word over the last decade and many development workers have attempted to implement his ideas, often without an adequate understanding of the conscientization process and the Copernican shift it requires in educational practice."[111] Their attempt to fully realize Freirian pedagogy with the Laedza Batanani project was working against participatory development's ongoing move toward what Pablo Leal refers to as "buzzword" status in the development field. However, the choice to apply theatre to this project at this time is significant; the seemingly natural choice to use theatre in conjunction with community participation forecasts the affinity with which participatory theatre would be embraced as a method as participation becomes an increasingly essential part of development interventions.

Theatre of the Oppressed in Africa

According to scholar of African theatre David Kerr, the Ahmadu Bello University Theatre Collective in Nigeria was influenced by Boal's work in their performances as early as 1977. The group was established by a group of Nigerian theatre artists and expatriate university instructors, and was similar in format to the Laedza Batanani Project. It is not clear how the group came to be aware of Boal's work. The organizers sought to improve upon earlier theatre for development by

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[111] Kidd and Byram, 91.

increasing community participation and allowing real collaboration between artists and local citizens. Kerr claims the Ahmadu Bello group had a "relative independence from official development agencies," and the purpose of the group's endeavors seemed to be more focused on applying, testing, and improving the principles of TfD rather than achieving any predetermined development goal.[112] Over the course of several projects, the group experimented with varying configurations of process-oriented playmaking and roleplaying, with community members taking on more active roles in the dramas as the group went on. The group employed simultaneous dramaturgy in rehearsals and performances, though they did not strictly utilize the Forum Theatre format or describe their work as Forum Theatre.[113]

The *Atelier-Théâtre Burkinabé* (Burkinabe Theatre Workshop) in Burkina Faso was another early adopter of Theatre of the Oppressed in Africa. The group was founded in 1978 by Prosper Kompaoré, a director and Professor of Theatre at the University of Burkina Faso. The group was founded to produce theatre for development that was "rooted in the Burkinan and African cultural context."[114] They began incorporating Forum Theatre into their approach in 1983.[115] According to Plastow, "Kompaoré saw much of the thinking behind Forum Theatre as similar to indigenous African participatory performance forms, and sought to synthesise the two."[116]

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[112] Kerr, *African Popular Theatre*, 162.

[113] Kerr, 162; Amkpa, *Theatre and Postcolonial Desires*, 94–110.

[114] Kompaore, quoted in Plastow, 298.

[115] Roy, "Les Caracté et L'Évolution du Théâtre pour le Développement en Afrique Noire Francophone: Le Cas Du Burkina Faso," 33.

[116] Plastow, "Practising for the Revolution? The Influence of Augusto Boal in Brazil and Africa," 298.

According to Jessica Kaahwa, the first use of Theatre of the Oppressed in Uganda was also in 1986 as part of the Nattyole Primary Health Care Project. Uganda Ministry of Health official Jonathan Muganga was studying theatre at Makerere University at the time, and had the idea to implement Boal's Forum Theatre as a participatory alternative to prevailing didactic forms of health communication which were failing to achieve results.[117]

Adoption and Popularity of Theatre for Development and Forum Theatre

After the uptake of Forum Theatre in Africa in the 1980s, practitioners and scholars tend to frame theatre for development programs in relation to Freire and Forum Theatre, and it is more noteworthy at this point if programs deviate. Scholars and practitioners of African theatre for development including L. Dale Byam, David Kerr, and Ross Kidd present programs that use Forum Theatre or Theatre of the Oppressed while also using the theories of Freire and Boal as a primary theoretical framework to analyze them, resulting in an insular and possibly over-narrow view in an academic context. During my research among professional and volunteer practitioners in Uganda and Kenya, it was common to hear the terms theatre for development and Forum Theatre used interchangeably.

For such a complete absorption and proliferation of Forum Theatre into theatre for development practice, a method would have to be embraced by stakeholders at every level of the development industry, from multinational funding organizations to on-the-ground aid workers and theatre makers to community

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[117] Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts," 106.

participants and audiences. This is certainly the case for Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre; so, what makes Forum Theatre appealing to all of these groups?

The original influx of Boal's methods into development applications in Africa were associated with universities, and academics, artists, and activists, both African and expatriate, were the first to embrace Theatre of the Oppressed. It is possible that the postcolonial climate and similarities of Boal's ideology with postcolonial thought made it appealing and accessible to intellectuals at the time. The work of Paulo Freire had already been influential in anti-colonialist education in Africa, and likely paved way for the spread of Boal's ideas and methods. Similarly, the common threads of Marxism and anti-imperialism created a natural affinity for development professionals and artists seeking to harness grassroots postcolonial sentiment.

Frances Babbage, biographer of Augusto Boal states that "The flexibility and accessibility of Boal's methods have encouraged widespread dissemination" worldwide.[118] Many scholars and practitioners have argued that Forum Theatre has special resonance for African artists and audiences because of its performance aesthetics and accessibility. Not only is Forum Theatre adaptable to local tastes and cultures, in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa it already shares characteristics that make it appealing and legible to African audiences. Prospere Kampoare, cited above, was drawn to Forum Theatre because of similarities he saw between it and indigenous performance. Christopher Odihambo Joseph quotes communications scholar Joy Morrison who argues that Forum Theatre is particularly apt for development communication in Africa "because it has strong roots in African culture, because it is

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[118] Babbage, *Augusto Boal*, 1.

an oral medium, […] because it is interactive, and therefore participatory, and because it involves a democratic exchange of information."[119] Specifically, the convention of the joker as a go-between for the action and the audience and the dialogue that results echo question-and-answer techniques from East African storytelling, and lend themselves to riddling, proverbs, and call and response.[120]

As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is a clear connection between the movement toward participatory development and the embracing of Forum Theatre by development workers and NGOs. The direct influence of Freire and critical pedagogy on both the participatory development movement and on Boal's techniques would indicate a natural fit of philosophy, objectives, and method. In practice, however, participatory development and its associated techniques can be undermined by the bureaucracy and logistical requirements of large funding and administering organizations. In the case of Forum Theatre, the increasing popularity and application in larger and more professionalized projects contributed to potentially conflicting objectives. The pedagogical aspects of this conflict are discussed at length in chapter four.

While the earliest theatre for development projects grew out of universities and education programs, government agencies and NGOs embraced the technique in the 1990s and demand for TfD and Forum Theatre practitioners exploded. Ugandan theatre scholar Jessica Kaahwa describes in her 2004 article "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts" that in Uganda, increasing demand from donor agencies and NGOs

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[119] Morrison, "Forum Theatre in West Africa" quoted in Joseph, "Theatre for Development in Kenya: In Search of and Effective Procedure and Methodology," 52.
[120] Marhoum and Samper, "Kenya - Folklore"; "A Closer Look at Storytelling in Africa."

following the success of the Nattyole Health project led to a perception of Theatre for Development as a potential money-making opportunity. This resulted in the proliferation of unqualified groups marketing themselves as TfD experts. The theatre department at Makerere University, which already had an established TfD program, soon stepped in to connect NGOs with qualified practitioners and became a sort of clearinghouse for connecting TfD artists, particularly Makerere alumni, with interested organizations.[121]

Kenyan theatre artist Lenin Ogolla, writing in 1997, noted the same problem in both Uganda and Kenya:

> Today, many development workers especially in the Donor-supported Non-Governmental Organizations have a fair sense of the power of Drama and Theatre. The relative lack of expertise in this field however makes them gullible to any professional idlers who prefer to call themselves thespians. TFD has been in recent years patronized by the strangest of fellows whose backgrounds in basic theatre are questionable...In Kenya today, the civic education movement has created several opportunities for quacks who want to turn the fight for democracy into an industry.[122]

This observation is supported by the circumstances surrounding the development of Magnet Theatre, a particular style of Forum Theatre used by the NGO PATH in Kenya. Magnet Theatre was created by PATH employees in the early 2000s after the TfD group they had contracted to conduct a health behavior program was found to be unqualified and corrupt, using program funds for personal gain.[123]

The rapid popularity of using Forum Theatre in TfD was aided by what Christopher Odihambo Joseph calls the "conferencization" of theatre for development. Gatherings for development workers to network and share information

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[121] Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts," 106.
[122] Ogolla, cited in Joseph, "Theatre for Development in Kenya: In Search of and Effective Procedure and Methodology," 13–14.
[123] Gopinath, Interview with the author.

about TfD have been happening for as long as TfD itself; In 1979 the Chalimbana Workshop was held in Zambia, with the intention of improving on the experience of the Laedza Batanani project. From there, workshops, forums, and conferences dealing specifically with theatre for development in Africa have proliferated throughout Africa and the world. Joseph acknowledges the significant impact of such gatherings on the spread and practice of TfD, as well as the problems with the trend:

> The practices, methods and techniques shared and tested at the conferences determine the trends and introduce new ways of working with the practice of Theatre for Development throughout the continent. Though these conferences are very important, they have their own problems. It is not very easy for those who attend the conferences to disseminate the new knowledge and experience among other practitioners in their countries. The reasons for this are many. But the most obvious is usually the cumbersome task of organising a local workshop. The implications of such an undertaking are often too enormous. And if the dissemination does not percolate down to the grassroots, then the very objectives of the international conferences are defeated.[124]

This phenomenon is not limited to TfD, and in fact fits into the greater context of information sharing in the development field in general. As Joseph indicates, this emphasis on connecting and sharing at the international level can draw focus from the necessary community focus of Forum Theatre for development.

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[124] Joseph, "Theatre for Development in Kenya: In Search of and Effective Procedure and Methodology," 67.

Chapter 3: International Exchanges and the Performance of Aid

While Augusto Boal's initial practices were focused on the local and on enacting change "from the bottom up," theatre for development initiatives that use Forum Theatre and other Theatre of the Oppressed methods are often supported financially and logistically by western governmental agencies like USAID, multilateral institutions, and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), creating a "top down," and West-to-East flow of influence. The global movement of money, people, and ideas in international development is complex, and one theatre for development performance (as part of a larger development project) might be the result of a combination of funding, expertise, and influence from several international and local government agencies or NGOs. In this chapter, I examine the Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation (FACT) project, funded by USAID and spearheaded by the Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH). Through this program, I will trace the movement of money, people, and ideas between the United States and Uganda where the program is being conducted to determine what is exchanged between the United States and East Africa over the "lifecycle" of a development theatre project.

Figure 3.1. Map showing Washington, DC, USA; Kampala, Uganda; Kisumu, Kenya. Adapted from worldatlas.com.

The nature of development practice and discourse reinforces the unequal power relationship between "developed" and "developing" nations and solidifies national borders. It is enacted and perpetuated by the nation-state, and is designed to ultimately serve Western interests as it works to alleviate poverty and disease.[125] Critics of international development have made a compelling case that through its history and as it exists today development is a self-perpetuating neoliberal endeavor that by definition re-inscribes the dominance of the United States and Europe over the Global South.[126] The flow of money and the networks of people created by projects

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[125] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."
[126] Escobar, *Encountering Development*; Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*.

like FACT reflect the larger patterns of networks in international development as a global system.

What is unique about theatre for development is its potential additional impact on local communities due to the harnessing of local talent, energy, and perspectives through the act of creating performances and engaging in dialogue. As explored in chapter 2, community participation has become a major concern for international development following criticisms of its early focus on economic and technological advancement. The actual effectiveness of attempts to engage local populations in the development process vary according to many factors, and in some cases seem little more than lip service to the idea that local input is now considered necessary for any development initiative. Theatre for development is one of many techniques aimed at increasing participation (For further discussion of participatory development methods, see Chapter 2).

The layers of performance present in an aid project such as FACT go beyond the actual theatrical production to national culture and identity for both the donor country and the recipient. Through visual cues and the presence of U. S. representatives, the United States performs global power and generosity toward other nations for citizens of developing countries and the rest of the world. Locals perform engagement in their own development, which in nations like Uganda has become a sort of national duty and source of pride. Participating in, and celebrating, the progress of improving Uganda is regarded as a mark of a good citizen. Through the funding of theatre for development-based projects, the US exports not only money

and knowledge overseas, but also an image of themselves as a powerful and benevolent force in the world.

How Money Performs: USAID Funding and Control

The beginning of the international trajectory of the FACT program is the Washington DC headquarters of USAID. USAID describes itself as "the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential."[127] The agency has a targeted strategy for directing resources toward specific issues and geographic areas that align with USAID's mission and the interests of the US Government. USAID development projects are awarded through an application process that applies to all US Government partnerships and contracts. While there are similarities to a typical grant process, the process is unique and can be quite cumbersome to those not familiar with the process. For this reason, certain NGOs specialize in winning and implementing USAID project awards while others do not; working with USAID requires specialized expertise and resources that are a huge commitment for an NGO. Fundraising staff must be familiar with USAID proposals and processes, and Monitoring and Evaluation specialists must be able to provide the specific reports and feedback required by USAID.

USAID is structured into fourteen bureaus by three categories (See Figure 3.2.). Four of the bureaus are categorized as "headquarters," which do not directly administer programs: the Bureau for Foreign Assistance, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, Bureau for Management, and the Bureau for Policy, Planning and

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[127] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."

Learning. There are five geographic bureaus (Africa, Asia, Europe and Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East), and five functional bureaus including the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, Bureau for Food Security, the Bureau for Global Health, and the U.S. Global Development Lab. FACT is administered by the Bureau for Global Health, through the Office of Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition, and the division of Research, Technology, and Utilization.
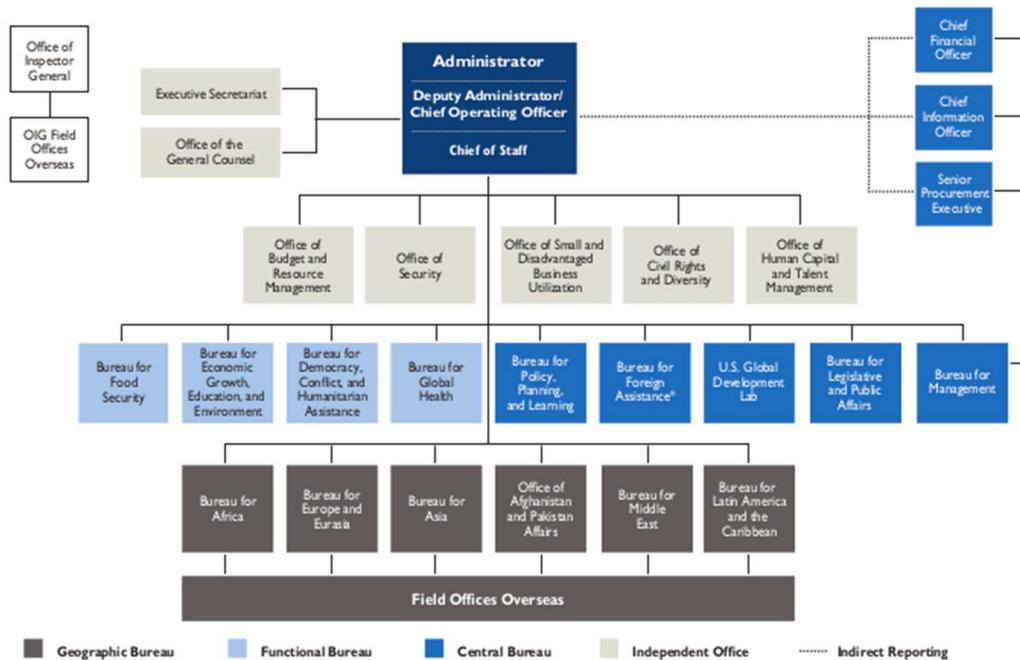
Figure 3.2. USAID Organization Flowchart. USAID.

USAID is funded by appropriation from Congress. Ultimately, money spent by USAID comes from the U.S. taxpayers. Foreign aid is often used politically as an area of the budget that should be cut. In reality, all foreign assistance makes up only 1 percent of the federal budget ($22.7 billion in 2016), yet polling has shown that the majority of Americans believe the US spends 25 percent of the budget on foreign

aid.[128, 129] USAID determines budget priorities by geographic area and development issue (global health, education, food aid, etc.) Through grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts, USAID disburses money to NGOs and educational institutions, for-profit development organizations and businesses, and foreign governments and organizations.

USAID breaks their process of awarding grants and contracts into an eight-step process (add visual). The first step is project design, in which USAID derives project goals from established strategies and priorities. USAID's institutional priorities are 1) increase food security, 2) promote global health and healthcare systems, 3) reduce climate change and promote low emissions growth, 4) promote sustainable economic growth (through the private sector), 5) expand democracy, 6) support disaster relief and preparation, and 7) respond to conflict and instability. USAID also places front and center the role of international development in national economic and security interests. The mission of the agency is "We partner to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies while *advancing our security and prosperity*."[130] USAID overtly incorporates political factors in its own development priorities. This is in contrast to, for example, the Millennium Development Goals, which were written and ratified collaboratively by representatives from 189 countries and do not represent political interests of individual nations. In 2011, USAID became part of the State Department under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, which was interpreted as a further linking of

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[128] USAID, "Budget."
[129] The Kaiser Family Foundation, "2013 Survey of Americans on the U.S. Role in Global Health."
[130] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."

development aid with national security interests.[131] USAID has specific priorities for each country they work in, known as a 5-year Country Development Cooperation Strategy. Programs are planned and designed from these set priorities as well as "substantial input from partner governments, industry, civil society, and development partners to understand challenges and resources available."[132]

Once the program has been designed, the next steps are to identify the type of contract or assistance needed (by NGOs or other contractors) and conduct market research on the goods, services, or other assistance needed. USAID funding assistance is divided into two types, established by US Government policy for all public-private partnerships: Grants, and cooperative agreements. Grants are less prescribed, and the agency defines them as "transfer of funds to another party for the implementation of programs that contribute to the public good and further the objectives of the Foreign Assistance Act."[133] The other type, is known as a "cooperative agreement," and both APHIA Plus and FACT are awarded by this type of funding. It is the policy that a government agency "shall use a cooperative agreement ... when ... substantial involvement is expected between the executive agency and the ... recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement."[134] This means USAID is involved and oversees the project throughout its execution, and provides specific guidelines about the goals and methods to be used.

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[131] McKelvy, "Hillary's Power Grab."
[132] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."
[133] USAID, "Responding to a Solicitation."
[134] Allen, "What's the Difference between a 'grant' and a 'cooperative Agreement'?: A Discussion of the Issues."

By law, all US government contracts must be advertised in a way that is accessible to the public, and the process of alerting the public to the funding opportunity happens in two steps. First, the opportunity is announced via an "Agency Business Forecast" on the US government business opportunity websites. According to USAID, "These forecasts provide tentative information about possible opportunities from USAID Headquarters (Washington, D.C.) or overseas field missions and are periodically (quarterly) updated."[135] Then, the formal solicitation is posted in the form of a Request for Proposals (RfP).[136] Usually, USAID contracts require teams of NGOs apply for the project collaboratively. One of the NGOs will be the "prime," meaning that they are ultimately responsible for designing and overseeing the implementation of the project. The other implementing partners work with the prime on specific aspects of the program. To illustrate, the prime grantee for FACT is the Georgetown University Institute for Reproductive Health, which partners with the International Center for Research on Women, the Population Media Center, and Save the Children to implement the project.

Requests for proposals from USAID, even for grants, are often for a very specific project. Through the project planning and research process, USAID has usually already determined many aspects the way in which they want the work done, or even the organization they want to do it. Danielle McCadden, the project manager for FACT, told me sometimes the RfPs are so specific that it is clear what organization the call is intended for. In their case, the RfP for FACT was essentially a continuation of a previous project that happened to be ending and the description used

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[135] USAID, "Grant and Contract Process."
[136] USAID.

the exact language that IRH uses in their work. While it was always possible someone else could apply and be awarded the funding, it was fairly obvious to the staff of Georgetown IRH that the project was intended directly for them.

After a project is awarded to a prime organization (the organization responsible for leading the intervention), USAID enters into a contract or cooperative agreement with the awardee. Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health was awarded 19.8 million dollars for the FACT program as a five-year "cooperative agreement" in 2013. The money is transferred to the prime, which then spearheads the implementation of the project with assistance from the collaborating partners; in the case of FACT, this includes Save the Children International and the International Center for Research on Women. Throughout the program period, IRH staff will continue to coordinate with USAID through scheduled meetings and periodic reports.

The awarding of the project was only the first step in the transfer of resources from the United States to Uganda, though it is complicated and takes place over several months. The next phase in the project begins in Washington DC, where Georgetown IRH and their partners serve as the go-between connecting the United States and Uganda through the project planning process, implementation, and reporting.

The FACT Program and Transnational Project Planning

Once the project was awarded to IRH, Danielle McCadden, the staff member in charge of managing the program, began coordinating staff from IRH and the implementing partners to plan the interventions that make up the project. In this section, I will unravel the back and forth movement of information and people

involved in the research, planning, implementation, and analysis of the FACT program. The FACT project is categorized by USAID as a "research, intervention, and technical assistance project," meaning its primary objective is to test a hypothesis about development methods. The resulting information will then in theory be applied to other USAID projects on a larger scale if it is shown to be effective. The FACT project is being implemented at sites in Nepal, India, Uganda, and Rwanda. In Uganda, the program is working in Karamoja, a region in Northern Uganda that faces unique challenges to development and maternal and child health. I am focusing here specifically on the Uganda program and the movement of resources, ideas, and people between IRH headquarters in Washington DC, and the program site in Karamoja in northern Uganda.

The ways in which the actual movement of people and ideas occur are dictated by technology and global mobility. Transnational exchange of ideas and program oversight occurs primarily via telephone and electronic communication. With rapidly improving telecommunications infrastructure, telephone and email are reliable ways of conveying information and written material between IRH headquarters in DC and program staff in Uganda. Program staff also travel to implement and oversee aspects of the program. Washington DC-based staff have traveled to the program site several times over the course of the project; certain Uganda-based staff have also travelled to DC, though less frequently. IRH relies on their Ugandan staff in-country to implement the plans as communicated to them, and to report back on the day-to-day details of how the project is going. For the ongoing maintenance of the project and the final evaluation, IRH staff in the US receive

copious notes on every event related to the project, describing what was done by whom, and how the participants, audience, and bystanders responded.

USAID to IRH: Securing the Cooperative Agreement

Certain aspects of the project, including the target locations, were determined before USAID even advertised the cooperative agreement opportunity for FACT. However, according to Danielle, in many ways the request for proposals for the FACT project was relatively open ended in comparison to other USAID projects they had applied for and received. It also was apparent to them that the RfP was intended for IRH specifically; their previous fertility awareness project, FAM, was ending in September 2013, and FACT was set to be awarded in October of the same year. The language used in the proposal referred specifically to work only IRH was doing, and it seemed clearly intended to be a follow up to the previous project. This is not uncommon for USAID projects; while any organization could technically apply, the program and RfP are based on previous work and so the NGO with that experience are at an obvious advantage.[137]

In order to respond to the call for proposals, IRH and partners had to design an initial plan to test the two related hypotheses, which USAID state as "1) Improved fertility awareness increases FP use and improves reproductive health outcomes. 2) Expanded access to FAM (fertility awareness-based methods) improves uptake of family planning (FP) and reduces unintended pregnancies."[138] The solution IRH proposed in their application consisted of four interventions. The first three have

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[137] McCadden, Interview with the Author.
[138] Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health, "FACT Overview EDEAN Solution Goals and Fertility Awareness."

remained relatively similar to their original plan, but the EDEAN intervention (now using Forum Theatre) has changed drastically. The goal of EDEAN is to diffuse fertility awareness information throughout the target community, in order to then test the above hypotheses. Based on IRHs previous work in other geographic areas, EDEAN was originally planned and proposed as a graphic novel series. However, formative research in Karamoja suggested other more effective possibilities, leading eventually to the decision to use Forum Theatre.[139]

Field Research

Danielle and other members of the program team (both Washington and Uganda-based) conducted this formative research in Karamoja over a period of two months in 2015. They convened 20 focus group sessions with target community members, totaling 160 people. They also conducted individual interviews with four community leaders, four local health providers and four Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)[140] center workers, totaling twelve in-depth conversations. The formative research report indicates that children are highly valued in Karamoja, and pregnancy is generally considered positive by both men and women, whether planned or unplanned. However, child spacing and anything that improved child health and well-being was also viewed positively. Traditionally, couples observed long period of abstinence after birth of a child due to men grazing cattle away from the home, but this has become less common. While many traditional social norms regarding gender

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[139] McCadden, Interview with the Author.

[140] The Early Childhood Care and Development centers are a network of facilities in Uganda providing early childhood education and other support for parents of young children. Some centers are managed and supported by local or international NGOs, while others are run by local governments.

roles, marriage, and family persist, many of those interviewed had negative perceptions of those who resisted modern advances like health care. All were generally aware of modern family planning methods, but many had misconceptions. Regarding the dissemination and use of fertility and family planning information, women generally knew much more than men, and were perceived as being the responsible party for family planning. Men's resistance to talking about and using family planning was connected to their relative lack of knowledge.[141]

One of the major parts of IRH's formative research was on the best way to disseminate fertility awareness information through the community. In my personal interviews and planning sessions, Danielle and the rest of the planning team placed significant emphasis on the enthusiasm demonstrated by community leaders for forum theatre as a communication method. In the focus groups conducted as part of the initial research, community members had also indicated that they were familiar with theatre for development, and other organizations working in the area had used theatre to address other local issues.[142]

However, in the written summary of formative research, "drama" was only mentioned briefly as one potential solution.[143] The written materials are intended in part for USAID reporting, therefore the comparative lack of emphasis on theatre as a method may indicate that the report's authors (who are not identified by name) believe that USAID would not respond well to the use of theatre. It was noteworthy that in the planning retreat we spent nearly all the time discussing the planning and

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[141] Institute for Reproductive Health et al., "FACT Formative Research Results."
[142] McCadden, Interview with the Author.
[143] Institute for Reproductive Health et al., "FACT Formative Research Results."

structure of the theatre training and performance, while the written materials focused almost entirely on the health information content and health services. I believe the minimal mention of theatre also indicates a lack of knowledge of theatre for development, and a lack of confidence in the knowledge they do have, on the part of the program planners (a possibility supported by comments made to me by staff that they felt a bit out of their element in planning a theatre intervention).

Project Planning

In October 2015, I attended a three-day planning retreat for the FACT program at the IRH office in Washington, DC. Present at the meeting were IRH staff working on the FACT project, including Project Manager Danielle McCadden, Director of Research Rebecka Lundgren, Uganda-based project staff member Lillian Ojanduru, project consultant Virginia Williams, as well as representatives of the supporting partners, Gaby Nguyen and Shannon Pryor from Save the Children, and Diana Santillan from the International Center for Research on Women.

The primary goal of the meeting was to first determine if theatre was a feasible approach to the intervention, and if so to create a structure and timeline for the theatre training and performances for both a proof-of-concept phase (wherein the project would be implemented in one community to work out any problems) and the pilot program (conducted in six communities which would serve as the actual test cases for the research portion of the project). The meeting began with a review of the initial research and other preliminary findings. Once IRH had decided to consider using theatre for the intervention, they had enlisted the Rafiki Theatre troupe based in Kampala to do some initial performances. These performances, held just prior to the

retreat, had provided program staff with a sense of what might be effective in planning participatory performances.

The retreat resulted in a plan for the intervention that included who would produce and perform the plays, where they would rehearse and perform, and a timeline for training and performance. The training structure was to occur in tiers, called "cascade training" or "training-of-trainers." Using a manual created for the program, Uganda-based Save the Children personnel would train "master trainers" recruited from regional ECCD employees. The "master trainers" would then train the peer group moderators, who would be chosen from young people they knew to be respected by their peers and capable of filling a leadership role. The peer group moderators would then be able to lead the peer groups in both learning fertility awareness information and the process of creating the plays on each of the four fertility topics.

Oversight, Deliverables, and M&E Feedback

Though now much information and instruction can be transmitted between locations expediently via the internet, the process of implementing development programs still necessitates the movement of development workers between countries, in this case Washington DC in the US and Uganda. Western development workers (and westerners in general) are highly mobile. Development facilitates the movement of people both to and from the global south or what the UN labels "less developed countries." Western professionals working in international development may travel in target countries for periods of weeks to years, while professionals from developing nations also travel or even emigrate globally as they work toward development in

their nation or region of origin.[144] Travel from the US to East Africa is relatively easy, with US passports being one of the most powerful, and African countries being ranked among the "most welcoming" with Uganda tied with 12 other nations in the number one most welcoming rank.[145] In the case of the FACT project, Danielle travelled to Karamoja at least three times over the course of the project. Lillian, a Ugandan citizen and employee of IRH travelled to Washington, DC once for the planning meeting in October 2015.

Since the planning session in 2015, some changes to the original schedule have been made. What was to be a proof-of-concept has been expanded to be the pilot program due to time and money constraints, with interventions taking place in six communities in the Moroto and Napak districts of Karamoja. The training-of-trainers started in May 2016, and the performances were held in June and July of 2016. To facilitate data collection for both the research objectives and monitoring and evaluation, IRH employed local research assistants, who observed the process and submitted reports to IRH in Washington. Staff also completed baseline and endline

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[144] While the majority of literature of transnationalism addresses migration from "less developed" countries to the US and Europe and the networks created and maintained through that movement, there is a growing body of research addressing the reverse, in the form of "expatriation," travel, and development work. For example, Nancy Cook writes about the experiences of development professionals in Pakistan in her article "Canadian development workers, transnational encounters and cultures of cosmopolitanism," examining how their worldview and relationship to their home is changed after working abroad.

[145] According to the Passport Index which ranks global mobility based on "passport power" (ability to enter countries without a visa or secure a visa on arrival) and "welcoming rank" (ability of foreign passports to enter). The US is ranked fourth for passport power. Uganda has a welcoming rank of one, while Kenya is ranked eleven. Passport Index, 2016, passportindex.org.

surveys and focus group testing to determine the impact of the intervention. The data will be analyzed for a final report on the program results.

Because the primary goal of the program is research-based, the main deliverable outcome of EDEAN will be the results of the data analysis to determine if this type of theatre intervention is effective in increasing fertility awareness and family planning use. In addition, IRH and Save the Children are planning several activities meant to disseminate the methodology and findings of EDEAN in order to integrate the format into other existing development efforts in the area and elsewhere. For the remainder of the project period, project staff is planning to hold a workshop on integrating the method in Uganda and creating a printed guide based on the workshop, as well as presenting their results at several global health conferences.

Performing Development: Images and Ideas

In addition to the project oversight and financial support, with the transnational implementation of any development project comes the performance of aid. The viability of development organizations and programs depends greatly on their ability to communicate the significance of their accomplishments in their target countries to audiences in the US. Organizations at all positions in the chain of funding and implementation must clearly demonstrate their impact in ways that attract and maintain the attention of donors and other supporters. For USAID, this means demonstrating the positive effects to the US taxpayers and their representatives. NGOs must market their work in applying for funding and soliciting donations, and reporting on their progress, in order to continue to receive support from the government, foundations, and individual donors. The most impactful tool at their

disposal is the use of carefully selected images imported to consumers in the west. These images typically fall into one of two categories: the serious, intended to evoke pity at the gravity of the situation faced by the world's vulnerable populations (sometimes referred to as "poverty porn"), and the triumphant, evoking the thrill (for the donor) of being part of something that can change people's lives for the better. Children are a staple of both of these types of images, as are adults working, usually at jobs we don't generally have to do in the developed world, such as farming with manual tools or washing clothes by hand. These images have the potential to reinforce our view of Africa as a place where life is excessively difficult and that needs to be "developed" in order to be more like the US.[146] •

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[146] Gharib, "At What Point Does A Fundraising Ad Go Too Far?"

"*Ultimately, Africa's prosperity depends on Africa's greatest resource — its people.*"

– *U.S. President Barack Obama at U.S.–Africa Leaders Summit, August 2014*
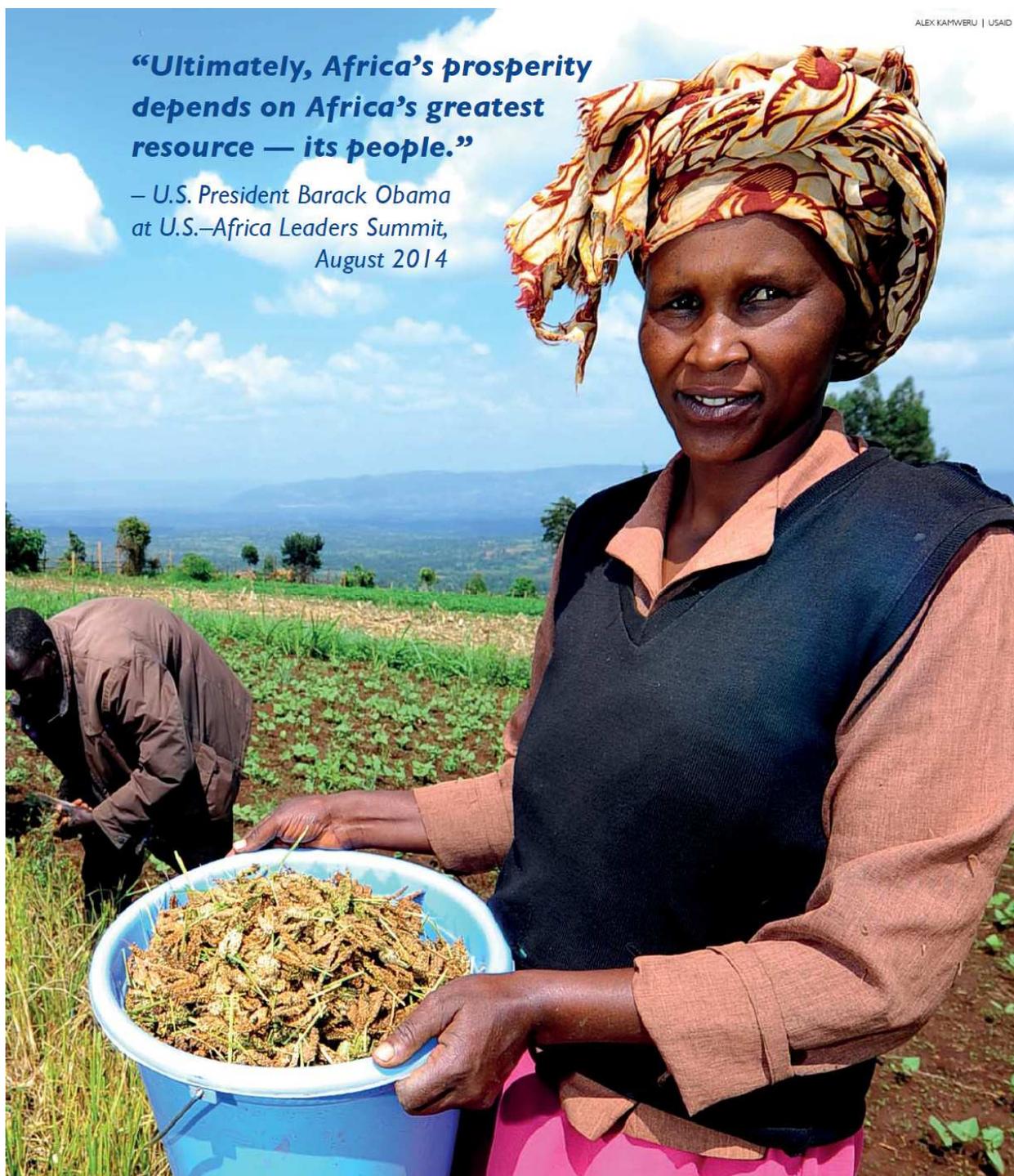
Figure 3.3. A photo from a USAID publication showing Kenyans working in a field, juxtaposed with a quote from former President Barack Obama. USAID.

The organizations involved in FACT also present many images of groups that

appear to be discussing or collaborating, presumably because they are engaged and

participating in their own development. Theatre for development projects are rich sources for this kind of imagery, particularly in demonstrating visually that members of the target community are "on board" with the development process. They are participating, not only intellectually but also physically and artistically, and therefore development is something they are involved in rather than something happening *to* them or being imposed on them. While the images published by NGOs may be reasonably accurate representations of people involved in and affected by their work, the way they are presented to and viewed by the average person in the United States can also contribute to reinforcing the dominant perception of Africa by the West.[147]

Representation• is equally important in recipient countries, though it is achieved in a different manner. USAID has a very specific branding strategy, which must be followed by every project they fund. According to the guidelines on their website, "USAID's framework legislation, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, section 641, requires that all programs under the Foreign Assistance Act be identified appropriately overseas as 'American Aid.'"[148] They go on to explain that

> since 9/11, America's foreign assistance programs have been more fully integrated into the United States' National Security Strategy. This elevation to the so-called "third-D" (development being added to diplomacy and defense) increased the need for *U.S. foreign assistance activities* to be more fully identified in the host country as being provided "**from the American People**." We have been identified as "America's good-news story" and have been tasked to make our efforts more visible and better known in the countries where we work.[149]

The red, white, and blue USAID logo and the tagline "From the American People" appears on every banner and billboard, every vehicle, and every structure, and even

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[147] Keim, *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*, 88–105.
[148] USAID, "Branding."
[149] USAID.

food packaging that is funded in any way by USAID funds. The visibility of this branding is intended to fulfill the organization's mission of increasing goodwill toward the United States, and USAID cites statistics that speak to the effectiveness of these efforts. According to one study, USAID's aid efforts in Indonesia following the 2004 tsunami "in early 2005, favorability of the U.S. nearly doubled in Indonesia (from 37 to 66 percent) thanks to the massive delivery of - for the first time 'well branded' - U.S. foreign assistance." but it also has the effect of conveying the presence and influence of the U.S. Even people are sometimes "labeled" with the logos of USAID and other development organizations. In Uganda, I often saw people wearing tee shirts with the logos of aid agencies, including USAID, and partner organizations, commonly given out to participants in community development events. African employees of NGOs that partner with USAID are in the odd position of serving as representatives of U.S. Government. When working on the APHIA Plus program, Ugandan employees of PATH travelled around in cars emblazoned with the USAID logo and distributed printed materials clearly marked as USAID projects. The United States is associated with wealth and global power, and these things are read onto those who represent U.S. interests. These employees are an instrument of a foreign state, but without the privileges thereof. These transnational systems reinforce and highlight the ways in which boundaries are not in fact permeable to many.

Figure 3.4. Diagram showing the parts of the USAID Logo for use by implementing organizations. USAID.

Figure 3.5. Bags of Lentils for food aid labeled with the USAID Logo and Tagline "From the American People." USAID.

Conclusion

The movement of not only financial assistance but also people, knowledge, and the ways of doing things encompassed by USAID funded projects returns us to the idea of "intervention" as a central theme of development. In order to enact the changes deemed worthwhile by USAID through the FACT project, Washington-

based IRH had to make many physical and virtual trips between their United States office and the program location in Karamoja, Uganda. Danielle, the program manager, first had to set up and conduct baseline research on the area through focus groups and interviews, both in person and with the assistance of partners and local staff. The results of that research was then brought back to the United States, where a team of experts from the three NGOs working on the project designed an intervention to improve "fertility awareness," in order to then test the hypothesis that increased fertility awareness in a community increases the use of family planning methods. Once the intervention was designed, it was then exported and implemented in Karamoja. Again, local staff collected data on the intervention as it was implemented, and Danielle travelled to observe the project multiple times. This information was again returned to the United States in its "raw" form, to be interpreted by other IRH staff through the monitoring and evaluation process, and then finally reported to USAID.

When described simply in terms of who and what moves between the United States and Karamoja, this movement paints a picture of a constant intervening within the target community. Development is ideally about meeting the needs of those in the "underdeveloped" community; in practice though it seems more as though the "developers" in the situation must focus on getting what they need from the community in the form of research and results in order to complete the intervention they have been enlisted to do. This continuing presence of outside "developers" in a community is a reminder of the outside interests they represent, whatever their motivation.

Chapter 4: Negotiating Critical Pedagogy Process and Public Health Outcomes through Forum Theatre

> Nelson: I would go with women —even maybe three in a week. Because by then I was not married. And even at the time I got married I could at least sneak out once in a blue moon.
>
> Voiceover: Day after day at his shop, Nelson watched Magnet Theatre, and asked questions of PATH staff. He gradually realized his behavior had put him and his wife at risk of contracting AIDS. Finally, he considered voluntary testing and counseling, known as VCT.
>
> Nelson: It really showed me some outside world, then I decided to start changing my life…Then I started to think about that so much. That's when I went to VCT.
>
> Voiceover: It was a critical turning point. Nelson's HIV test, to his great relief, was negative.
>
> Nelson: It was great. In fact, I jumped up in the counseling room. And I decided to change my behaviors directly from that day. I'm also telling other guys, and my friends, to change their behaviors. I've really spread the message. It really opened up my brains to know what is in the outside world, the real thing in life about HIV and AIDS.
>
> Voiceover: Today Nelson owns a small restaurant, and is a husband and father. He presents neighbors with PATH materials to spread the word. He's even spoken out on the radio. Through Magnet Theatre, Nelson Sagwa has become a community leader, and an unsung hero in the fight against AIDS.
>
> Nelson: Life is precious. So, I decided to be open, and just tell people what is happening. My wife was very happy, and my parents also. And now they are also trying to pass the message across to other people.[150]

Improving public health is often a matter of changing behavior. In the case of HIV/AIDS prevention, behaviors such as unprotected sex with multiple partners increase risk of transmission; therefore, a public health program aiming to slow transmission will focus on changing people's behavior. The above example of Nelson changing his ways after attending Magnet Theatre is often promoted by PATH as anecdotal evidence of the effectiveness of the form. Magnet Theatre is based on

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[150] PATH, *Changing Behavior, Changing Lives*.

Forum Theatre, but with some key adaptations that make it more fitting for public health interventions. In this chapter, I will describe Magnet Theatre and the APHIA Plus Program. I will explore the background of public health education and communication strategies (primarily Behavior Change Communications or BCC) and Theatre of the Oppressed and its pedagogical basis in Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and identify points of contention between the two. I will then examine Magnet Theatre's attempt to negotiate these conflicts through adaptation of the form through their Magnet Theatre current project, APHIA Plus, and their previous experiences.

As other scholars of applied theatre have noted, there are contradictions and tensions inherent in using Theatre of the Oppressed methods such as Forum Theatre in any international development context.[151] On a macro level this contradiction, as described by theatre for development practitioner Michael Etherton, is between development's "ultimate purpose of promoting compliance in the existing world order" and theatre for social change which ideally "enhances the collective cultural will and the desire for profound change in the world order ."[152] Looking specifically at the pedagogic methods that inform Theatre of the Oppressed in juxtaposition with those that inform public health education and communication, it is clear that there is a fundamental clash of priorities in the use of Forum Theatre for public health. Through

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[151] Prentki, *Applied Theatre: Development*, 1.
[152] Etherton, "South Asia's Child Rights Theatre for Development: The Empowerment of Children Who Are Marginalised, Disadvantaged, and Excluded," 215.

past and current examples of the theatre-based work of PATH,[153] I will examine how those contradictions play out in a global public health context and some adaptations Olouch Madiang and C. Y. Gopinath implemented while working for PATH to deal with them. Through their innovative method known as Magnet Theatre, they and their colleagues found a way to reconcile some of the difficulties and contradictions faced in using Forum Theatre for public health.

I became aware of Magnet Theatre as part of my broader research on Forum Theatre as theatre for development in East Africa. One of many techniques of Brazilian director Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, Forum Theatre has been used in development-related projects in Africa since the late 1970s.[154] The method originated as an overtly political form of theatre in which spectators take an active role in changing the situation presented in the theatrical space, with the hope of empowering them to then enact change in society. Its use in international development is just one of many ways it has been adapted for and employed in different contexts worldwide. On one hand, Forum Theatre is valued in a development context because it encourages community engagement and participation, which has become a necessary part of development intervention in recent years. However, that participation is still within the context of top-down development interventions; this contradiction is at the heart of much inquiry into TfD and

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[153] Originally an acronym for Project for Appropriate Technology in Health, the organization is now known simply as PATH.
[154] Plastow, "Practising for the Revolution? The Influence of Augusto Boal in Brazil and Africa," 298.

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participatory development in general.[155] In a public health context, contrasting pedagogical frameworks further complicate the use of Forum Theatre as an engagement tool.

PATH, a large international non-governmental organization (NGO) funded in large part by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has been using Magnet Theatre for public health interventions since 2000. At its height in the late 2000s, PATH was using Magnet Theatre in programs throughout Africa as well as in several projects in South and Southeast Asia. More recently the method has fallen out of favor, and the only program in which PATH is currently using Magnet Theatre is the AIDS, Population, and Health Integrated Assistance (APHIA) Plus program in Western Kenya. APHIA Plus is an ongoing countrywide public health project funded by USAID. PATH is the managing organization in the Western Kenya region, where it has been using Magnet Theatre to engage young people and encourage behavior change toward positive public health outcomes.

This chapter is based primarily on my interviews with those involved in Magnet Theatre at its inception and currently. I have also analyzed training manuals, reports, and publications from funding and implementing organizations. While I myself have been involved as a participant observer in various capacities with other development projects using Forum Theatre (and that experience influences this work), my analysis of Magnet Theatre presented here is based on the views expressed by the practitioners I interviewed and the publications of the organizations involved. My two primary informants are C. Y. Gopinath (known by all as Gopi) and Olouch

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[155] See Plastow, "Practising for the Revolution" and Prentki, *Applied Theatre: Development*.

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Madiang. Gopi is considered the inventor of the Magnet Theatre adaptation, made while he was a Creative Director for PATH in Kenya from 2000 to 2006. He is originally from India and currently lives in Thailand working primarily as a filmmaker. Kenyan development specialist Olouch Madiang was also involved at the outset of Magnet Theatre and still uses the form in programs he oversees as Senior Technical Advisor for Youth Outreach with PATH Western Kenya.

Magnet Theatre and the APHIA Plus Program

Gopi and Madiang originated Magnet Theatre as part of a PATH project in the early 2000s with the purpose of engaging teenagers and young adults. Gopi based the form on Forum Theatre for development performances he had seen in East Africa, although he says at the time he was not aware of Theatre of the Oppressed and its history. The changes Gopi made from what he observed (to be discussed in detail in the next section) were an effort to help Magnet Theatre better serve the public health agenda of PATH. Magnet Theatre is devised and performed by members of what PATH publications refer to as "key populations" (also known as the "target" group), rather than theatre or development professionals. Madiang informed me that often the PATH staff members coordinating a project will recruit an existing community group, such as a youth group or church organization, to create the theatre performances. These individuals become the center of the intervention, occupying the role of both target population and health resource for their peers in the audience (Madiang).

Unlike most theatre for development performances that perform in a location only once, Magnet Theatre is intended to be done for the same audience, with different plays performed over the course of several weeks (the specific number of

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performances varies by the project, but the training materials I reviewed all used six performances as an example). The performers create new plays for each performance, responding to issues that came up in the previous session. This creates an ongoing dialogue between the peer leaders who perform and the audience, all of whom are part of the target population for the intervention.[156]

The structure of PATH's current Magnet Theatre project, the APHIA Plus Program in Western Kenya, is typical of USAID projects. Gopi has since left PATH, but Madiang works on the APHIA Plus program as coordinator of youth outreach. PATH is the prime implementing organization for APHIA Plus in the region, and the secondary partners on the project include the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics (Jhpiego), and World Vision, all based in the United States, as well as Kenya's Ministry of Health.[157] PATH is a large public health organization based in Seattle with ongoing work in eleven countries. PATH has several projects at any given time funded by USAID, which make up one quarter of its total revenue. The purpose of APHIA Plus is to provide health services in Kenya, help improve and expand national and local public health services, integrating HIV/AIDS services with other health services, and improve living conditions for those living with HIV. In the statement of activities for the program, USAID says APHIA Plus

> combines family planning, maternal/child health, malaria, nutrition, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment services to provide an integrated, high-quality, equitable approach to sustainable services at the national, county, and community levels. Integrating these activities

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[156] Gopinath, Interview with the author.
[157] USAID, "APHIA plus (AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance), Western Kenya," 1.

through one program provides more effective communication and coordination with county health administrators. Seamless services and technical support at the local level ensure health workers address the unique needs of each geographic area across the country.[158]

This description emphasizes providing health services over health communication or education; however, I learned from Madiang that education efforts, including theatre, are actually a large part of the program on the ground. This was because baseline research in the area determined that much of the lack of access to services was linked to lack of health knowledge or inaccurate health beliefs. For example, in their community research for APHIA Plus, they discovered that in some areas of Western Kenya "superstitions and witchcraft are often blamed for many sicknesses."[159] The report tells the story of Angelica, whose 5-year old son was profoundly sick in 2013. The report quotes Angelica as saying, "This child eats well, and I know this sickness is caused by someone's bad eye and not malnutrition as you are telling me."[160] Community health workers counseled Angelica and provided her with therapeutic nutrition for her son. The report continues, "When she saw her child return to good health after routine monitoring by the community health worker, she abandoned her blame of superstition for her child's condition."[161] Magnet Theatre is one method through which PATH and their partners uncover and combat such misinformation and stigma in a culturally sensitive way, thereby removing obstacles that might prevent people from seeking health care.

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[158] USAID, 1.
[159] USAID, 1.
[160] USAID, 1.
[161] USAID, 1.

Global Public Health: Goals and Methods for Behavior Change

Global public health is one of many interrelated and overlapping categories encompassed in the work of international development, and it is distinguished as a subset of the field of public health in that it is specifically carried out by Western and international aid agencies in less-developed countries. With the turns towards rights-based and participatory development in the 1990s (see chapter 2), the notion of development expanded to a more holistic approach with less emphasis on economic development as an end goal. This led to a greater emphasis on aspects of development such as education and health. At 2.9 billion dollars, global health now makes up the largest portion of the USAID budget of any development goal.[162] As discussed in the previous chapter, USAID stands out among international development funders in some key ways, including the process by which it awards grants and prescribes certain methods of implementation and evaluation. Development organizations that regularly apply for USAID funding must have certain expertise and infrastructure in place, and must follow USAID's strict guidelines for both applying for and using funds.[163] Additionally, USAID is the largest development funder in the world by total dollar amount.[164] Because of this combination of factors, USAID's policies have an impact across the field of global public health. For Forum Theatre then, the ways in which USAID dictates organizations like PATH implement health programs including theatre are likely to become to some extent standardized across the field.

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[162] USAID, "FY 2017 Development and Humanitarian Assistance Budget."
[163] Olouch-Madiang, Interview with the author.
[164] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Compare Your Country: Official Development Assistance 2015."

Behavior Change Interventions and BCC

Global public health interventions are categorized as either health services or behavior change interventions. Health service interventions include anything that directly provides healthcare (such as distributing vaccines) or builds the capacity to do so (such as building a health clinic). Theatre programs like the one discussed here fall into the other category, known as behavior change interventions. Behavior change interventions address obstacles to health other than direct availability of health services. This includes a wide range of factors including lack of accurate health information, lack of awareness of available services, and social and cultural stigmas around disease and health behavior. The majority of behavior change interventions are centered on communication and education strategies, and the widely accepted and promoted body of theory that informs public health communication is known as Behavior Change Communication (BCC).

BCC incorporates health education, but it also takes into account research findings that simply informing people of public health facts does not correlate with behavior change.[165] In his 1997 article "Behavior Change Communication Strategies," public health communications expert Peter Aggleton lays out the key principles of BCC and the bodies of theory they are derived from. From communication theory, Aggleton notes that realistic goal setting, frequency and saturation of messages, and the importance of making desired behavior changes as convenient as possible for those in the target population. From social marketing theory, Aggleton adds the importance of making the desired change in behavior

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[165] Glanz, Rimmer, and Viswanath, *Health Behavior and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice.*, 12.

"more interesting, desirable, likable, and apparently beneficial" (note the *appearance* of benefit is stressed, rather than convincing the viewer of the *actual* benefits).[166] Structural intervention theory contributes further weight to the above principle of making changes easy and convenient; for a BCC intervention to be successful it must also address any structural barriers to the desired behavior. These may include legal restrictions, financial hardship, social and cultural pressures and taboos, and accessibility of care.[167]

BCC also uses theoretical models that predict and explain how and why people change their behavior to strategize effective interventions. These include Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and the Stages of Change model, and the Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Social Cognitive Theory identifies three main factors that contribute to behavior change: self-efficacy, or the belief that one *can* accomplish the change, goals, meaning how the desired behavior corresponds to the individual's personal wants, and outcome expectancies, or if they expect a positive result from the behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior emphasizes a person's attitude and beliefs about performing a behavior as the most significant factor influencing behavior change. The Stages of Change Model places individuals on a continuum based on their time-delineated relationship to making the desired behavior change. For example, in the case of a smoking cessation program, those who have no intention of trying to quit smoking within the next six months are considered to be in the "precontemplation" stage. Those who intend to take action to quit in the next six months are in the "contemplation" stage, and those who have begun to take

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[166] Aggleton, "Behavior Change Communication Strategies," 112.
[167] Aggleton, 111–23.

steps toward quitting are in the "preparation" stage. Once action is taken and the person is actively trying to quit, they are in the "action" stage, and once they have been changing their behavior for six months or more, they are said to be in the "maintenance" stage. The Diffusion of Innovation theory operates on the community level, categorizing community members who adopt new behaviors as *innovators*, *early adopters*, *early majority adopters*, *late majority adopters*, and *laggards*, depending on how quickly they are open to the change. Interventions that use this theory rely on "opinion leaders" in the first two categories to disseminate information and model behaviors, thereby spreading them through the rest of the community.[168]

Each of these theories focuses on creating or manipulating circumstances in order to cause behavior change. By definition, BCC is a method of motivating statistically significant uptake of health behavior change within a target population. Meaning, the method is intended to influence members of a given community (the "target population," which is defined by geographic location, as well as factors such as age, gender, economic status, etc.) to stop engaging in behaviors proven to increase health risks (for example, having unprotected sex with multiple partners, which increases the risk for HIV infection) and/or start taking part in behaviors which can improve health (getting tested for HIV and receiving counseling). These risks and benefits associated with behavior change, when taken up by a large enough segment of the population, can improve not only the health of the individual but also the whole community by slowing the spread of disease and by increasing the social acceptance of new behaviors such as HIV testing and using barrier methods of contraception. The

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[168] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Theory at a Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion Practice," 27.

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objective of any well-designed BCC strategy is a specific and measurable pre-determined change in behavior adopted by some target percentage of the population. For example, a program focused on reducing preventable child diseases might develop a BCC strategy that aims to increase the number of children receiving vaccines, and the goal of the program might be stated as "to increase the number of children receiving vaccines on schedule by twenty percent." If this goal is met, the program is successful; if not, it is not, and funding for continuation or expansion of the program and even other work by the same organization could be affected by its success or failure. While education is often an integral part of a BCC strategy, the end goal of BCC is to statistically improve health outcomes and strategies are designed that are most likely to do that.

Forum Theatre as Health Communication

Public health organizations including PATH and IRH consider theatre for development a behavior change strategy. Theatre for development, and Forum Theatre specifically, appeal to funders and NGOs designing behavior change interventions for several reasons. Theatre for development is relatively resource efficient, relying on community mobilization rather than material resources. It combines the ability to reach many people at once, a strength of mass media campaigns, with the personal contact, responsiveness, and potential for dialogue of individual or small group methods. Its interactive nature allows program designers to meet funders' requirements of community engagement and participation, which have become ubiquitous since the participatory development movement (see Chapter 2). The effectiveness of attempts to engage local populations in the development process

varies according to many factors, and unfortunately in some cases seems to be little more than lip service to the fact that local input is now considered necessary for any development initiative.[169] Forum Theatre is a promising method for cultivating authentic participation through the Joker's questions to the audience and invitation to enter the scenario and enact change. The technique fosters dialogue with and among community members and can be used to engage communities in all points of the intervention process, from fact-finding at the start to evaluation and reflection at the end of programs.

Behavior Change Communication and Critical Pedagogy: Points of Contention

PATH explicitly identifies their use of Magnet Theatre as a form of Behavior Change Communication (BCC), the strategy by which public health organizations engage individuals and communities toward making choices that improve their health outcomes. However, elements of BCC can come into conflict with the pedagogical approach that underpins Forum Theatre and its derivative, Magnet Theatre. Theatre is just one of many possible methods that can be incorporated into a BCC strategy, and the potential conflict takes two forms. First, the starting point and end goals that frame BCC conflict with the community-based focus of critical pedagogy. Secondly, many other BCC methods, especially those derived from advertising, are manipulative in a way that is in direct conflict with the principals of Forum Theatre, namely "its intention to transform the spectator into the protagonist of the theatrical action," and the importance of openness and dialogue over arriving at a particular

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[169] Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 141.

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solution or conclusion.[170] It is important to note that there are a wide range of methods and strategies used in public health behavior interventions, and many organizations prioritize the use of BCC methods that incorporate community participation and empowerment (including Forum Theatre), to their credit; however, my argument here is that despite these positive aspects, the objectives of BCC dictate a certain degree of top-down (or outside-in) control.

While BCC does account for the decision-making capacity of individuals, the focus is on producing and disseminating the right combination of messages to affect their decision making in the desired way. The language around this strategy frames the members of the target population as objects to be influenced and evaluated. Through the course of the intervention, they either change their behavior to the desired positive outcome and become a point in the "plus" column, or they don't, and they are left behind in the "minus" column. Whatever empowering or participatory methods are incorporated into a BCC program, the ultimate purpose of BCC is to cause behavior change, not to educate, empower, or expand choices and opportunities for people. Often these things do happen as part of a public health intervention, and the trend in global public health continues to move toward involving and empowering target communities as much as possible, but not at the expense of desired health outcomes.

In contrast, Forum Theatre, and Boal's broader work known as Theatre of the Oppressed is informed by the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire. Freire's approach, outlined in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, frames the student as an active

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[170] Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 253–59.

subject, learning through engaged inquiry and dialogue in contrast to passively receiving information.[1] The theory argues against the "banking model" of education, in which the student is a vessel to be "filled" with knowledge by a teacher who occupies a position of relative power by virtue of possessing said knowledge. Fostering empowerment and the opportunity to make independent choices are crucial to the practice of critical pedagogy. Theatre of the Oppressed applies this to the stage, criticizing traditional "Aristotelian" theatre that uses emotional catharsis to satisfy a passive audience, effectively reinforcing the social and political status quo. Boal advocates for placing the audience on equal footing to the actors and allowing them to participate in a dialogue with the action. Forum Theatre relies on the knowledge and desires of the audience to drive change.

The language of Behavior Change Communication publications tends toward the paternalistic, reinforcing the traditional top-down banking model of transmitting knowledge. For example, USAID's BCC manual says BCC is designed to "promote and sustain individual, community and societal behavior change; and maintain appropriate behaviors." The terms "sustain" and "maintain" suggest control over behavior, and "appropriate" places a value judgment. This is a tricky area in public health, because there is little argument to be made that behaviors that result in disease or even death can be regarded as "appropriate." However, from a critical pedagogy perspective the evaluation and choice of behavior must be left to the subject. Even more disturbing, for a US organization publication or representative working in East Africa to deem a common behavior "inappropriate," even if it is unequivocally

unhealthy, evokes a power relationship that echoes the patronizing and infantilizing rhetoric of colonialism as well as traditional education.

By harnessing communication theories from commercial advertising, public health advocates are encouraged to "sell" healthy behavior by making it seem attractive rather than by convincing the target audience of its merit. One particular method laid out in a BCC handbook published by the World Bank suggests that "producing an emotional experience which is followed by a reduced affect if some action can be taken" can push people toward positive health choices.[171] As part of a planning session I attended for the Forum Theatre-based EDEAN program with George Washington University Institute for Reproductive Health, the program planners held a training session on BCC. The trainer, a public health communications consultant, showed us a video that she regarded as an example of a BCC strategy that was especially effective based on the project goals and outcomes. The video was part of a public health campaign in India, and it encouraged hand washing because it is "good manners." It depicted a mother raising her son to wash his hands, and then showed how proud she was of him as he grew to be a successful young man. It used images and music quite effectively to elicit emotional reactions of joy, sadness, and pride at seeing one's child grow up but it did not mention the health benefits of hand washing at all.

Some BCC strategies, like the aforementioned video, focus entirely on the behavior change outcome rather than informing and empowering target groups to make behavior changes based on their own cost-benefit decision-making process, by

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[171] Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP), "Theories of Behavior Change," 4.

weighing the potential benefits to making a change against all the potential costs, including social, cultural, and economic challenges. This sort of cathartic emotional manipulation is exactly the effect Boal criticizes in his rejection of Aristotelian climactic drama, and is in direct conflict with the principles of critical pedagogy. BCC begins with the assumption that what are defined as healthy behaviors are inherently good and should be promoted by any means necessary. In a meta-analysis of HIV interventions, researchers found that across all interventions studied the desired behavior of condom use increased by 18 percent, while the "practical knowledge of condom use" increased by only 16 percent. This is admittedly not a large discrepancy, yet it does illustrate that not everyone who made the target behavior change necessarily understood all the reasons for doing so.[172] In BCC, success is determined by quantifiable changes in desired health behaviors, (the number of HIV tests administered, or the number of condoms distributed). Success from a critical pedagogy perspective is less straightforward: helping people live "more fully human" lives and empowering communities to make positive changes based on their own informed desires.[173]

The Invention of Magnet Theatre

Magnet Theatre originated as a reaction to the prevailing use of Forum Theatre in development at the time. In 2000, Gopi and Madiang were working for PATH on a USAID-funded project known as IMPACT (a loose acronym for Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care). PATH was the implementing partner in

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[172] Health Communication Capacity Collaborative, "Social and Behavioral Change Communication Saves Lives."
[173] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 55.

charge of BCC for IMAPCT, and Family Health International (FHI), another public health NGO, was the prime.[174] USAID and FHI had brought on a local theatre troupe to do outreach for the program, but when the troupe leader was caught embezzling money from the program the theatre outreach ended. Gopi agreed to come up with an alternative form of outreach, and the result was Magnet Theatre.

Magnet Theatre is a variation of Forum Theatre with certain added innovations to better address public health applications. Gopi observed that most Forum Theatre for development in Kenya was conducted in one-off performances. Groups would come to a community and perform a play about an issue including the participation and dialogue customary in Forum Theatre. However, these one-time interventions provided no ongoing support for behavior change. Also, they were not connected in any way to actual access to the means to change behavior in the community. Such a play might address the importance of getting tested for HIV and discussing the results with one's partner, but if there are no health workers in the community to conduct testing and counseling then it is unlikely that the behavior change objectives will be met.

Gopi, Madiang, and the others involved in the early development of Magnet Theatre addressed these issues by adapting the form. Rather than conduct single performances, PATH arranged for their partner groups to perform plays on a regular schedule. They recruited audience members from the target group (usually young people in single-gender groups) and held performances in the same time and place

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[174] The "prime" is the organization tasked by USAID with coordinating the project. They then work with one or more "implementing partners" to plan and complete various parts of the project. See Chapter 3.

every week. This change to multiple performances instead of just one had several advantages: first, the interventions cultivated repeat audiences. Young people enjoyed the performances and knew when to expect them, so they returned each week to continue the conversation. This led to the greater effectiveness of the resulting discussion because information was repeated and reinforced, and audience members who were more hesitant to make behavior changes regularly encountered those who were already taking up the desired healthy behavior. This innovation drew upon the stages of change model of behavior change, which places target population members on a continuum based on their readiness to make positive heath change, as well as the less-used diffusion of innovation theory, which identifies early adopters, majority, and laggards in the uptake of new ideas or technology.[175] The stages of change model indicated that participants needed continued exposure and support to move through the stages toward making change, while the of innovation theory was the source for the idea to "magnify" those who had made positive changes already in order to enhance the spread of the healthy behavior being introduced.

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[175] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Theory at a Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion Practice," 15.

Figure 4.1. PATH Magnet Theatre Troupe members dance and sing to kick off a performance. PATH.

Figure 4.2. A Magnet Theatre Facilitator addresses the audience. PATH.

Figure 4.3. A Magnet Theatre Performance. PATH.

In addition, Gopi and Madiang found that repeat performances of Magnet Theatre offered an amplification of the dialogue cultivated in a singular performance of Forum Theatre. During the week between performances, the performers responded to issues raised in the prior week's discussion to create the next series of performances. The dialogue then includes not only the audience's response and input to the situations in the play but also the peer group's counter-response through theatre, which in turn provides another opportunity for discussion. For example, one week a performance focusing on condom use to prevent transmission of HIV might elicit questions and concerns about how to broach the subject with one's partner. The troupe could respond to this interest from the audience and incorporate communication between partners into the next week's drama. This cycle fostered ongoing dialogue among the group and a mutually supportive relationship between the actors and their peers in the audience. Madiang informed me that quite often the actors become seen as leaders in the community even after the theatre intervention ended. Not only did the actors have additional health knowledge learned through

researching their performances, they also had placed themselves in a visible leadership role in the community and had connections to the affiliated health services. Peers knew if they went to the actors with a question about health issues, they could talk with them or refer them to the appropriate health professionals.

The location of Magnet Theatre also allowed for more effective interventions. Theatre for development performances Gopi and Madiang had observed generally took place in easily accessible public spaces, with the idea of attracting as many people as possible. This was in part due to the emphasis on evaluation of the programs and tracking the audience they reached. A play that took place in an open market could count (and report to its funders) an audience that included everyone within earshot, whether or not they were engaged by the actual play. Magnet Theatre was designed to focus on quality of engagement with an audience rather than quantity. They utilized the public health practice of community mapping to identify locations that were accessible to their target audience, yet required some effort to attend. Gopi sees this as an essential difference between Magnet Theatre and other Forum Theatre used for development: in Magnet Theatre, audiences must make a choice to attend. The decision to commit time and attention is an important step in the progression of behavior change for health. It can then lead to the self-efficacy necessary to make other changes, as well as the perception of health as something of value.[176]

The other major innovation of Magnet Theatre was to offer health services such as testing and counseling with health professionals either on-site at the

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[176] Gopinath, Interview with the author.

performances or through an easy referral process. An audience member who was inspired by the performance to get tested for HIV could be tested or at least make the necessary arrangements immediately after the play. The peer group aspect of the theatre performance was supplemented by the ability to speak to a health professional in confidence about one's particular situation and ask questions too personal for group discussion. The availability of trained health professionals also provided another important improvement to the typical Forum Theatre for development as observed by Gopi; while the actors in Magnet Theatre had been thoroughly trained on the health information pertinent to their work, having trusted community health workers available at the performances provided the authority to address incorrect factual information without the dialogue devolving into an unproductive argument between laypeople. This also took some pressure off of the peer leaders to provide information. With health experts close at hand, they could refer questions or concern beyond their knowledge to the appropriate professional right away.[177]

Finally, for the purposes of evaluation and reporting, Gopi and Madiang had to come up with a way to convey what they were accomplishing that went beyond the number of people reached. Their approach has evolved over time to two-prongs: tracking actual health behavior (such as testing for HIV) through a health services referral system, and a checklist for assessing the audience participation, discussion, and questions during the outreach. This approach provides sufficient quantitative data

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[177] Olouch-Madiang, Interview with the author; Gopinath, Interview with the author.

to satisfy the reporting requirements of USAID while also capturing the qualitative information needed to assess the true impact of theatre as a method.[178]

Conclusion

The advertising roots of Behavior Change Communication have led to public health communication strategies focused on pre-selected outcomes, in opposition to the liberatory pedagogy of Freire and Boal. The strength of using Forum Theatre for development lies in the ways in which its outcome is outside the control of top-down influence. Whether an audience member is informed or not, and whether they are making healthy choices or not, they are encouraged to participate and called on to think critically. Unless public health and international development organizations are willing to radically reject the pursuit of behavior change by any means, community-devised Forum Theatre will always come into some philosophical conflict with public health behavior interventions. While such a paradigm shift is unrealistic and likely to have dire material consequences for target populations, I believe there is some value to using traditional health communication methods in conjunction with Forum Theatre, and the innovations of Magnet Theatre demonstrate the possibilities of a multi-pronged approach.

While Forum Theatre is an excellent tool for addressing social issues and attitudes, it may fall short if used primarily to disseminate factual health information. BCC emphasizes the spread of public health messages, though these messages focus on "selling" a desired behavior rather than educating and empowering the viewer. It is not an exaggeration to say that access to such knowledge is a matter of life and death,

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[178] Olouch-Madiang, Interview with the author.

so the stakes of using the right pedagogical approach are high. In cases of public health outreach, Forum Theatre needs to be supplemented with other methods that provide the necessary information to make informed decisions through empowering, community-based pedagogy. While there is evidence that simply educating and informing people about health issues and risks does not have a significant effect on behavior, this does not justify failing to engage and inform a target community as part of the push for change.[179]

Forum Theatre, used appropriately and in conjunction with empowering health information, can provide a much-needed participatory alternative (or addition) to the prevailing theories and strategies of Behavior Change Communication in public health. Magnet theatre, though currently experiencing a low point in application, has found a place of compromise between the radical basis of Forum Theatre and the top-down structure of USAID development policy. The tension between critical pedagogy and BCC, and more broadly between massive global structures of top-down aid and small-scale theatre interventions are in no way lost on the founders and practitioners of Magnet Theatre. Within that tension, Magnet Theatre allows for ownership of health knowledge and behavior in a way that many BCC methods do not. For the audience, it may in fact be made very clear which is the right choice and which way they are expected to "drive," but at least they are allowed to take the wheel.

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[179] Glanz, Rimmer, and Viswanath, *Health Behavior and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice.*, 12.

Chapter 5: Casting for Development: Actors and Training Methods

In chapter two, I discussed how Forum Theatre grew and spread throughout the world and specifically to East Africa, where it is now applied by international development organizations. In this chapter, I also look at the spread of the method, but on a local scale. How do those in Uganda and Kenya who actually create and perform Forum Theatre plays learn the method, and from whom? And, what does the process of devising plays in the context of US-funded development projects in Uganda and Kenya look like? To address these questions, I will look at who the actors are in each case, the training practices of each of the projects and groups, and the factors that influence these decisions for each of three examples.

Three Models

In the 2004 publication *Participation Communication Strategy Design*, development strategists Paolo Mefalopolous and Christopher Kamlongera divide theatre for development into two categories a) that which is performed entirely by outside artists; and b) that which includes the participation of community members, with or without the assistance of outside artists. Thus far, I have discussed two projects in detail, both of which fall into the latter group: EDEAN conducted by Georgetown IRH in Northern Uganda, and APHIA Plus conducted by PATH in Western Kenya. To these, I add one more group which does work of both kinds, a professional company based in Kampala known as Rafiki Theatre. Rafiki is the only professional group of the three I worked with, and the members all have academic

training in theatre for development as part of their university theatre education. Through my discussions with Rafiki members, I examine here the state of formalized academic and professional theatre for development training.

EDEAN, the theatre-based intervention of the FACT project conducted by Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health, uses a method known as cascade training, which I will discuss in the second section. For this project, Georgetown IRH puts theatre groups together solely for the purpose of conducting their one project; therefore, the training is designed to be as streamlined as possible, and cascade training is useful for this purpose.

For their Magnet Theatre groups, PATH provides more extensive training and team building, because they intend for the groups to work together on an ongoing basis. PATH Staff work with the groups on their particular strategies for devising and performance each time they are asked to do an intervention, and some of the groups have been working on PATH projects for many years. In the third section, I look at the training strategies PATH uses to take groups from just starting out to being able to devise an effective Magnet Theatre play independently.

Decision Factors: Resources, Scale, Participation

Three major factors influenced all the groups I discuss here in their decisions about training methods: 1) available resources, 2) scalability and sustainability, and 3) possibilities for community participation. Available resources, including but not limited to finances, are always a concern when working in developing regions. Funds are limited and often restricted by grantors in how they can be used (for example, money granted to a public health program for medical equipment could not be applied

to staff salaries). Funds are awarded for and must be used within a certain period of time, and must be constantly brought in or renewed based on demonstrable evidence of success as a project goes on. Employing a professional group costs more than using volunteers, and also does away with the benefits of local participation. In addition, the use of money and other resources within an impoverished community presents a host of issues that must be considered. If volunteers are financially compensated for their time, this can create conflict in the community or potential for corruption. It also puts the participants in a position to be seen as an employee of the external organization rather than primarily representing the interests of the community. Other types of compensation such as meals and t-shirts commemorating the project are often given in place of money, but this too can cause issues of perceived unfairness. Human resources are also an important consideration. The decision to use an established group of professional actors requires the availability of such a company nearby, while the use of volunteers requires qualified staff to train them.

The second factor, scalability (discussed in detail in Chapter 1) and sustainability, are common buzzwords in development planning. Scalability refers to the capacity to expand a project from a pilot or small-scale program to a regional or national level. The other communities encompassed by the scaled-up target are of course different, so scalability includes factors that make the program effective in diverse communities and transferrable. Sustainability is likelihood that a program can be continued in the target community, either with or without the assistance of the original implementing NGO. Factors that influence sustainability include required

funding and infrastructure, commitment and leadership from the community, and the human resources necessary to continue the intervention.

The third factor is the preference to include the participation of community members in the intervention as much as possible. The rise of participatory development since the 1970s, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, is one of the main reasons for the proliferation of Forum Theatre as a development intervention. Once participatory development methods were embraced by mainstream development organizations, incorporating some level of participation into interventions became a basic requirement in order to secure funding. Forum Theatre is by definition participatory, but it is made more so if the actors as well as the audience are made up of members of the target population. In cases where health information is being presented through drama, using a team of amateurs from the community creates a central group of visible leaders who have put in extra time learning and discussing the health concerns presented in the play.

Amateur Participation

For all of these considerations, the decision to use amateur actors can be an appealing solution. While professional and educational theatre for development groups have sprung up over time, many programs are designed specifically to use drama created and performed by members of the target community. One reason for this is by involving community members in the creation and dissemination of content, projects create a central group of community members who have "bought in" and can serve as an ongoing source of information and encouragement. For example, in the

PATH projects, Magnet Theatre actors are provided with resources to share with the community should anyone have questions for them later about seeking health care.

The participation of amateurs is a common emphasis throughout applied theatre (of which theatre for development is one example) and community-based performance (with which theatre for development often overlaps).[180] A performance means more to an audience when those creating and performing it are peers, and in the case of public health topics which can involve sensitive social and cultural norms, familiarity, common understanding, and trust can be crucial. Comparing community-based performance to the (eventually professionalized) little theatres in the United States, Community Performance scholar Jan Cohen-Cruz indicates a key advantage of amateur-led theatre:

> "The basic unit of [community-based performance] is the people who contribute to it through their stories or their co-creation as performers, people who are intimately connected to the theme of a given production via lived experience, which is facilitated but not replaced by professionals. Community-based performance will always offer a first-voice account of a situation that most professional art does not."[181]

Jonathan Fox, founder of Playback Theatre, an improvisational form of community performance, echoes this sentiment. He wanted the actors in his company to remain amateurs because "I wanted them to live in the world and be like their audiences, men and women of common work, family responsibilities, and civic duty."[182] The use of amateurs allows the actors to be seen as participating in the capacity of citizens of the community, rather than motivated by financial and professional gains.

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[180] See Figure 4.

[181] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 26.

[182] Fox, *Acts of Service: Spontineity, Commitment, Tradition in the Nonscripted Theatre*, 3.

Boal himself intended his work to be accessible those without theatre training. His book describing Theatre of the Oppressed methods is called *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, indicating potential uses for those who do not consider themselves "actors." While the experiments that led to Forum Theatre and other Theatre of the Oppressed methods were conducted with the professional actors of Arena Theatre or with theatre students, they are ultimately intended to be a tool available to anyone.[183] Boal himself spent many years conducting workshops and trainings around the world on the various applications of Theatre of the Oppressed with people with widely differing interests and experience.

In addition, the distinction between amateur and professional and conventions of who participates in community performance varies culturally, and in most of Africa the traditional role of community members in performance has been complicated by colonial influence. Prior to colonization, performance in Uganda included primarily participatory rituals, storytelling, and festivals, but also professional solo performance supported by the patronage of the Buganda monarchy.[184] Colonization and independence had the effect of dividing theatre in many African nations, including Uganda, into an amateur aesthetic theatre (similar to the little theatre movement in the U.S.) and a professionalized popular theatre (for example, Concert Party Theatre in Ghana).[185] "Aesthetic" theatre based on European colonial influence is likely to be much less familiar to those outside of city centers,

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[183] Boal, *Hamlet and the Baker's Son*; Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 16.
[184] Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts," 82.
[185] Kerr, *African Popular Theatre*, 127.

whereas participatory performance by community members is more closely related to some other forms of performance in Uganda and Kenya still practiced today.

Professional and Academic Training in Uganda: Rafiki Theatre

Academic Origins

I first became acquainted with Rafiki Theatre through my contacts at Makerere University in Kampala. Rafiki is a semi-professional theatre company and non-profit organization based in Kampala, Uganda. They work locally in Kampala, other parts of Uganda, and have also worked on projects in South Sudan, Rwanda, Kenya, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Currently, the company members of Rafiki perform on a volunteer basis, or occasionally receive token compensation, with most money taken in going to the troupe's operating expenses. There are many affiliate actors, and they take on parts in particular projects based on their availability. They are all under 30 and are graduates of the Makerere University Music Dance and Drama department. Makerere has been at the fore of many advances in theatre for development (including the University Travelling Theatre Movement see Chapter 2).

Makerere University has incorporated Theatre for Development into the theatre curriculum. At the time of my last visit, the bachelors of arts in theatre degree required classroom courses in applied theatre as well as practical participation in the department's touring outreach program. Just recently, the department changed the Bachelor of Arts in Drama degree program to a Bachelor of Arts in Drama and Applied Theatre, emphasizing the centrality of community-based performance in the curriculum. The description states, "This course aims to produce graduates who will work in the entertainment & popular theatre industry and those who will work in the

social and community development sector (Theatre for Development) and applied theatre contexts."[186]

The Rafiki Style and Mission

Rafiki Theatre was founded in 2010 by Claus Schrowinge, a theatre practitioner then working for the German Civil Peace Service. Schrowange now resides in Rwanda, and Rafiki is currently headed by Hussein Maddan who I spoke with several times in the course of my research, both in formal interviews and informal conversation.

Rafiki was the first of several groups founded by Schrowange. In his 2016 book *Art and Conscientization*, Schrowange describes the group's founding and the collaborative development of their signature style.

> In January 2010 I gathered 12 students and young graduates of Music, Dance & Drama from Makerere University, Kampala, all of them hungry to apply what they had studied. Rafiki Theatre was born. During the next four years we explored the possibilities of participatory theatre for the promotion of peace, human rights, and sustainable development.[187]

Schrowange's acting training included movement-centered work with Hungarian director Gabor Csetneki and Improvisation Theatre with Keith Johnstone as well as Theatre of the Oppressed, and he attributes the development of Rafiki's unique adaptation of Forum Theatre to all of these influences. These influences combined to create a unique style that Schrowange describes as "an emotional and provocative, authentic and believable way of acting; integrating music, dance,

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[186] Makerere University, "Makerere University Department of Music, Dance, and Drama: Upcoming Couses."
[187] Schrowange, *Art and Conscientization: Forum Theatre in Uganda, Rwanda, DR Congo, and South Sudan*, 12.

movements, images, and symbols."[188] Stephanie Rejzek, a German theatre practitioner who observed Rafiki's work, noted that the style emphasized the artistic side of the form more than typical Forum Theatre.

> During my studies I heard a lot about Augusto Boal. I saw Forum Theatre Plays all over Germany. I never liked them. Mostly the art wasn't important enough - only the content. Not my thing, was what I thought. Then I came to Uganda and saw Rafiki Theatre performing and I changed my mind. I never saw a theatre troupe using that form of theatre in such a creative way. It's not used as method, it is art. Powerful actors in an impressive performance- Moving. And while you are enjoying the play, you reflect about the content. It is a beautiful way to get information.[189]

After leaving Kampala for Rwanda, Schrowange taught what he calls "the Rafiki style," which combines the structure of Forum Theatre with the emotional affect and more spectacular elements of African popular theatre to the groups with which he worked later.

Rafiki Theatre's stated mission is: "Exploring and employing the tool of 'Participatory Theatre' to conscientize communities and individuals on human rights, violence, and other factors that hinder development of human potential, and enhancing a process where people discover alternative non-violent ways of addressing these issues in a secured theatre setting." Based on my discussions with Hussein and the archives of recent projects, it seems that while the impetus to create this form of theatre was based in community empowerment and human rights, with a strong emphasis on the Freirian concept of conscientization, in actuality Rafiki does an equal amount of work in public health programs. While peace building and human rights work seem to energize the actors as well as the group leadership more, public health opportunities are easier to come by, are safer for the participants, and usually

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[188] Schrowange, 12.
[189] Rafiki Theatre, "Rafiki Theatre: Home."

have more secure funding and logistical situations. Claus Schrowange's introduction to Rafiki's work states "We motivate [the audience] to become active in their daily lives and within their limited means and powers, to act against all kinds of injustice, violence, and Human Rights abuses."[190] This reflects the roots of Rafiki's methods in Freire and Boal, and makes sense in a peace building or human rights-focused situation, but the translation to public health interventions is less clear.

Their website also emphasizes community transformation and behavioral change (as used in public health applications). At the time of my interviews with the actors, they had recently completed a test performance with Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health on the EDEAN fertility awareness intervention (see Ch. 3) and expected to resume work on that project shortly pending budget approval. However, they talked most about the recent peacebuilding work they had done in Northern Uganda and South Sudan. They were proud of the project and it seemed that for them that work had had the most visible and rewarding outcomes of their recent projects. Some of Rafiki's other recent projects include work on the issues of maternal and child health, female genital mutilation, and gender-based violence. Unlike amateur troops and those put together for a specific basis by large NGOs like PATH or IRH, Rafiki is a non-profit business in itself and therefore must be as marketable as possible. For this reason, they do not limit their work to particular issues but instead partner with other NGOs to fulfill their missions.

For the short time Rafiki was working with Georgetown IRH on the FACT project, they learned the relevant public health information on fertility, menstruation,

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[190] Schrowange, *Art and Conscientization: Forum Theatre in Uganda, Rwanda, DR Congo, and South Sudan*, 24.

couple communication, and family planning, as well as the circumstances and concerns of the target community (based on IRH's baseline research) in order to devise an appropriate performance to meet IRH's goals. For other projects, members of Rafiki immerse themselves in the relevant issues, and each project expands the group's understanding of development in Uganda. The Rafiki actors I interviewed spoke about not only their theatre experiences but about the nuances of each subject they addressed. They were passionate about improving the lives of others in their country, and emphasized the high stakes of issues of public health and violence. Most notable was the sense of responsibility taken on by going into another community. The Rafiki members were reflective about their own role as outsiders when working in communities outside the city. Hussein explained,

> "...They are welcoming [to us]. First of all it's a new thing, there is excitement. Then secondly, they [in the community] expect a lot from you. Somebody coming from outside, maybe from a place where there's no war, a place where you have running water, you have electricity, you have everything and you are down there where there's nothing. So that alone creates some... people believe to trust you, because you are there. And, yeah, they are willing to give up what they have for you. Also because the moment you get to a new place, to me I think, already with your new cultures you begin to pass to them and they, the locals, begin to pass their cultures over to you, so, you lend and borrow, and that already creates a very strong bond."[191]

The group has a sense of duty toward their work, recognizing their privilege relative to those in the remote communities they work in and expressing a desire to make life better for others in their country and region.

Having graduated from the Makerere theatre program, the members of Rafiki Theatre all have formal training in theatre performance as well as specific experience with applied theatre. However, Rafiki uses the particular combination of methods

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[191] Maddan, Interview with the author.

originally developed by the founder of the group Claus Schrowinge which they term the "Rafiki Method", and the group does a great deal of additional training, practice, and work to develop group trust and cohesion.

To facilitate the devising process, Rafiki members often start with image theatre, taken from Theatre of the Oppressed.[192] They also use several exercises from Keith Johnstone's Theatresports, a form of improvisation that incorporates competition.[193] In contrast to much of the advice given in manuals for amateur groups, there is no official script created. Actors improvise based on a set storyline and characters even in performance. They are encouraged to interact with the audience and the space they encounter, creating a unique performance for the specific audience and circumstances. In cases where the actors and audience speak different languages, the actors use their own primary language (usually English, Uganda's lingua franca, or Luganda, the most common native language in the region around

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[192] Schrowange, *Art and Conscientization: Forum Theatre in Uganda, Rwanda, DR Congo, and South Sudan*, 34.

[193] The International Theatresports Institute states that "Theatresports™ is an improvisation show created by Keith Johnstone and developed at the Loose Moose Theatre. The first official performance was held at the Pumphouse Theatre in 1977. Theatresports™ could be defined as teams of improvisers competing for points. This is a simplistic definition. It relates to what people see, but does not define what Theatresports™ actually is. Theatresports™ is much more than a show structure. It represents a philosophy and approach to improvisation. […] Theatresports™ encourages performers to take risks while being good-natured. The components of the show (horn, basket, judges, challenges, teams, host, etc.) are there to support and encourage risk and allow improvisers to be fearless in their endeavour to create stories in the spontaneous moment. It's aims to create a theatre show offering a variety of stories ranging from the comedic to the dramatic. It embraces stories of life, politics, religion, and love. It challenges points of view; expresses opinions. It creates an evening of theatre that engages the audience in a way that makes them respond openly, as one might do at a sporting event, and has them thinking and talking about the performance afterwards. International Theatresports Institute, 2016, theatresports.org.

Kampala).[194] Translation or a summary of the action in the local language of the spectators is used if necessary. However, Schrowange says that in such cases the emphasis is placed on physical action and emotion to convey the story and limit the need for the disruption of extensive translation of text. Even without a language barrier, physical theatre, music, and symbolism are used to maximize understanding and connection with the audience. Schrowinge places great importance on performing believable emotion, in a way that counters Boal's Brechtian influence.[195]

Training and Rehearsal with Rafiki

During my visit in August of 2015, I took part in a training session with Rafiki and experienced their process their training and practice methods first hand. The group is tight-knit artistically and socially and many members described the group feeling like a family. They do a lot of relaxation, warm-up and physical preparation. This is done in pairs or groups and also fosters trust. When I visited and did training exercises with the actors, I was welcomed and incorporated into the group. The members are all skilled actors, and they graciously shared original solo pieces they had created in response to latest work on gender-based violence.

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[194] For a more in-depth discussion of language in Uganda and Kenya, see chapter 1.
[195] Schrowange, *Art and Conscientization: Forum Theatre in Uganda, Rwanda, DR Congo, and South Sudan*, 34–36.

Figure 5.1. Rafiki Theatre actors complete a sensory warm-up exercise. Photo by author.

I asked the group about their hopes for the future of the company, and two themes emerged. First, they expressed gratitude at the opportunity to do what they love and have a positive impact. They also hoped that eventually the company would be more self-sustaining and be compensated more fully for their work, enabling them to do theatre full-time. Some expressed hope for greater recognition of the company, and through that, the opportunity to do more work.

Professional companies like Rafiki often play a role in amateur performance training as well. As part of their offerings (and their attempt to market themselves) Rafiki Theatre offers workshops and trainings for NGOs and other theatre groups. On their website, Rafiki states

Since our existence, organisations and companies (e.g. GIZ, World Vision,

etc.)[196] have contracted Rafiki to help them effectively pass on development and behaviour change messages to communities. Rafiki has also been used to add value and mind appealing communication to workshops, conferences, seminars, etc. If you are having any of those, you would add value to it by engaging Rafiki. Participatory theatre is an innovative method to introduce a topic during workshops, conferences or seminars. Formation, training and supervision of participatory theatre groups. Rafiki has trained, mentored and conducted capacity building of community groups in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and South Sudan. These groups have been efficient in provoking community dialogue and transformation in areas related to civil peace, cattle rustling, gender equality, and promotion of community safe health practices.[197]

There are many professional and semi-professional theatre for development companies operating in Uganda and Kenya, and as pointed out by Christopher Joseph and Jessica Kaahwa, among others, such companies can be of varying quality. Rafiki must compete with these companies with the added obstacle that many of the NGO personnel that might be in a position to hire them do not have enough experience with Forum Theatre to recognize Rafiki's training and skill. The members of Rafiki, as well as the company publications and writings of the company's founder all stress the work they do in support of peacebuilding and human rights in areas of conflict, and it seems that this is truly where the "heart" of the company lies. However, they are contracted at least as often for projects that fall more strictly in the development category, particularly in the area of public health. Rafiki's most recent projects have included a vaccine promotion project with World Vision, the REACH (Reproductive Education and Community Health) program to combat Female Genital Mutilation funded by the UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), and a preliminary test

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[196] GIZ stands for *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*, the International Aid Agency of the German Government. World Vision is a large international NGO that focuses on promoting the well-being of children.
[197] Rafiki Theatre, "Rafiki Theatre."

project for the EDEAN intervention conducted by Georgetown Institute for
Reproductive Health (IRH), discussed in the next section.

Figure 5.2. A soldier enters the action in a Rafiki Theatre performance. Rafiki
Theatre.

Figure 5.3. A Rafiki Theatre performance. Rafiki Theatre.

As part of preliminary research for the project, IRH enlisted the Rafiki Theatre troupe to do some initial performances and potentially train the community volunteers. However, this proved to be too expensive and difficult due to the travel required for Rafiki and their compensation. IRH eventually decided instead to use "cascade training," described in the following section. This decision meant Rafiki lost a potential project and income, and undoubtedly had a significant impact on the project itself.

Cascade Training of Community Volunteers: Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health and EDEAN

In contrast to the semi-professional Rafiki Theatre, the actors involved in the EDEAN intervention conducted as part of the Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation (FACT) project are not experienced performers. The primary target population for FACT is men and women of childbearing age, both married and unmarried, and the actors are drawn from this population. These volunteers may never participate in Forum Theatre again, and the training they receive is intended to be as efficient as possible to allow them to produce the performance with minimal time invested. The purpose of the project is to determine if increased fertility awareness in a community causes higher rates of family planning use, and the EDEAN theatre-based intervention is intended to increase fertility awareness around four main topics: couple communication, menstruation, fertility, and family planning methods. The training process for these volunteers incorporates basic Forum Theatre training with the necessary health information; while the theatre training will likely only be relevant for the duration of the project, the health training the group receives

will establish them as peer leaders that others know they can go to with questions or for health resources.

The training and rehearsal process developed by Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health and their partners on the FACT program uses a technique known as "cascade training." Also called "training of trainers," this system starts with program staff training a small group of leaders. These leaders then each train their own group on the material, ideally creating a trickle down of the knowledge and skills involved. This form of training is common in development work, as it is time- and cost-efficient and builds in the participation of community leaders, which in theory helps build interest from the community.

Before looking at how actors for this project were trained, I will first describe how the intervention was designed and the decision by IRH and partners to use Forum Theatre. The idea to use theatre for this project originated with baseline research conducted in the community. When asked in a focus group what development communication methods they thought would be effective, community leaders mentioned Forum Theatre and theatre for development (as well as community meetings, songs, and radio shows).[198] The staff of Georgetown IRH did not have experience with theatre for development, so they consulted Kampala-based theatre for development company Rafiki Theatre, which has worked in the region in the past. Rafiki created and performed a sample play so that IRH could become familiar with the method and be better equipped to plan the program incorporating theatre.

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[198] Institute for Reproductive Health et al., "FACT Formative Research Results."

My contacts at Rafiki and IRH explained that the original plan for the project involved having Rafiki Theatre conduct trainings of local people and lead them through creating their own Forum Theatre plays. The performers were to be young people from the community, and would receive training on both theatre and relevant health and fertility knowledge. While the performers would be part of the outreach to the rest of the community, they are also members of the target population themselves; therefore, their training and rehearsals would help to reinforce the messages of the program and hopefully make the participants effective peer leaders promoting healthy behavior. IRH ultimately decided not to hire Rafiki Theatre to conduct the trainings. Instead, they would use local teachers to follow a curriculum from a training manual to be created specifically for this project, with the minimal assistance of a more local theatre group. Reasons for this decision are explored in the next section, but it is also important to note that this change had a dramatic impact on Rafiki Theatre, taking away work they expected to complete and potential income.

IRH's revised plan includes two major elements dealing with the theatre training of those who will create and perform the dramas: cascade training and published training manuals. "Training-of-trainers" is a method of passing information and skills through a hierarchy of development workers and volunteers, and it is quite common in development projects including those that use theatre. For the EDEAN intervention, training was planned in three levels, described thus in the project overview:

> "Community Development Officers (CDOs) in each region will be invited to serve as Trainers for EDEAN, and will be trained by the FACT team and a theatre organization. The Trainers will then train the Peer Group Moderators in Fertility Awareness, Group Facilitation Skills, and Drama Skills, to prepare

them to facilitate Peer Group Meetings and guide Peer Group Members in developing and acting out dramas. Trainers and the FACT team will provide ongoing support and coaching to the Peer Group Moderators through weekly check-in calls and monthly in-person meetings."[199]

During the planning process this cascading structure was as confusing in discussion to the experienced project planners as it was to me as an observer, and required constant clarification on what level of training and trainer was being discussed. This trickle-down method of disseminating skills and knowledge to deliver interventions is ubiquitous in development programs due to its low requirement of resources, but it has come under criticism for its limited effectiveness and high potential for errors. It is appealing because of its cost-saving potential, its ability to be "scaled-up" to reach more communities, and its appearance of community participation (though this is to some extent on the surface only, due to the set curriculum delivered wholesale from written manuals). The use of published manuals as training tools is a complement to the training-of-trainers. Since trainers will only have a short time to learn the information and activities they are to use in their own training workshops, the system relies heavily on printed manuals that break everything down into simple step-by-step instructions.

In the process of designing the EDEAN intervention, IRH and Save the Children project staff identified two manuals that needed to be created for three separate trainings: Uganda-based IRH staff would be trained first, to use the "training of trainers" manual to train the peer theatre group trainers (recruited from local school or health center staff), and one for those trainers to use in training the volunteer actors. These manuals were created and tested in the early phases of the intervention.

[199] Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health, "EDEAN Overview."

For theatre projects, the intention is to create a manual that will be usable for training a group to create theatre without the aid of an experienced practitioner or someone present for this initial planning of the intervention.

The circumstances that led to IRH's decision to end the collaboration and instead implement "cascade training" indicate a great deal about the priorities and demands made by funding and administrative development organizations. This trickle-down method of disseminating skills and knowledge to deliver interventions is ubiquitous in development programs due to its low requirement of resources, but it has come under criticism for its limited effectiveness and high potential for errors. Unsurprisingly, the majority of the factors influencing the decision have to do with expenses; the Kampala-based group is made up of trained and experienced theatre professionals and would need to be compensated accordingly. They are based far from the target community and would require transportation and housing during the program. This was not an entirely easy decision, however, and the team planning the interventions expressed concern that the peer groups would not be able to both learn the health information and prepare effective performances in the available time.

One of the biggest reasons for the popularity of Forum Theatre as theatre for development is its participatory nature, and this also influenced IRH's choice to recruit volunteers from EDEAN's target populations. In projects that train community members as performers, not only does the actual theatre performance involve participation from the audience, but the actors who create the dramas are also part of the target population (and therefore "count" in the impact of the project). This increases the number of people reached, and creates a core group of more engaged

community members who can have an ongoing influence on their peers. In both EDEAN and PATH projects (described in the following section), this additional impact is built into the intervention design and will ideally create a core group in the population that is knowledgeable of and committed to the intended health behavior changes stressed by the programs.

In some cases, training of trainers is also a necessity due to language or other cultural or communication barriers. There may not be enough knowledgeable development workers available from the target region to conduct trainings in the local language. In the EDEAN program, the document specifies that the first level of training will be conducted in English, while the rest are done in Nga'karamojong.

Cascade training and the dissemination of written manuals both improve a project's "scalability," allowing it to be recreated in other communities. Scaling up is generally built into the project design from the beginning. In the case of the EDEAN intervention of the FACT project, I became involved in the planning at the point when the initial pilot program was being designed. Throughout the process of designing the pilot, the project planners from IRH and Save the Children emphasized the necessity of "scalability." While the pilot program is going to be implemented in several communities in the Karamajong region, the eventual full-scale project will be implemented across Uganda. During the planning session for the FACT/EDEAN pilot program, it became apparent that scalability was a major sticking point for the decision to use theatre as the primary intervention. None of the participants in the meeting had any prior experience with Forum Theatre, and they were very concerned that the training and devising of plays would not be replicable as the project was

expanded. Theatre-based interventions struck the project staff as particularly tricky to scale because of their own lack of familiarity with community-based theatre and the devising process.

In order for a project to be scalable, it must not rely on resources or circumstances that are unique to the pilot study region. Originally the Rafiki Theatre group was going to assist with the training of the volunteer actors. The project planners eventually rejected this idea in part because communities added later in the scaling up phase would not have access to a similar troupe to provide training, so the project could not rely on that strategy to train the groups. Instead, IRH opted to create a training manual that would be used for the initial pilot study, and then revised based on feedback to be used in the communities added later.

The hesitancy among program designers to invest resources in partnering with a professional or otherwise established theatre group (like Rafiki) may also have to do with the lack of knowledge about what groups do quality work and an inability to make that distinction on their own. Scholars of both Ugandan and Kenyan theatre for development have noted the problem of unqualified theatre groups cropping up as theatre for development grew in popularity and demand from NGOs and other aid agencies spiked.[200] Often, development agencies interested in using theatre do not know where to begin or what to focus on in designing a program and enlisting local practitioners. This is particularly problematic for those working for donor organizations in the United States, who are not only unfamiliar with theatre for development methods but also removed from the theatre network and cultural climate

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[200] Joseph, "Theatre for Development in Kenya: In Search of and Effective Procedure and Methodology"; Kaahwa, "Ugandan Theatre: Paradigm Shifts."

in the target country. Rather than invest in and delegate control to a local group, it may seem easy to control and standardize the quality of the work by using NGO employees and community members.

PATH's Magnet Theatre: Training Amateurs for Ongoing Collaboration

Like the IRH program, Magnet Theatre is performed by volunteer community members rather than trained actors. However, the major difference in this respect is while IRH expects their performers to work together only for the duration of the intervention, PATH trains their Magnet Theatre groups with the intention of creating a long-lasting community group that can continue working both on PATH projects and independent projects as well. As discussed in chapter 4, Magnet Theatre is an adapted form of Forum Theatre developed in the early 2000s by Olouch Madiang and C. Y. Gopinath, employees of the Western Kenya division of the global public health NGO PATH. While the method has been used by PATH projects elsewhere, including other regions of Kenya, South Africa, and India, it is currently only used by the Western Kenya office where founder Madiang still works as a Senior Technical Advisor. My description of the training and devising process comes from interviews with Madiang and Gopi, and with members of the TEARS theatre group, which was formed and trained by Madiang, as well as written training and publicity materials published by PATH.

For Gopi and Madiang, the choice to form and train community members to devise and perform Magnet Theatre came after an unsuccessful attempt at partnering with an established theatre company. According to Gopi, this group "prided themselves on being maestros of theatre," and were more concerned about their

costumes and how they looked onstage than presenting the intended public health information. The partnership was dissolved after it was discovered that the leader of the group had taken money intended for the production for personal use. Gopi decided then to engage members of the community in the process, under the PATH project directly, rather than partnering with an outside group.

Further reasons for using community volunteers in Magnet Theatre are summarized in a manual on the use of the form in India:

> Magnet theatre is directly implemented by key population members rather than by professional actors from outside the target population groups. This is done for the following reasons:
> - Key population members best understand and empathise with their peers and are able to win their confidence so that information can be shared without fear or prejudice.
> - they are able to communicate well with other key population members and use familiar, colloquial language.
> - the use of key population members paves the way for the mobilisation of key populations and builds a sense of ownership of the project right from the start.
> - Building the capacity of key populations to conduct Magnet theatre results in the creation of a core group of committed resource people whose skills the project can draw upon to train others.[201]

These points echo many of the benefits of using amateurs discussed previously. However, PATH's recruitment and training of community members differs in that they form groups with the intention of working with them in the long term, rather than on a one-time project. In Western Kenya where Madiang works, this has resulted in a network of existing theatre groups who are available to volunteer for projects relevant to their communities.

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[201] PATH, "Magnet Theatre in India: A Guide to Using Theatre to Reduce HIV Risk and Promote an Enabling Environment for HIV Prevention, Care, and Treatment."

When an existing group is not available in the target community for a new intervention, Madiang must recruit and form a new one. Often, he will work with an existing church group or other community organization, taking advantage of existing social ties and community leaders to engage actors and audience. Otherwise, he will recruit groups of young people, who may not have employment or educational opportunities. This not only serves the direct goals of the Magnet Theatre intervention, but mobilizes otherwise idle community members toward a positive use of their time. Though they are not paid for their work, through participating in Magnet Theatre these young adults may come to be seen as a positive force in the community and even find social and economic opportunity.

One amateur group formed earlier in the life of Magnet Theatre, TEARS Group Kenya, is a success story in this respect. The group began as an informal group of young people using theatre to address issues of STI's and family planning. The group was recruited and trained by PATH as part of their magnet theatre interventions in the region. Their affiliation with PATH has allowed them to improve and expand their work, and their programs now include music programs, peer discussion groups, and social enterprise, business, and career resources for youth as well as a greatly improved and professionalized theatre program.

For these groups, Magnet theatre training is intended to fully prepare groups to create theatre autonomously with little interference from program staff. PATH provides its community-based troupes with copious training as they would with local workers or volunteers working on any intervention. Theatre groups are educated on the relevant public health issues, available resources, and barriers to healthy

behaviors that will inform the content of the plays. They are also trained on the goals of the program itself, and thus are fully integrated as implementers of the program and trusted to pursue those goals.

Figure 5.4. A PATH Magnet Theatre performer explains proper condom usage. PATH.

In the Magnet Theatre training process, groups learn how to create and perform plays by actually going through the process. Trainers, including Madiang and other PATH in-country staff guide new groups through the devising process at first, and then take a less hands on approach as the groups become more experienced. The Magnet Theatre training manuals present the information in a step-by-step form walking the reader through the devising process, ostensibly providing a road map that groups could use independent of supervised training. Madiang, having a great deal of experience with theatre and having developed methods of devising and performance

to fit the goals of PATH, described a systematized way of scaling their work making it an easy and efficient intervention type to scale.

Actors in the TEARS theatre group, who perform as part of PATH's Magnet Theatre program, described being "on their feet" from the beginning, experimenting with possible scenarios through improvisation rather than creating a text first. This approach is easier for participants who have little or no formal theatre training. It also avoids barriers of language and literacy that might prevent some people from participating. Improvisation allows people to contribute in their own way rather than being assigned a part, which may increase participant's comfort and willingness to join in.

Despite the reliance on improvisation in the devising process, PATH's manual for Magnet Theatre training advises creating a written script for each performance. While it acknowledges that it may be preferable to have one person do most of the writing, it strongly recommends "collaborative scripting." The scenario to be presented in the script should be developed by answering eight questions provided in the manual. The first two questions determine the subject of the play: What is the problem facing the target audience, and what is causing the problem? The next two questions, who are the key players, and where does the problem take place, determine the given circumstances of the play. These first four questions give the group their setting, characters, and conflict. The next question asks, "What are the words and phrases used to talk about the problem in the community and among the target audience?" which will guide the performers to use language that resonates with their peers in the audience and appears realistic. Questions six and seven ask the group to

consider the myths, prejudices, and attitudes of the community, as well as the "technical facts related to the theme." Finally, the manual asks performers to think about what, if anything has already been done to solve the problem, and if it has been successful.

In order to facilitate participation, PATH manuals as well as those I interviewed indicate a preference for an amateur quality to theatre for development performance. According to the manual "Magnet Theatre: A Guide for Theatre Troupes," "The quality of acting in Magnet Theatre is simple enough for audience members to feel comfortable joining as actors. But, it is not so poor as to compromise the depiction of a scenario or cause the audience to lose respect for the performance."[202] Gopi told me he encouraged actors not to make their performances "too good" as to avoid intimidating or alienating the audience and consequently reducing the impact of the performance. There is a fine line here, as an under-rehearsed performance runs the risk of losing the audience's respect and attention. A performance that is too polished and professional can make the fourth wall seem too substantial to be crossed by spectactors.[203]

Though PATH is a large organization implementing projects for USAID (arguably the most inflexible major international funder), Madiang emphasized the importance of allowing the members of local Magnet Theatre groups to have ownership over the material and situations presented. The members of TEARS, who had done performances supervised by Madiang in the past, confirmed this, saying that

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[202] PATH Kenya, "Magnet Theatre: A Guide for Theatre Troupes," 13.
[203] Gopinath, Interview with the author.

they had always felt free to incorporate their feelings and beliefs into their performances.

Conclusion

In these examples, the factors that influenced project decisions regarding the actors, their training, and the devising process are largely the same things that affect project planning of any development intervention. Financial concerns in particular effect whether a project will use professional actors (either as performers or trainers), an established amateur group, or members of the target community with no theatrical experience. Some training methods are more resource-efficient as well; cascade training, as used in the EDEAN intervention, saves significant costs and also provides increased opportunities for community participation on multiple levels as trainers, group leaders, and actors, as well as audience. Cascade training and amateur actors also make the project more scalable, as professional trainers and actors are not needed in areas where they may not be available.

What do the choices made in development theatre interventions mean for the theatrical experience of people in this region, and for the "theatre scene?" For theatre professionals, the ubiquity of theatre for development is a mixed bag. For the members of Rafiki and others, theatre for development provides professional and artistic opportunities, though those opportunities are limited when many project organizers choose to use community members instead of professional actors. Often groups of this type are contracted to train amateurs rather than produce performances themselves.

The use of amateurs is a critical element of theatre for development's sister field, community performance, and theatre for development programs that use amateur actors from the target community arguably have more capacity to empower community members and amplify their voices than projects that employ professionals. However, this potential cannot be realized if the training provided does not adequately convey the form, which is a danger particularly in one-time programs like the EDEAN intervention. PATH has struck somewhat more of a balance in this way through Magnet Theatre, emphasizing the lived experiences of the volunteer actors and training groups in a way that prepares them to continue to produce theatre autonomously if they so desire.

It is also noteworthy that all of these programs bring theatre to people that might not otherwise see or participate in it; however, I wonder if the artistic theatre and/or popular and traditional performance forms of Uganda and Kenya are in danger of being overshadowed by theatre for development similar to the ways in which colonial theatre subsumed indigenous forms prior to independence. In Karamoja, Rafiki performed for audiences that claimed to have never experienced theatre before. However, they have undoubtedly seen and participated in traditional performance that they themselves might have discounted due to the importing of Forum Theatre.

Chapter 6: Goals, Results, and Claiming "Success": Assessment in Theatre and Development

After all the planning, funding, devising, implementing, performing, and evaluating, we are left to examine what actually results from theatre for public health programs, and how programs define, monitor, evaluate, and communicate that success. In this chapter, I look at the idea of goals, results, and impact from the perspective of both development and theatre. I consider how the results of these programs fit into the ongoing global, national, and local impacts of development. I question how the programs accomplish their pre-established goals and to what extent they have the intended and desired impact on communities. And, I investigate what other unintended or unexpected impacts are they having. I present examples of outcomes and evaluation practices from the APHIA Plus and FACT programs, examine current practices of goal setting and evaluation, and suggest additional possibilities for understanding outcomes.

As much as development criticism has focused on the collateral negative impacts of what development does accomplish, including reinforcing colonial power structures, cultivating dependence, and spreading neoliberalism, there is also much to critique about the intended results (and lack thereof) in development, especially as compared with the vast amount of resources expended. Anthropologist and former development worker Thomas Dichter puts this in stark financial terms in the introduction to his 2003 book *Despite Good Intentions: Why Development Assistance*

to the Third World has Failed, citing that between 1960 and 2003 the development

industry had spent 1.7 trillion dollars, yet had little impact on global poverty.[204]

At the local level, these projects do much more than present health

information and change health behavior, and can have impacts outside of those

desired by the implementing organization. For participants, they provide a creative

outlet and avocation. TEARS leaders noted the potential job and leadership skills.

PATH highlights the potential for confidence and self-efficacy in communication,

health and self-care. For the general community, programs bring arts exposure and

cross-cultural communication. And, whether or not the input from the audience has a

noticeable impact on the health outcomes of a community, the dialogue facilitated by

the performances can be a productive place for dealing with local concerns.

The test of results in theatre for development lies with the audience's

experience and subsequent actions. Historically, there has been a reluctance to

attempt to understand let along quantify audience response in theatre. Therefore,

project organizers must grapple with the problems of audience reception in a way that

goes beyond that of most theatre theorists. Assessment of theatre for development

programs is influenced more by development's strategies of monitoring and

evaluation than by theories of audience response. And, it is safe to say that those on

the development side of the field are much more comfortable implementing and

assessing audience response than we have historically been in theatre studies.

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[204] Dichter, *Despite Good Intentions: Why Development Assistance to the Third World Has Failed*, 2.

Assessing "Results" in (Applied) Theatre

What exactly are the "results" of theatre? Setting aside for the moment the distinction of applied versus aesthetic performance, this question is perennial throughout the history of theatre, with theorists generally arguing for some form of entertainment or education as the primary goal. Whichever those producing the work intend, this is only part of the equation in the modern theatre. The test of these goals lies in the experience of the audience, which can only be assessed indirectly. Also important to consider is the economic dimension of audience attendance and participation, the intellectual and even physical effects on an audience, and the possibility of actual social change for individuals and communities. There are three categories I have identified here as potential markers of "success" in theatre, both aesthetic and applied: 1) economic factors, 2) emotional and intellectual impact, and 3) Schechner's ideas of transportation and social transformation.

Economics: Attendance and Participation Monetized

For aesthetic theatre companies, and in particular their marketing departments, reaching a large audience (and collecting the income from those ticket sales) may be the most important goal. As Susan Bennett reminds us in her important study of the audience, "The survival of theatre is economically tied to a willing audience – not only those people paying to sit and watch a performance, but increasingly those who approve a government, corporate, or other subsidy."[205] This second point is even more relevant for applied theatre, as such programs are not fueled by ticket sales or any direct income from the audience. For both aesthetic and applied theatre, audience

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[205] Bennett, *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception,* 4.

size is one of the few ways in which impact can indeed be accurately measured and compared. The number of people who witness a theatre performance is a quantifiable result. NGOs can use these numbers to report their impact to funders, and nonprofit aesthetic theatres can do the same to secure and maintain funding through grants.

The economic dimension of theatre for development is tied to the endless cycle in development of securing money through grants and USAID projects, delivering the results of those projects, and using those results to demonstrate worthiness to receive more funding through grants and projects. In cases where indicators of results are tied to the behavior of the target population, as in public health Behavior Change Communication interventions, this has the effect of literally monetizing not only the presence of individual audience members but also their subsequent health behavior choices.

Programs are planned with specific objectives, determined by the funders or by the implementing organizations. These objectives become deliverables, which the implementing organizations must complete and report on in order to secure continued funding for their work. Whether the desired outcome is determined in number of audience members reached or specific behavior changes such as health testing, each person affected increases the "worth" of the work of the NGO and has the potential to increase funding.

Emotional and Intellectual Impact

Brecht and Boal, considered essential thinkers in the development of theatre for social change, both discussed the impact on audiences as part of their respective philosophies of theatre as a vehicle for social change. Both criticize the emotional

impact of theatre as understood by Aristotle, in which emotional involvement leads to identification and ultimately catharsis, leaving the spectator satisfied rather than empowered. Both Brecht and Boal, like those who use theatre for public health, believed in the ability of theatre to change people's behavior. For Brecht, this change takes the form of greater awareness and a motivation to change society or one's own behavior within it. Brecht encouraged a performance style that alienates the audience, causing them to engage intellectually rather than to relate to the characters emotionally. In *Theatre of the Oppressed*, Augusto Boal lays out his vision for the impact of theatre on audiences, drawing from Bertolt Brecht and going even further. For Boal, it is not enough to change the audience's thinking; his philosophy of Theatre of the Oppressed not only encourages action, but also allows participants to practice and embody changes they can make in the "real world."

Efficacy, Entertainment, "Education:" Theatre for Development as Social Drama

Richard Schechner's concept of the efficacy-entertainment braid identifies the potential impact of performance on the audience or participant based on the context of a performance. Identifying the relationship between ritual and theatre, it places performances on a continuum between those that are transformative, resulting in a change in social status (such as a "coming-of-age" ritual granting adult status), and those that transport audiences, taking them on a figurative journey but returning them to their starting point essentially unchanged.[206]

Like Schechner's ritual examples, applied theatre is also undertaken to enact a transformation in participants and audience. Applied theatre is by definition intended

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[206] Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 131–32.

to enact change; however, that change may or may not constitute a true transformation of social status. Though applied theatre may ideally fall to the efficacy side of the efficacy-entertainment braid, within applied theatre the continuum could more accurately be between didactic/educational and efficacious. Didactic applied theatre would include that which is primarily one-sided in communication and intends to inform or educate (in the traditional didactic transfer-of-knowledge sense). In this adapted applied theatre spectrum, education replaces entertainment, and efficacy is understood to mean a transformation in social status pertaining to behavior or health status as well as one's role in the community. The traits that indicate a ritual-like transformative performance do not entirely line up with those of applied theatre. Schechner identifies eight pairs of traits that form the continuum between efficacious and entertaining performance (with the caution that "no performance is pure efficacy or pure entertainment"):

Efficacious	**Entertainment**
1) Results	Fun
2) Link to an absent other	Only for those here now
3) Symbolic time	Emphasis now
4) Performer possessed, in trance	Performer knows what s/he's doing
5) Audience participates	Audience watches
6) Audience believes	Audience appreciates
7) Criticism discouraged	Criticism flourishes
8) Collaborative creativity	Individual creativity [207]

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[207] Schechner, 130.

In an instance of applied theatre that falls to the efficacious side of the continuum, the emphasis above on results, audience participation, and collaborative creativity are essential, while the other traits of efficacious (ritual) performance generally do not apply. In fact, the entertainment-side emphasis on the here and now, the mental presence of the performer, and the allowance for criticism (or dialogue) seem as essential to the effectiveness of theatre for development as do those identified from the efficacious side. Theatre for development relies to some extent on the promise of entertainment to draw the audience in, in order to then facilitate learning, dialogue, or even transformation.

In many instances of theatre for development, participants and/or audience may indeed undergo a change in social status through the performance. Anecdotes such as that of Nelson (see Chapter 4), whose outlook on his sexual health and behavior and even his family life changed as a result of PATH's Magnet Theatre performances demonstrate that some do regard their experience as transformative. Gopi and Madiang indicated that Magnet Theatre performers often came to be regarded as leaders in the community and were sought out by peers for advice or information. Audience members like Nelson who change their behavior change how they are perceived by community members as well as how they regard themselves. After Nelson knew his HIV status, he felt that his negative diagnosis was something worth protecting.

Assessment in Theatre

Theatre as a discipline has historically downplayed the possibility of understanding audience response. As Susan Bennett notes in her influential 1997 book on the subject, "Criticism has remained, by and large, text-oriented and…discussions of audience reception have remained relatively simple and cursory." [208] Etherton and Prentki observe a similar tendency in theatre artists to distrust assessment methods from other disciplines "while being reluctant to develop their own."[209]

Etherton and Prentki also lay out several important considerations for impact assessment in applied theatre through examples primarily drawn from their areas of expertise in theatre for development. They Returning to the difference between M&E and long-term impact assessment, the authors indicate that because of the unpredictability of live performance, particularly that which is participatory, monitoring and evaluation techniques designed to look for expected outcomes may miss the incidental or unintended impacts of a performance. They argue that long-term assessment is the only way to truly discern whether a change has happened in a community as a result of a theatre intervention.

While I agree with the authors' observation on the reluctance of artists to develop and commit to methods of assessment, I believe their argument that M&E cannot capture theatre's effect is overstated. Particularly in light of the methods used by PATH (discussed below), qualitative and open-ended assessment is possible, and

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[208] Bennett, *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception*, 7.
[209] Etherton and Prentki, "Drama for Change? Prove It! Impact Assessment in Applied Theatre," 144.

may even provide insight into ways in which all theatre artists, applied and aesthetic, can more effectively reflect on the experience of their audiences.

Results in Development and Public Health

International Agendas: Western Development Organizations and Workers

As we know, the aims of development range from the global to the local. While a sense of responsibility or altruism is certainly present for many individual development workers (much like the arts, you could say "no one is doing this for the money") the desired results that drive development and public health include more than helping people. On the global level, development serves foreign policy interests of both donor and recipient countries. Multilateral and governmental agencies engage in development as part of a global political agenda. Within recipient countries, development strategies and successes are critical political issues.

Ferguson provides an interpretation of development as an institution in the same vein as Foucault's prison, asylum, and clinic, in which the actual planned intention is replaced by an unintended yet socially instrumental outcome. The prison, originally intended to rehabilitate criminals has instead created and separated a class of people from the rest of society. Though the prison system has failed in its original intention, it has become a critical institution of social control for which we can imagine no viable substitute. Ferguson argues that the same shift of intention and function has occurred in development, and with it the loss of any responsible subject understood to control the global system that has resulted. He says,

> the outcomes of planned social interventions can end up coming together into powerful constellations of control that were never intended and in some cases never even recognized, but are all the more effective for being "subjectless." This theoretical innovation makes possible a different way of connecting

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outcomes with power, one that avoids giving a central place to any actor or entity conceived as a "powerful" subject.[210]

As discussed in chapter 3, USAID and the United States government regard international aid as a component of foreign policy and tacitly acknowledge the role of development as part of an international performance of power, benevolence, and presence. The stated intended results of United States development aid are to increase positive feelings toward the U.S. globally and increase political stability.[211] The agency uses aggressive visual branding wherever possible to promote these goals, and touts their success in this respect through results of a survey conducted in Indonesia.[212]

Over the past few decades, the practice of development has come to be more and more focused on the feedback and funding cycle rather than the tangible impacts for affected communities. For NGOs, a significant proportion of their effort and resources go into the cycle of demonstrating success to ensure continued funding. Monitoring and Evaluation alone can take up to 10% of a project's budget.[213] NGOs publish and promote their results both for the funding organizations and for a public audience in a quest to compete with other organizations for funding and donations. The continued existence of development organizations depends on two things: 1. Continued problems to "solve" through development and 2. Funds available and allocated to them to do so. In order for them to continue to operate, they must be

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[210] Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho,* 19.
[211] USAID, "USAID Mission, Vision and Values."
[212] USAID, "Branding."
[213] Frankel, Gage, and Measure Evaluation, "M&E Fundamentals: A Self-Guided Mini Course," 11.

successful enough to warrant continued funding and to compete with similar

organizations vying for the same funds, but not so successful that the problems of

underdevelopment are actually solved.

Short-Term Success: Goals, Outcomes, impact, results

In the language of development, results are referenced and defined in specific

ways and each term has slightly different meanings. USAID, along with many other

funders, uses a format for planning projects known as a logic model or logical

framework.[214] The logic model is required as part of a project proposal to USAID,

and determines what will be done as part of the project, what the organization expects

to accomplish, and how they will evaluate their success.

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[214] These two terms are often used interchangeably, however technically they have
slightly different meanings. In addition, different funders have adapted the form and
may use slightly different terms for the various components. I have attempted here to
provide a succinct overview, focusing on the template used by USAID.

Logical Framework Template: Basic

Narrative Summary	Indicators	Data Sources	Assumptions
Project Goal:			
Project Purpose:			Affecting the purpose-to-goal link:
Outputs:			Affecting the output-to-purpose link:
Inputs:			Affecting the input-to-output link:

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Figure 6.1. Blank USAID Logical Framework Template. USAID 2017.

This template is used for every program and method…USAID indicates that program designers should generally design a program from the "top down," meaning starting from the overall goal and working backwards to determine how to accomplish it. The following are the main parts of the logical framework, with examples drawn from the theatre-based EDEAN intervention of the Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation (FACT) project (implemented in Karamoja, Uganda by the Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health):[215]

- The **Goal** of a project, located on the top row, is set by the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). The project

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[215] There is no formal logical framework for the EDEAN intervention, as it is part of a larger project. However, for the purposes of explaining these concepts with a theatre-based example I have drawn these elements from the narrative explanation of the intervention to create a working logical framework for the intervention on its own. For more on the FACT project and EDEAN intervention, see Chapters 1 and 3.

contributes to these goals along with other programs in the country or region. The Goal of the EDEAN intervention is **to test the hypotheses of the FACT project.**[216]

- **Purpose** refers to the overall result of the particular program. In other (non-USAID) versions of the logic model format, this category is often titled **Outcomes**. The purpose of the EDEAN intervention is **to increase fertility awareness.**

- **Outputs** refer to the immediate, direct results including deliverables. Outputs for the EDEAN intervention include **the manuals for drama training and training of trainers, evaluations of the performances and the audience's response, and, if successful, the increased knowledge of and interest in modern family planning methods in the target population of adults ages 18-25.**

- **Inputs** include resources and activities undertaken by the partners. **Activities**, sometimes listed separately, refer to the actual work to be done by the organization and partners. **Creating training manuals and developing the intended performance structure, recruiting trainers and peer leaders, training of trainers, and facilitating the development and performance of the plays are some examples of inputs.**

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[216] These hypotheses are: "1) Increased fertility awareness improves family planning use, and 2) expanding access to FAM (Fertility Awareness-based Methods) increases uptake of family planning and reduces unintended pregnancies." Georgetown IRH, "FACT Project."

- **Assumptions** are those expectations or beliefs that must hold true in order for the lower-level achievement to lead to the next result. One assumption that would be necessary for an input to lead to an output could be stated: **in order for facilitating a performance about family planning methods to lead to increased knowledge of family planning methods, the group of peer actors must be able to convey the information clearly and accurately.** If the group is not able to do this, the model will not proceed as planned and the purpose and outcomes will not be achieved. In order to proceed with the model when planning the intervention, the planning team had to determine that this was a reasonable assumption.

- Other components of the model plan specifically for the future evaluation of the project. **Indicators** for each level of result refer to how the project team will recognize success, and **data sources** are the specific methods of monitoring that will provide the indicators.[217] An **indicator** for the purpose of the EDEAN intervention listed above would be **members of target population who attended performances demonstrate increased fertility awareness**. The **data source** for this indicator would be **the results of surveys conducted with a sample of the target population from the audience**.

These final two components provide the blueprint for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the project. Monitoring and evaluation is the process by which

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[217] USAID, "Technical Note: The Logical Framework," 2.

project implementers track and analyze progress in relation to the planned activities and outcomes. Strategies and methods for monitoring and evaluation should be considered and integrated into the project and activity plans as much as possible from the project design phase. USAID specifies that monitoring and evaluation techniques can and should be used at any level of the process, from their own regional and national strategies to the individual interventions the make up a project.[218] The separate definitions of the two terms used by USAID seem vague and overlapping:

> "Monitoring plays a critical role throughout the Program Cycle and is used to determine whether USAID is accomplishing what it sets out to achieve, what effects programming is having in a region, and how to adapt to changing environments. […] Data from monitoring are used to: assess whether programming is achieving expected results; adapt existing activities, projects, and strategies as necessary; and, apply Agency learning to the designs of future strategies and programming."[219]

While USAID defines evaluation as

> "the systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of strategies, projects, and activities as a basis for judgments to improve effectiveness, and/or to inform decisions about current and future programming. […] The purpose of evaluations is twofold: to ensure accountability to stakeholders and to learn to improve development outcomes."[220]

From these definitions plus context and conversations with development professionals, the distinctions as I understand them are that monitoring is continuous throughout the project and evaluation refers to specific data collection activities, and

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[218] USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research, "USAID Evaluation Toolkit: Guidance, Tools, & Resources for Planning, Managing, & Learning from Evaluations."
[219] USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research, "USAID Monitoring Toolkit: Guidance, Tools, & Resources for Monitoring at USAID."
[220] USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research, "USAID Evaluation Toolkit: Guidance, Tools, & Resources for Planning, Managing, & Learning from Evaluations."

that monitoring refers strictly to data collection whereas evaluation includes the process of analyzing and making judgments based on that data. This distinction may be essentially irrelevant though, as the terms are rarely seen used separately in development publications.

Evaluations should be as unbiased as possible. In some cases, this means NGOs will use an outside contractor to conduct the evaluation. Otherwise, the M&E is conducted by the staff of the implementing partner itself. As in development strategies overall today, local participation is stressed by USAID in their guidelines for M&E. They encourage the engagement of local stakeholders in the reflection and assessment of interventions through methods such as interviews and surveys.

In their article "Drama for Change: Prove it!," Tim Prentki and Michael Etherton draw a distinction between monitoring and evaluation (M&E), the process by which NGOs continuously track progress and report outcomes through and immediately following a program, and the assessment of longer-term impact in development programs.[221] Long-term impact of theatre for development, and development projects in general, falls outside the timeframe of all but the most long-running projects. Once a project has concluded and is no longer actively funded, there is no project staff or resources to go back and assess its impact on a community. Monitoring and evaluation is an essential part of development programs, and must be built in to any project from the earliest proposal and planning stages. The latter, longer-term evaluation is almost never undertaken, leaving a dearth of information on the actual impacts of a project on a community. Therefore, while no one would likely

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[221] Etherton and Prentki, "Drama for Change? Prove It! Impact Assessment in Applied Theatre," 139–55.

admit in the abstract that long-term results don't matter, and in fact the idea of

"sustainability" is emphasized in development work, practically the idea of results in

development is limited to those that can be immediately assessed through the

immediate process of monitoring and evaluation during and immediately following

the life of the project.

Results and the USAID Project cycle

USAID includes in their materials for potential partners an infographic of

their "Program Cycle" (figure 6.1.). This model is quite abstract and seems designed

to be so flexible it is almost meaningless as a roadmap for project design and

execution.
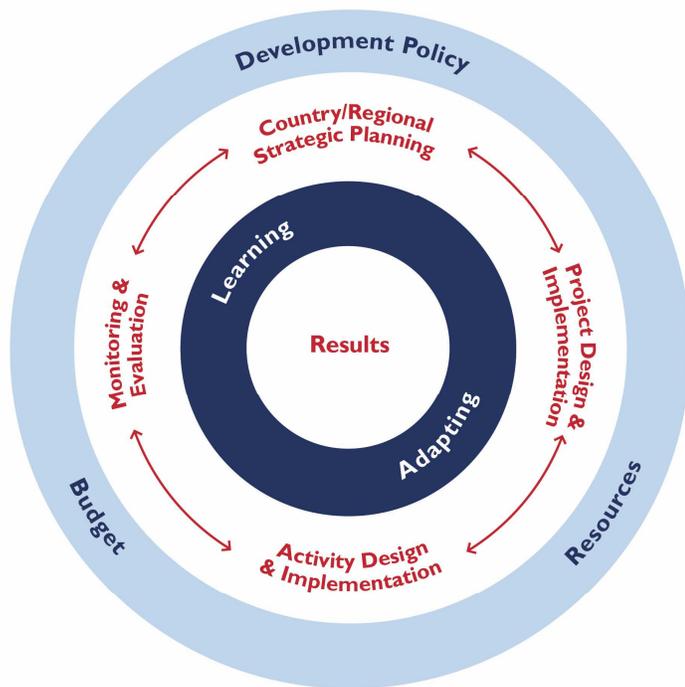
USAID Program Cycle

Figure 6.2. The USAID Program Cycle. USAID, 2016.

In the USAID diagram, there is no clear start and end point. In reality, projects do have a start and end, so this model either misrepresents the cycle or intends to incorporate multiple projects that build on each other (and apparently never conclude). In the outer (light blue) ring, we see the external factors that go into a project: Development Policy, which refers to USAID's overall strategy and specific country strategies (CDCs), and Budget and Resources (arguably part of the same thing). Inside this ring are the actual steps taken by USAID and their partners during the process, presented with arrows going between each step in both directions; again, there is no indication of any actual sequence to these elements. Visually this gives the impression of a whirlpool, into which one could jump at any point and have no clear way to get out. The process is cyclical, but with no entrance or exit to the process indicated.

Inside this ring is the dark blue band containing "learning" and "adapting." This emphasizes the cycle of continuous evaluation. It also seems very telling that these elements surround "results," which are inexplicably located in the inner circle, visually blocked from the steps involved in completing a project. This could simply be a result of bad design, but it is hard not to read through the lens of critiques of development as a self-perpetuating (and failing) system as a sign of the illusiveness of actual results.

In an attempt to provide a clearer picture of the actual progression of a USAID development project, I have created a modified version of the USAID Program Cycle (Figure 6.3.). Taking a cue from the USAID Logical framework, I started from the end by placing "results" at the end of the cycle, indicating that measurable, material

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gains toward development goals in the target community are indeed the desired end point of the cycle. These results mainly come as a direct result of the implementation of the project activities (as indicated by the double arrow); for example, bringing a mobile HIV-testing facility to a community would ideally result in a number of community members receiving an HIV test. Activity design and implementation is preceded by project design and implementation (conducted by the implementing partner both during and after the application for and receipt of funding), which is in turn based upon the priorities set by USAID in their country and regional strategic planning. This central circle of the cycle includes the same four elements from the original model, but I do not believe it is accurate to imply that the cycle goes in both directions in every case. At the top of the diagram are the national-level policy elements (Development Policy, Budget, and other Resources) determined by USAID, the Department of State, and Congress through budget appropriations.

Along the left side of the revised diagram are the feedback portions of the project cycle. Monitoring and Evaluation draws on the activity implementation and results to provide data and analysis about the successes and/or failures of a project. This feedback is returned to USAID where in theory it contributes to country and regional strategic planning, as well as longer term learning and adapting. The lessons learned from each project should contribute to agency-level development policy as well as national foreign policy as it relates to international aid.
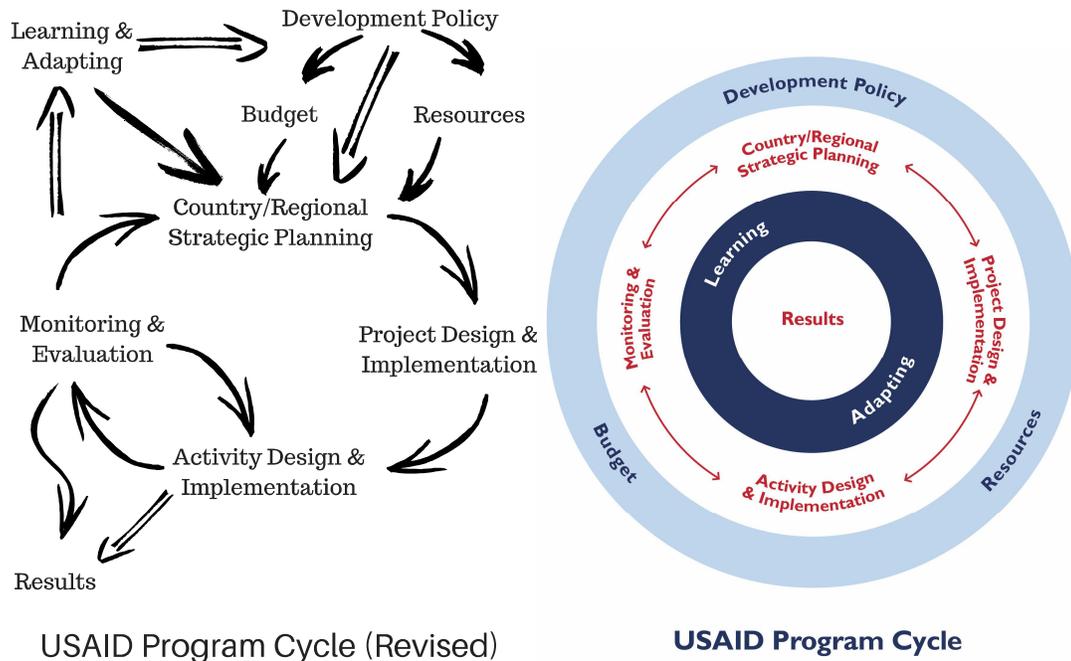
Figure 6.3. Revised and Original USAID Program Cycles. Author/USAID.

Defining and Determining Success in APHIA Plus and FACT

Like any USAID funded project, both the FACT Program, conducted by

Georgetown IRH and APHIA Plus Western Kenya implemented by PATH, set the

activities, outputs, purpose, and goals of their interventions at the beginning of the

project process, at the point of applying for the project with USAID. In the particular

interventions that use theatre, these projects must negotiate the particular challenges

of setting and evaluating progress toward goals that have their main test in the

experience of the audience. The case studies presented in this dissertation are able to

assess their impact using tools from the field of development monitoring and

evaluation, unhindered by the usual reluctance to engage with audience response in

performance. In addition to assuring the "legitimacy" of theatre for development as a

development strategy through demonstrating its effectiveness, the ways in which

development assessment approaches are applied to theatre may provide insight into better understanding what we can and can't glean about an audience's experience in theatre more broadly.

Ultimately, the arbiter of "success" is the funder of the program, in this case USAID. The broad upper level goals, which if accomplished would presumably indicate success, are set by USAID as part of their project planning. Implementing partners contribute the lower rungs, determining what actions and intermediate steps will lead to the overall goal.

Conspicuously absent from the role of determining success are the actual community members. Instead, stakeholders in the community are usually regarded as sources of data that will go into the implementing NGOs assessment and ultimately be reported to USAID. Members of the target population, community health workers, educators, and leaders may be asked to give their impression of the impact of the work, but the ultimate evaluation is conducted by the implementing organization.

Project Goals

The overall goals of APHIA plus are:

- Provide integrated health services for more than ten million people in Nyanza and Western Provinces
- Support the Ministries of Health to improve and expand services for HIV and AIDS, reproductive health and family planning, tuberculosis, malaria and maternal and child health
- Improve and expand civil society activities to increase healthy behaviors
- Reduce stigma and establish safety nets for people living with HIV[222]

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[222] USAID, "APHIA plus (AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance), Western Kenya."

The last two of these deal at least in part with health beliefs and behavior, and therefore relate to the magnet theatre outreach interventions that are part of the APHIA Plus program.

According to Madiang, the specific outcomes that should result from the APHIA Plus Magnet Theatre activities are "mobilizing young people to access interventions and take up interventions, build confidence in interventions, and also to inform them of interventions" available to them. It is also used as part of their monitoring and evaluation strategy, particularly the audience participation and discussion, "to harvest feedback from the community on our services or on the needs and […] that feeds into our programming."[223] This feedback component is harnessed through the guided reflection used by Magnet Theatre groups, discussed in more detail in the next section.

As a research program, the EDEAN component of the Fertility Awareness for Community Transformation project is slightly different. Because the main goal of the FACT program is to test a hypothesis, the component interventions are all designed to create the necessary conditions to do so. The hypothesis being tested by FACT is that "increased fertility awareness will lead to increased use of modern family planning." Each activity, including EDEAN, is intended to bring about "increased fertility awareness." Then IRH and partners can test whether or not there is evidence to support the hypothesis.

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[223] Olouch-Madiang, Interview with the author.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As discussed previously, PATH, Georgetown IRH, and other NGOs categorize theatre for development as a type of behavior change communication. Therefore, the outputs and outcomes of a theatre for development project are related to not only the experience of the audience but also their subsequent health choices and behavior. Unlike in the aesthetic theatre, assessment is not optional in theatre for development. TfD project managers figure out ways to evaluate theatre-based projects because they must. There is no option to say, "we can't know what the audience is thinking."

Indicators and data sources for theatre interventions must focus on the experience of the audience, which can only be assessed indirectly through their conduct and comments. PATH incorporates a questionnaire to be conducted by the theatre group following a performance (Figure 6.4.). Some of the questions ask the group to reflect upon their own performance. While this is in part for the performers own benefit, it is also part of the monitoring and evaluation process because the group members are actually in most cases part of the key (target) population (see Chapter 5).

Most of the questions are meant to capture a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding the performance, things that may have affected the audience's experience, and the participation and reactions of the audience. The discussions that result are recorded and used toward the evaluation of the intervention, both toward ongoing adjustments throughout the series of performances, as well as in the final evaluation of the project.

The questions that aim at understanding the audience's experience primarily deal with their engagement and participation. For example, did they participate in the mobilization and icebreaker activities, did they participate actively in the drama and discussion, and did they share personal stories? These questions get at the connection between the performers and the audience, and also speak to some of the traits Schechner identifies as marks of efficacious performance. Specifically, the active participation of the audience indicates an efficacious performance, whereas passive watching does not. Schechner also indicates "collective creativity," as might be indicated by the audience's willingness to enter the drama and participate or relate personal stories, as a quality of transformative performance.[224] The relationship between the audience, facilitator, and actors is clearly recognized by those evaluating Magnet Theatre as a significant indicator of the effectiveness of theatre as a behavior change intervention.

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[224] Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 130.

Figure 6.4. Observation Checklist for Magnet Theatre Outreach. PATH, 2005.

The EDEAN intervention strategy document summarizes priorities for monitoring and evaluation of the activity:

> The ultimate success of this solution will be highly dependent on the quality and quantity of messages and information transmitted by the peer group facilitators and educators, as well as how effectively that transmission and its

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effect on target populations is measured. That effect will be measured by monitoring a), change in knowledge of fertility, and FP and b), behavior (e.g. holding conversations about FP, seeking info about FP, and uptake of FP services/products).[225]

These two effects correspond to the if/then portions of the FACT project hypothesis, which could be stated: If Fertility Awareness increases in the target population, then family planning uptake will also increase. In order to determine if positive results (increased family planning use) are a result of the variable (change in FA knowledge), IRH must first evaluate if a change in knowledge occurred as a result of the intervention. In further discussion of the M&E strategy for EDEAN, the two components being measured are referred to as the "knowledge portion" and the "behavior portion."

To evaluate the "knowledge portion" of the program, IRH will use something called a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice, or KAP, survey. The survey will be given to a sample of community members before the solution is implemented to assess baseline knowledge of fertility awareness topics. It will then be conducted again with a sample of those who attended EDEAN performances, as well as a control group of the same demographics from neighboring communities that were not exposed to the EDEAN intervention.

The KAP survey will also include questions to evaluate changes in attitudes and behavior, though this portion of the assessment may be less reliable as those being surveyed will be self-reporting on their behavior.[226] IRH plans to use additional

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[225] Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University, Save the Children International, and International Center for Research on Women, "FACT: EDEAN Intervention Strategy Draft," 3.

[226] SPRING: Strengthening Partnerships, Results, and Innovations Globally, "The KAP Survey Model (Knowledge, Attitudes, & Practices)."

tools to assess behavior change, including qualitative reports by the peer theatre

groups after each performance (similar to the PATH example above) and monthly

qualitative reports by peer group leaders based on their meetings and discussions with

their groups. Finally, IRH and partners will attempt to monitor interest in family

planning use through quantitative means by tracking referrals to health providers and

distribution of family planning methods including Cycle Beads,[227] condoms, and oral

contraceptives.[228]

Communication

Demonstrating the success of programs and interventions is essential for

NGOs, both internally to current funders and to the public (including current and

potential individual donors). Interestingly, reports to funders about interventions that

use theatre often downplay the theatre component. It is often lumped in with other

BCC methods or mentioned briefly without explanation of the form. As EDEAN was

the first theatre intervention conducted by Georgetown IRH and the final reports have

not been completed yet, I cannot make much of an assessment of how they have

chosen to convey the EDEAN portion of FACT in their publications. They do have a

two-page fact sheet on the EDEAN intervention available on the FACT project

website, which states that "EDEAN uses a community theatre approach to diffuse

fertility awareness throughout the community." Aside from this, the only description

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[227] Cycle Beads are a tool for tracking menstruation and fertile days for the purposes of planning or avoiding pregnancy. They were developed by Georgetown IRH for their public health programs and are now widely used in their original form and as a smartphone application. Cyclebeads, cyclebeads.com, 2017.

[228] Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University, Save the Children International, and International Center for Research on Women, "FACT: EDEAN Intervention Strategy Draft," 4.

of the actual theatre activity is "Peer Group Members enact Community Theatre

Performances to share the information throughout their communities. Some

performances follow a standardized storyline that emphasizes core fertility awareness

information, while others are developed by group members." These three sentences

make up the entire description of the use of theatre, despite the fact the theatre is the

core activity of the intervention.[229] For comparison, another behavior change

communication intervention under FACT known as WALAN, which uses written

materials, posters, and other visual medium to convey health information, contains an

entire page with descriptions of each of the published components, what they are

intended to do, and what information they contain. It is more difficult to describe and

explain theatrical structure and performances than it is to summarize content from

written material, yet in an intervention based entirely on performance it is noteworthy

that the central component receives so little description.

PATH, on the other hand has been using theatre for many years, and has used

narratives and examples of their Magnet Theatre work in communications with

funders relatively more than other NGOs. It seems likely that as PATH used Magnet

Theatre more and had more experience and material, those creating their publications

became more comfortable talking about and highlighting their theatre methods. In

addition, Magnet Theatre is a particular point of ownership and pride for PATH as it

was adapted by the organization. Like their other advancements in public health,

including developing vaccines and technological advances, in their website and

public communications they hold up Magnet Theatre as an example of their record of

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[229] Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health, "Brief: FACT Project's EDEAN
Solution."

developing new effective ideas and methods in global health. However, it should be noted that in the USAID Fact Sheet for the project, no mention is made of theatre at all.[230]

Where the Programs Stand Now

APHIA Plus Western Kenya, originally scheduled to end in 2015, is still active as of this writing. Neither USAID or PATH has updated the published end date, so it is unclear for how long it has been renewed. In the January 2016 report on PATH's work in Kenya, the organization begins with a discussion of the work done through APHIA Plus, PATH's largest program in the country, during its original five-year term.

> In Western Kenya, PATH and our partners serve a population of 10 million people. Between 2010 and 2015, we have achieved unprecedented gains. For example:
> - 95 percent of children born to HIV-positive mothers in project-supported sites now receive treatment to prevent transmission.
> - More than 1,000 health workers have been trained to provide family planning services, and more than 1,250 to provide maternity care.
> - More than 188,000 orphans and vulnerable children and households have received support and services.
> - More than 100,000 community members have gained access to clean drinking water.[231]

Not surprisingly, these quantitative statistics do not include the less measurable information gathered about behavior change results and specifically those achieved through Magnet Theatre. The paragraph immediately following the statistics provides a more narrative reflection, but still does not mention theatre or any specific form of behavior change communication.

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[230] USAID, "APHIA plus (AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance), Western Kenya."
[231] Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health, "FACT Overview EDEAN Solution Goals and Fertility Awareness."

APHIA Plus efforts add up to more than the sum of their parts. Support for health facilities and training for health workers improve care for all diseases. **Community engagement programs reduce the stigma around HIV**. And programs that empower women address economic and social barriers that contribute to poor health. We also link services to one another and to the larger health system to increase their impact. Together, these activities strengthen the entire health system, addressing immediate threats while building the capacity to improve health into the future.[232]

Because the program has been extended, there is no published final report from the APHIA Plus Program available at this time.

As of early 2017, the FACT program has ended, but the final evaluation has not been completed. For IRH, time and financial limitations resulted in changes to the planned activities and expected outcomes. While the original timeline for the project included a proof of concept in a couple of communities followed by an expanded pilot phase, a later than expected start date meant that IRH was forced to expand the proof of concept into a small pilot phase. The only deliverable will be the training manuals that could, in theory, be used for future projects in the area. However, when I asked Danielle McCadden, the project leader, about who she expected to use them, she acknowledged that it was unlikely that a future program would use IRH's manuals rather than creating their own.

Each of these programs will eventually produce a final report, through which they will convey their successes and "lessons learned" (a kind term for things that did not work, or outright failures). These reports will undoubtedly portray a project that was successful in contributing to the goals assigned by USAID, and yet one that leaves much work to be done, in the hopes that funding will be made available to continue their efforts. As for the theatrical interventions of these projects, it is clear

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[232] PATH.

that development organizations that use theatre have not yet come to a decision on the best way to utilize their theatre activities, and the results thereof, as evidence of their impact in communities. However, the ease with which they approach the monitoring and evaluation of creative performance and the surrounding activities that make up a theatrical intervention is refreshing, and may provide insight to the broader theatre field, particularly in the area of applied theatre where predicting and demonstrating results may be an uncomfortable but necessary part of the production process.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

From Washington, DC to Kampala to Karamoja: Tracing Interventions

My own experience through this study has involved travel on the same scale as that of the aid projects I have studied, not only in the physical sense (though I did physically travel to Uganda and Kenya), but in the sense of travelling between two intellectual and academic areas separated by language, professionalization, and priorities. I began of course in the realm of theatre and performance studies, comfortably located within my intellectual home of the arts and humanities with easy access to postcolonial studies, conceptions of transnational movement, and Marxist framing of economics, all of which have been used extensively to comment on development from outside but not within the field. In order to locate, understand, and interpret actual uses of Forum Theatre I immersed myself in the professionalized world of international development and its funding cycles, jargon and acronyms, and most importantly its priorities.

In writing this dissertation, I have now had to return to the world of theatre and the humanities, and communicate as much as possible the way in which theatre operates as a tool for development for a humanities audience. This exercise in itself has been eye-opening, and reinforces the challenge present in the fight against global inequality; truly granting the "targets" of development their humanity and control of their decisions may result in unpredictable outcomes, where the process of development hinges upon designing interventions to achieve a specific predetermined goal. However, like so many things, the reality at the ground level seemed quite

different than the view from the academe, with the divide between theatre and development appearing virtually non-existent to those actually using theatre in development projects. Forum Theatre and its adaptations can in fact change people's minds and habits. Even though that change may be in line with the agenda of a foreign government, that does not negate the positive effect on that individual's life of, for example, getting tested for HIV. Overall, while I am left with a feeling of helplessness in the face of the current system and lack of viable alternatives, I do believe that the use of theatre and participatory methods is generally having a positive impact, at least within that system.

To return to the physical movement of development projects, drastic differences of scale must be dealt with over the course of an intervention. Theatre for development involves the overseas transfer of money, knowledge, and people, yet the theatre performance(s) that result are hyperlocal; take for example the performances produced by the EDEAN project in Northern Uganda. The resulting performances and accompanying discussions were conducted by members of the target population, young men and women alternately in mixed gender and single gender groups, for audiences of their peers. In each of six communities, these performances were held within walking distance for the audience and participants.

Zooming out from here, we see the "peer group moderators," chosen from the community, who trained the volunteer actors. Further back, we have the "master trainers," who were recruited from community health and education workers in the region. All of these trainers follow guidelines handed down by Uganda-based IRH personnel, who collaborated with US-based IRH staff to plan the interventions. IRH

received money as well as guidelines from USAID, in order to implement the FACT project according to their standards.

The local performances may be the end of the line geographically from a US perspective, but they should not be considered the end result of the project. The stated objectives of EDEAN are to: "Develop a simple, low cost, scalable solution based on the results of formative research that diffuses easily through social networks to reach a fertility awareness 'tipping point'" and to then use that solution to "evaluate whether increased fertility awareness leads to increased family planning use." The true end result of the program is the information delivered back to USAID, which follows the reverse path through Uganda-based IRH personnel, to IRH in the US. In this case, that includes 1) the solution, including training manuals and other materials that could be used to replicate and "scale up" the intervention in other projects and geographic areas, and 2) the results of the research on fertility awareness and family planning use. These "deliverables" are packaged according to USAID's reporting instructions, with the idea being that USAID will now have evidence of the effectiveness of this method that it can use in designing future programming. FACT is designated as a research project, so this aspect is more important in this case, but even in larger-scale projects the feedback loop of monitoring and evaluation is a major part of any project, and from the point of view of the implementing partner, the report to USAID is the real product of the intervention. We could follow this same path to trace the movements of the APHIA Plus program as well. There would of course be some differences, but the essential funneling of the (US) national control, to the

global exchange, to the eventual local performance, and the return trip of reportable results would be the same.

The history of the use of Forum Theatre for development also takes us from global to local. In the 1960's, the field of development was maturing worldwide, and criticism arose from both inside and outside the field regarding its original economic focus and imperialist agenda. At the same time in Latin America, Boal and his collaborators were developing the techniques that would become the Theatre of the Oppressed. As development practitioners and organizations embraced participatory development as a way to involve and engage target communities, Boal's work was spreading worldwide, and finding new applications in areas like education and therapy. African theatre artists adopted the techniques into their own work, and Forum Theatre soon found its way into development applications.

The contradictions of using a radical, community-focused method in support of a top-down international state agenda play out in the tension between global public health's focus on results and Freirian critical pedagogy's emphasis on empowerment. Specifically, the public health approach to disseminating information, known as Behavior Change Communication, relies on principles of advertising and peer pressure to influence behavior, and evaluates success based on quantitative increase in the desired healthy or "positive" behavior. Forum Theatre presents a venue for discussion, including discussion of facts, but should not assume to know a "right" choice for the participants. Forum Theatre must by definition present an open situation for discussion, rather than simply provide a forum for discussion while actually being part of a larger pre-set agenda that is not responsive to that discussion.

A Window on Development

Looking closely at the use of Theatre of the Oppressed methods in development projects draws into question some of the fundamental aspects of the global development industry. These criticisms are not unique; post-colonial and Marxist scholars have critiqued international development since its inception. These critiques have been instrumental in encouraging change within the existing system, such as the incorporation of participatory development based on Freirian pedagogy. However, it is arguable that the embrace of more empowering approaches within the same top-down structure merely serves to make projects *appear* more equitable without actually transferring any power to the affected communities.

The stark juxtaposition of Boal's theoretical writings on Theatre of the Oppressed and the objectifying language of large-scale development highlights the conflicts between the two. Boal, and his theoretical influence in the work of Paolo Freire, seek to place the power to explore and enact change in the hands of the community. In the current system of international development this sort of transfer of power is essentially impossible. In the cases discussed in the previous chapters, funding, approaches, and most importantly, the desired outcomes are determined by USAID. Participatory approaches such as Forum Theatre may be useful in gathering information and engaging community members in the project; however in order for the project to be "successful" the predetermined outcomes must be met. Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed work toward liberation. As long as the tactics and goals of an initiative are set by outsiders, liberation within the context of that initiative is not possible.

This is not to say that the incorporation of Forum Theatre has no positive impact within projects like APHIA Plus and FACT. While I question the ultimate good of changing a community based on objectives set by outsiders, in the vast majority of cases the intended outcomes are in line with the hopes of those in the community. In the case of public health, one would have a hard time finding anyone who is explicitly opposed to the mitigation of disease, for example. The differences more often lie in the ways in which change is brought about or encouraged, and the social, cultural, and economic factors that influence behavior. And, it is in these areas that, in the absence of a complete revolution in the global system of development (and possibly the whole global economy), Forum Theatre can be quite useful.

For theatre practitioners, this has implications for any application of theatre for change working within a state system. We must be careful and critical to ensure that even within the structure of power, we are providing tools for communities to determine their own development as much as possible. In addition, development is such a large part of economy and culture in Uganda and Kenya that any trend has an impact throughout the region. While theatre has had an impact on development, development has shaped national arts and culture. The aesthetic drama presented at the National Theatre of Uganda often presents plays with the themes of development, traditional African culture, and the negotiation between the two.

Also, while this dissertation is focused on global development by USAID, it is important to note that the incorporation of Forum Theatre has also occurred in grassroots and civil society organizations that do development-related work. These projects could not possibly be entirely separate from the larger development machine,

but they are much less tied to the global and state agendas represented by organizations like USAID and the UN and do not answer to them directly. Within these programs, Forum Theatre has much more potential to truly help a community give voice to their concerns and desires and take action with the support of the community organization, even potentially in opposition to state control.

Looking Forward

Further Research

This study looks at only two programs, but through those we have encountered several organizations from Washington, DC to Uganda and Kenya. From here, I believe a more in-depth look at each of the levels identified in the introduction would help to further understand the role and future of theatre for development. I found information from USAID on their regard for theatre as a communication tool to be virtually nonexistent; at the USAID level reports mentioned the use of theatre in a brief sentence about communication methods, or not at all. In the future, I would like to delve more deeply into top-level funders and their knowledge and impressions of Forum Theatre. The main challenge here is the bureaucracy and security issues present in dealing with any government agency, but a better understanding of the view of theatre for development by large funders would be invaluable to NGOs as well as applied theatre practitioners in developing countries and the US.

Also of interest but falling largely outside the scope of this study is the placement of theatre for development in the context of the professional theatre "scene" and cultural landscape. Theatre for development, and development in general, has undoubtedly had a large effect on national culture, theatre professionals,

and theatre education in Uganda and Kenya. Assessing this impact would be a fascinating subject and open up questions of ways in which development influences nations that go beyond direct economic factors. My limited research in this area indicates that the answers would differ based on the country; in Uganda I found that those involved in theatre for development generally came to it by way of an interest or educational background in theatre, while in Kenya the founders of Magnet Theatre were development professionals. I also heard more negative sentiments toward theatre for development from Kenyan theatre artists than in Uganda.

The Future of Forum Theatre in the Field

Participatory theatre is a specialized form of public health communication. At the planning level within US-based organizations, Behavior Change Communication specialists should have more specific knowledge of Forum Theatre, and I would recommend coordinating with theatre experts on the planning phases of projects. In addition, I believe the repertoire of theatrical methods for public health and development interventions should be expanded. Forum Theatre is an excellent method for some objectives, including gathering information about health beliefs and social norms in a community, determining community values and goals for health improvement, and confronting community disagreements such as generational differences in health beliefs and behavior, stigmas of disease, and gender expectations. However, Forum Theatre is not the best method for every public health intervention, and particularly in the case of providing factual information the form can break down and fail to accomplish its goal of empowerment and dialogue. For example, in a performance about HIV/AIDS transmission, inaccurate information

about how the disease is contracted presented by audience members could devolve into argument, requiring the actors and joker to take a stand and correct the speaker. There is no authority in a Forum Theatre performance, and there should be no agreement between the audience and performers to accept anyone's word over another. The audience does not "delegate their power" to the characters, therefore one person's opinion is as valid as anyone else's. This system is wonderfully fruitful in matters of conflicting points of view, but in applications where scientific fact is at issue the form will undoubtedly be corrupted.

The problem of incomplete theatre knowledge is not as pronounced in recipient countries, where development theatre is highly visible in both the development and artistic sectors. Knowledge of theatre for development is widespread (though the problem of the proliferation of unskilled practitioners still exists), and local NGOs seem to readily take advantage of it. Funding and resources are of course a problem, and I think the choice not to use local theatre expert to help develop programs, as Georgetown IRH decided, should be questioned. Local groups like Rafiki not only know more about theatre for development in the local context, but also potentially know more about the culture in general and can provide insight on artistic and logistical factors such as training methods, scheduling, and what to expect from audiences.

In the world of international development, proven results are highly important. In the project reports I reviewed, theatre was not specifically tested as a variable in evaluating successful behavior change initiatives. I suggest development agencies do quantitative analysis that specifically tests the use of forum theatre, as well as other

theatre methods, for appropriate health knowledge and behavior change. This effort and the results should be incorporated into the ongoing push for more effective participatory development and greater local control of interventions.

Critics of the international development machine have proposed solutions to the development problem that vary in scope and feasibility from a shift in focus to a complete deconstruction of the field. Most seem understandably resigned to the fact that the global development machine is unlikely to be dismantled or revolutionized quickly. Thomas Dichter, a veteran of the development industry, calls for a dramatic reduction in direct programs (such as those presented in this study) and a shift toward economic and political development spearheaded by developing nations themselves. James Ferguson, speaking primarily to individual academics as to what they can do to improve the situation, calls for deliberate involvement with those non-state actors such as the grassroots and civil society organizations mentioned above. Arturo Escobar sees the problems of development in terms of language and framing, and sees true progress as possible only through the reframing of the relationship between the West and the developing world by those on both sides.

It is safe to say that movements are being made in all of these directions, though slowly and perhaps on too small a scale to counter the push by government and multi-lateral institutions for greater funding, more programs, and new "innovations" in the fight against global poverty. Theatre can be a part of the solution; movements by local civil society organizations address the suggestions of both Dichter and Ferguson. Forum Theatre that seeks to identify and address the economic and social needs of a community independent of the international

development system can have immediate impacts as well as shaping the course of the community's collective desires for the future. Beyond that, dialogue fostered in local theatre has the potential to reframe the understanding and language of development in the global south, contributing however modestly to the shift in development discourse suggested by Escobar.

Forum Theatre can and does enhance public health and development outcomes and provide limited avenues for empowerment and participation within the current system. On an individual level, the programs discussed in the previous chapters have encouraged people to make choices that improve health outcomes, question social norms that prevent such choices, and access care they may not have under other circumstances. This in itself can improve self-efficacy and empowerment for members of the target population. And, though the target outcomes may be set ahead of time by USAID and the implementing partners, the community may have input into how those outcomes are pursued and Forum Theatre is an excellent method for engaging in that dialogue.

Development has and does contain the impulse to empower those struggling with poverty, poor health, and limited opportunity in part due to the effects of colonialism and imperialism. Yet true liberation through development is not possible because of the ultimate control exerted by foreign governments, foundations, and multi-lateral institutions. As a form of theatre that gives voice to the voiceless, FT could be part of a solution to this problem. As it stands, however, forum theatre is just one of many positive impulses within the overall control of the top-down system. The contradictions of employing a theatre method based in radical philosophy toward the

international agenda of the United States remain, and I believe Forum Theatre's greatest potential in international development lies in its application to the remaking of the global development system itself.

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