

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHORT-TERM
HUMANITARIAN AID

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Christina Ruth Delgatty, MDiv, B.A.

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EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHORT-TERM
HUMANITARIAN AID

Committee Members Approved:

Dr. Toni Watt, Chair

Dr. Bob Price, Member

Dr. Howard Balanoff, Member

Approved:

J. Michael Willoughby
Dean of the Graduate College

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ABSTRACT

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHORT-TERM HUMANITARIAN AID

by

Christina Ruth Delgatty, MDiv, B.A.

Texas State University-San Marcos

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SUPERVISING PROFESSOR: TONI WATT

Social scientists, international aid organizations, governments, and religious groups have conducted extensive research concerning the effectiveness of long-term humanitarian aid. However, there is little research concerning the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid. This project is centered on the short-term trips that are sent to Cameroon by a small, U.S. based nonprofit that supports an orphanage in Northwest Cameroon. The purpose of this research project was to identify the issues involved in evaluating short-term humanitarian aid including defining effectiveness, determining unmet needs for evaluation, and exploring the benefits and drawbacks of implementing more formal evaluation methods. The results of a qualitative analysis of the data revealed that both the orphanage and organization are aware of dependency and dominance issues, but there is a mutual understanding of the benefits of having a

dominant organization work with the orphanage toward goals of independence. Delivering deep and long-lasting happiness and offering long-term support is an important part of short-term trip effectiveness. Structured goals and the willingness to honestly evaluate short-term trips will enable better evaluation, and the tools used in evaluation must address not only tangible effects but also intangible effects such as improved morale or spiritual development. This project serves as a starting point for future research by identifying some of the key issues and questions involved in evaluating the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Researchers and historians agree that humanitarian aid has been an important part of all civilized societies throughout history. From international aid donations to neighborhood food drives, humanitarians express their desire to care for humanity in many different ways. Aid is administered by rich and poor alike, and it affects all levels of society. Aid can be delivered in response to a request from the needy or as an assertion of oneself into a perceived need. The universal human spirit hears the cry of the needy and yearns for opportunities to do good. These yearnings have become an important part of the culture of the Western world (Krotz 2009).

Humanitarian aid has evolved over the years into the widely diverse and international industry that it is today. Nonprofit organizations, for-profit businesses, and governments participate in humanitarian aid each in their own way and all with noble causes and good intentions. A wide variety of reporting goes into measuring the success or failure of each project. Still, there is not a consensus among evaluators about how to define what is and is not effective, especially when it comes to short-term projects. Some organizations would measure effectiveness by the feeling of accomplishment felt by their volunteers. Others would only consider a project effective if it demonstrated a clear

return on investment such as revenue growth in a nonprofit farming business in a poverty stricken community. Still others would consider the subjective feelings of those being helped as evidence of an effective project.

No matter the project, each organization has to answer the question of whether or not their well-intended and noble projects are effective. As demonstrated in Chapter II, there is a lot of information about the effectiveness of long-term humanitarian aid projects. Many of the larger humanitarian aid organizations put great effort into evaluating the effectiveness of their long-term projects. However, short-term projects tend to be overlooked by both large and small organizations due to factors such as limited time for data collection, minimal investment in the region, or nominal commitment by the team members. They may even prefer not to evaluate the short-term projects to avoid potentially negative responses to good intentions.

The background and history of humanitarian aid will be explored in Chapter II with attention to the evolution of nonprofit organizations in the Western world. Historical changes and theoretical transformations have influenced this evolution. They have paved the way for modern humanitarian aid to include increasing awareness and exposure through the development of a unique nonprofit sector. Modern humanitarian aid includes improved relationships within the United States concerning humanitarian aid, greater support for humanitarian needs around the world, and increased expectations for effective humanitarian projects. Like any for-profit or academic projects, these humanitarian projects, whether short-term or long-term, must be evaluated for effectiveness in order to more clearly define and fulfill their purpose.

Due to the lack of consistency and available data for short-term projects, research on how to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid is especially needed for short-term projects. The goal of this project was to answer the following research questions:

- How do volunteers define effectiveness?
- Are there clear goals for the trip(s)? If so, what are they?
- Who defines what it means for each trip to be effective – volunteers, sponsors, NGOs?
- How do volunteers evaluate effectiveness?
- According to these measures, are the trips successful? Is there consensus?
- Can those receiving the aid help to evaluate the effectiveness of the trips?
- Are there unmet needs for evaluation?
- What are the drawbacks to implementing more formal evaluation methods?

The researcher created the data collection methods described in Chapter III to gather data on these questions from interview participants that have been involved in short-term humanitarian aid trips to an orphanage in Northwest Cameroon called New Hope Children's Home (NHCH). These methods include in-depth interviews with volunteer trip participants, on-location interviews with the paid staff, conversations with volunteer members of the board, and participant observation by the researcher. The orphanage is managed by a U.S. based non-profit that we will call Hope For Cameroon (HFC) which sends an average of three groups of volunteers for short term (two to three weeks) humanitarian projects each year. Full access to the staff, board, and volunteers has been granted by the board of HFC for this research project.

Each of these data collection methods focus on gathering in-depth information concerning the perspectives of each participant. Chapter IV: Results, and Chapter V: Conclusions, will offer evaluation, qualitative analysis, and synthesis of the data collected by using the methods above with the goal of answering the research questions and

identifying future areas of research and development on the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are multiple perspectives on how to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid from the Western viewpoint. This literature review covers the history of nonprofit work, previous research, and theoretical approaches to evaluating the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. The research predominantly covers the Western world delivering aid to the needy around the world. Throughout the centuries, evolving perspectives, approaches, and theories about the administration of humanitarian aid have drastically affected the way aid has been delivered by the Western world to both domestic and international recipients. This chapter begins with the history of and background for humanitarian aid and describes how researchers and nonprofits have attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

The Evolution of Humanitarian Aid

In his book *The Scourge of Poverty in the 21st Century*, Christopher Chitereka (2008) discusses the evolution of four theories related to humanitarian aid that are focused on reducing poverty: Modernization Theory, Dependency Theory, Free Market Theory, and Developmentalist Theory. In another study concerning how to record the history of charity, voluntarism, and the nonprofit sector as represented in elementary and secondary school textbooks, Ross and Til (2001) found data and concrete examples of

Western approaches and perspectives on humanitarian aid that are very similar to and support the theories presented by Chitereka. This section is a discussion of the theories presented by Chitereka in their historical context for the past 100 years as suggested by Ross and Till that gives insight into the current Western approaches to administering humanitarian aid.

Until the 1920s, it was rare to find even a small mention of either domestic or international humanitarian aid activities in textbooks or other publications. The prevailing perspective of the colonial period was that underdeveloped countries were simply primitive and motivated by irrational impulses (Olivier de Sardan 2005). Because the slave trade was a thriving industry in the Western World that relied on this perception, it was rare if not impossible to find even a mention of international aid in the literature of the day. Through the 1920s, humanitarian aid activities seem to be merely an incidental element of American civil life (Ross and Til 2001). The only clear record of aid during this time was through the church and its missionaries. Although often driven by religious sentiment and friendly toward the work of the church, the American government did not seem to consider itself responsible for offering humanitarian aid. By the 1920s, the American government offered some forms of aid, but there were niches that they did not, could not, or chose not to manage (Ross and Til 2001). Organized charities filled some of these niches, but they were not yet recognized by the government as official entities.

A big change in the American perspective came in the 1930s as the Great Depression and the New Deal created a more visible need for nongovernmental humanitarian aid. The major changes in people's lives during these years opened wide

the door for organized charity to become more visible and better represented in the American story. (Chitereka 2008) Til and Ross (2001) found that since the 1930s there has been extensive development of a distinct nonprofit sector focused on delivery of humanitarian aid.

Organized charity began to emerge in the textbooks in the 1930s-1940s as a supplement to governmental programs (Ross and Til 2001). By the late 1930s, organized charity and/or philanthropy began to thrive in the niches where the government was lacking (Ross and Til 2001). These organizations did the kind of research and development that could lead to a more effective and efficient government role. They also carried out programs that helped to relieve part of the American government's burden in administering humanitarian aid (Ross and Til 2001).

In the period between the two World Wars, cultural relativism became a dominant perspective in the American approach to humanitarian aid. Americans had many opportunities for stability and to achieve material success, and they began to see organized charity as a predecessor of the welfare state (Ross and Til 2001). Nonprofit organizations began to study the uniqueness of individual cultures and the necessity of using fieldwork to study societies (Olivier de Sardan 2005).

Organized charity in the United States enjoyed its highest level of prominence during the 1950s and 1960s when it began to emerge as a complement to government welfare programs (Ross and Til 2001). Modernization Theory was the prominent theory and practice in this period with its general assumption that effective poverty alleviation efforts would eventually spread sufficiently to most people. This theory relates directly to the Westernization of developing countries. However, although there was the rapid

development due to Westernization, Modernization Theorists made little headway toward reducing poverty (Chitereka 2008). Critics of Modernization Theory say this perspective is very one-sided and characterized by the Western World's culture. Therefore, it remains irrelevant to international cultures and can ignore some domestic issues as well.

The 1960s perspective moved away from seeing organized charity as a complement to governmental programs and began to see it as competition. Organized charitable activity began to take the form of advocacy, criticism or opposition (Ross and Til 2001). During the 1960s, the nonprofit sector began to distinguish itself and its role as separate from the government and business sectors. It also began to more prominently pursue a distinct agenda as well (Ross and Til 2001).

Dependency Theory became a popular perspective in the 1960s and 1970s as a reaction to Modernization Theory. Dependency theorists believe the cause of underdevelopment in poor countries is due to the exploitation of the poor by the rich. Because of this belief, humanitarian aid strategies must seek to alleviate this exploitation and allow the poor to move into an equal level of development (Chitereka 2008).

Moving into the 1970s, the government began to use nonprofit organizations as a grantee or contractor for delivery of service (Ross and Til 2001). Nonprofit organizations often took on an auxiliary role as they became planners, advisers, and evaluators of government-sponsored programs, sometimes at the government's expense, sometimes not (Ross and Til 2001).

Another key shift in perspective happened in the 1980s. The appeal of working with nonprofit organizations shifted from voluntary giving to voluntary service. Nonprofits were looked at as the resource base that would compensate for the changes in

public spending policies (Ross and Til 2001). If volunteers did the work of administering humanitarian aid, they could compensate for the needs created by these changes.

During the 1980s, Free Market Theorists became more prominent. They believe that Dependency Theory leads to corruption and a lack of competition. Their focus is on enabling free market economies to grow and trade freely. Unlike Dependency Theory, Free Market Theorists differ from Dependency Theorist by focusing more on international trade as the means of increasing economic growth and development (Chitereka 2008).

Rejecting the idea that economic growth or capitalism will eradicate poverty, Developmentalist Theorists look to changes in structure to alleviate mass poverty (Chitereka 2008). Poverty-alleviation efforts must emphasize the role of policies and institutions such as the reallocation of public resources for social services.

Developmentalist theorists advocate for extensive state sponsored social services like free education, public health, progressive taxation, and land reform. They also support agricultural projects that include irrigation provisions, expertise, credit, technology, and access to markets for farmers (Chitereka 2008).

These growing differences in theoretical approaches led to more complexity in the function of the nonprofit sector. Through the 1990s, the nonprofit sector's independence from government welfare became more apparent. The theoretical and functional complexities challenged the ideal role of both the welfare state and the nonprofit sector. The constraints and imperatives of the approach in the 1990s delayed the goals of achieving the ideal role for either the welfare state or the charitable sector (Ross and Til 2001).

Transformation has become a predominant perspective concerning the nonprofit sector in the 21st century. Transformation happens when the charitable segment of society frees itself from the constraints imposed by government and business sectors. It involves changing relationships between institutions and people and the perceptions that mandate or support these relationships (Ross and Til 2001). As perceptions are change, civil society appears to be emerging as the leading image of the nonprofit sector (Ross and Til 2001).

In modern times, some see nonprofits as becoming too much like the government, and others criticize them for becoming too much like a business. Both of these critiques, however, offer a good argument for the perception and support of a unique and independent nonprofit sector (Ross and Til 2001).

Where belief is strong or social ties are shared, this sector articulates needs, offers assurance and comfort and permits individuals to join in creating the joys of shared community life. Its churches and other places of worship; its schools and colleges; its social agencies; its organizations that advocate and even demand social, political, and economic change – all permit opportunities, though not guarantees, for the greatest and the least in society to make common cause (Ross and Til 2001).

This look at both historical references in textbooks and the development of theories concerning humanitarian aid gives insight into the development and subsequent erosion of the boundaries between the government, for-profit businesses, and the nonprofit sectors for over 100 years. These changes have paved the way for ideas, values, roles, relationships, and capital to flow more freely amongst the three sectors. (Phillis et al. 2008) Each sector of society has a unique purpose and approach, and without involving all three sectors, the most difficult social problems cannot be understood, let alone solved (Phillis et al. 2008).

The Nonprofit Sector

Although governments, businesses, and nonprofits all play a role in global humanitarian efforts, the nonprofit sector has emerged as the primary means of administering humanitarian aid of all types through the years of historical development. It is a unique product of the American democratic and capitalist government system. Americans have reacted to marketplace failures with volunteer time and contributions to meet the needs and fill the void left by businesses and government agencies (Ott 2001).

Nonprofits have used many different strategies to deal with perceived needs. Some nonprofits provide services to individuals or groups in need while others try to eliminate the causes of the needs (Ott 2001). Some include both administration of services and elimination of causes in their strategies. No matter the approach, the primary purpose for every nonprofit organizations is not making money. Although important, the focus of nonprofit organizations is on serving the public good rather than making a profit (Ott 2001).

Nonprofit organizations fulfill a unique role in society. Each nonprofit has its own set of values and ideologies with which they pursue their goals, and yet all nonprofits seek to make the world a better a better place for themselves and others. The drive to embrace a vision and set of values that are not driven by profit is what separates nonprofit organizations from other types of organizations (Berman and Werther 2001). Vision serves as a source of inspiration and motivates those associated with the organization (Berman and Werther 2001). Vision is often developed by founders and updated over time. It is the glue that binds people to the organization and holds it together (Berman and Werther 2001).

Although the focus of this research is on humanitarian aid, not all nonprofits are humanitarian aid delivery organizations. O'Neal created nine categories of nonprofits that represent the purposes, issues, and causes in which nonprofits are engaged (O'Neal 1989):

- 1) Religious organizations
- 2) Private education and research
- 3) Health care
- 4) Arts and culture
- 5) Social services
- 6) Advocacy and legal services
- 7) International assistance
- 8) Foundations and corporate funders
- 9) Mutual benefit organizations

Although some organizations may fit into more than one category, these categories demonstrate the diversity of nonprofits. They also show international aid as an important part of the work done by nonprofits.

Nonprofits rely on financial contributions from individuals and organizations that agree with their values and ideologies. Fluctuations in donations can drastically affect nonprofits, especially the smaller ones. The Giving USA Foundation publishes an annual report on the nonprofit sector in the United States that includes a variety of statistics, financial trends, and other valuable information. According to the Giving USA Foundation's most recent Executive Summary report, the total estimated charitable giving in the United States dropped 3.6 percent in 2009 due to the continuing recession. It affected nonprofits that would have received contributions for buildings, endowment campaigns, and long-term planning. Some nonprofits did show growth during this time. Typically, these provide immediate services, such as human services, health, international aid, and even environment. Religious nonprofits showed a very slight decrease, and

individual giving, charitable bequests, and foundation grant making all decreased in 2009. Giving to religion, education, foundations, public-society benefit organizations, arts/culture/humanities, and individual donations also fell in 2009. Increases were seen in donations from corporations, to human services, for health, to environmental/animal related organizations, and to international affairs (*Giving USA 2010*).

The following two charts from the Giving USA Foundation's 2009 Executive Summary report illustrate the source and recipients of contributions in 2009:

Table 1. 2009 Contributions: \$303.75 Billion by Type of Recipient Organization

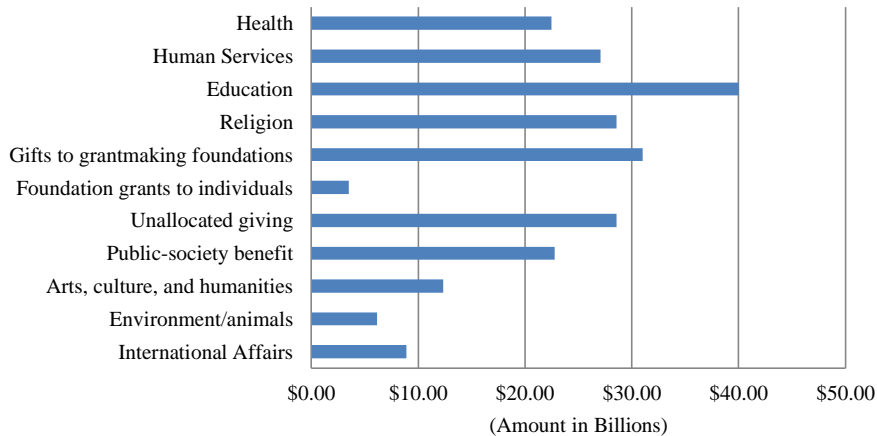
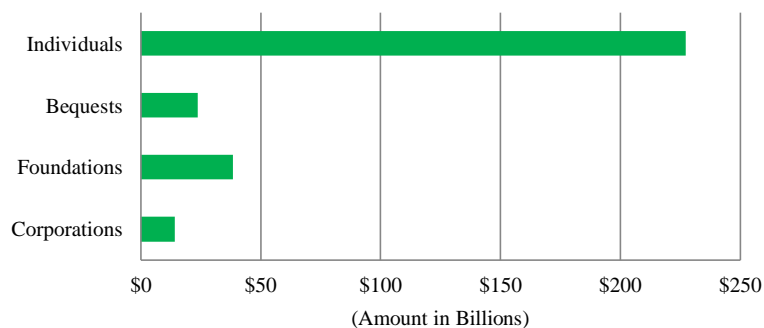


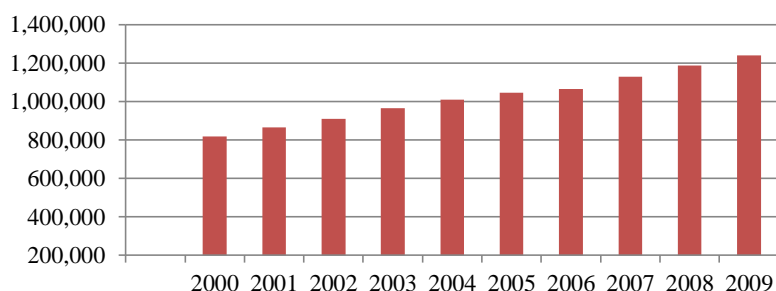
Table 2. 2009 Contributions: \$303.75 Billion by Source of Contributions



As demonstrated in these charts, the \$307 billion of recorded contributions in 2009 have a wide variety sources and recipients. Recipients range from education charities bringing in just over \$40 billion to individual grant recipients bringing in \$3.5 billion. The source of contributions is overwhelmingly from individuals at just over \$227 billion, but bequest, foundation, and corporation sources of donations were no small amount averaging over \$26 billion each. These charts give some insight into the value that U.S. based nonprofits has to the American people.

Although \$303.75 billion is a significant amount, nonprofit giving has decreased over the past few years. In 2008, giving was two percent down from the previous year, coming in around \$307 billion (*Giving USA 2009*). Even with this decrease in nonprofit giving, the number of nonprofits in the United States has shown consistent growth since 2000 according to the Giving USA Foundation's annual report in 2009. The following chart demonstrates the growth of nonprofits from 2000 to 2009:

Table 3. Number of 501(c)(3) organizations in the United States, 2000-2009



As demonstrated in this chart, the growth in the number of nonprofits has grown from 819,008 in 2000 to 1,238,201 in 2009. In spite of the economic downturn during that time period, nonprofits have found ways to launch and become publically recognized organizations.

The Global USA Foundation also reported that in 2009, charities implemented new development strategies to raise awareness and contributions (*Giving USA*, 2010).

These strategies included:

- Building a more compelling case for giving in light of more competition for funds
- Improved communications with donors through newsletters and email announcements
- Partnerships with other organizations for increased visibility and a broader audience
- Soliciting smaller annual gifts from members and decreasing response time
- More advocacy and attention awareness efforts for a certain need or crisis
- A change in priorities from group fundraising to a focus on specific problems or needs

Many nonprofits change their funding strategy each year according to perceived need and expectations. Although they are not for-profit entities, nonprofits must have increased income to keep up with the ever growing needs and obligations the organization is working to address.

Many organizations in the nonprofit sector do not pay federal, state, or local taxes. Donors, both individuals and corporate, of these types of nonprofits are permitted to deduct the gift from their federal and state income taxes and thus do not pay taxes on that amount of their income (Ott 2001). This unique structure encourages individual, group, and business donations to fund the projects defined by each organization. Donations are most often the primary income source for nonprofits. Donors select recipients of their donations by connecting with the values, ideologies, and vision of an organization. In order to ensure continuing support, nonprofit organizations seek to develop on-going relationships with their donors. Donors are encouraged to become actively involved in the nonprofit's unique strategies.

While the nonprofit must have a fundraising strategy, it needs a human resource strategy as well (Berman and Werther 2001). Each nonprofit organization is managed by a board of directors who are responsible for the success or failure of the nonprofit's mission, vision and strategies (Berman and Werther 2001). The board is the final authority on the decisions and direction of the nonprofit related to economics, staffing, projects, and other core structures. Its members can be directly or indirectly involved in the services offered by the organization. The involvement of the board varies with each nonprofit, and it is affected by the history and resources of the organization and its board members' personal preferences (Carver 1997).

Each nonprofit's management staff reports directly to its own board of directors. Depending on the size, the nonprofit has a unique management structure. Some nonprofits rely solely on paid staff to deliver its services, while others rely heavily on volunteers. Most often, nonprofits rely on a combination of paid staff and volunteers to run the organization.

Volunteers play an important role in the structure of nonprofits especially when the nonprofit is small. Even though each volunteer is unique and has their own motivations, most are simply seeking an opportunity to make a contribution and do some good (Berman and Werther 2001). Volunteering gives them a feeling of accomplishment and self-satisfaction, and it often gives them opportunities to grow as individuals and connect with new social groups (Ott 2001). Volunteering offers an opportunity to develop unused talents and skills, and volunteers often develop new skills such as public speaking, leadership, or management skills that they may never have developed otherwise (Ott 2001).

Surveys about giving and volunteering consistently show how behavioral habits are very important in predicting both present and future volunteering and contribution factors (Ott 2001). Some of these behavioral habits are membership and regular attendance at religious institutions; involvement in community, voluntary, and professional associations; higher level of education; and volunteer experience in their youth. Membership in an organization demonstrates a connection with the vision of that organization, and members are more likely to be asked to volunteer than non-members which will increase their likelihood to contribute or volunteer (Ott 2001).

Each nonprofit has its own set of values and ideologies that define how they approach the needs of underdeveloped countries. International nonprofits cover a broad spectrum of ideologies, but there are two primary perspectives into which most nonprofits fall – religious and non-religious. Both religious and non-religious nonprofits seek to improve the quality of life for their aid recipients, and they often work together to increase the effectiveness of the aid they offer.

Religious nonprofits deliver a combination of religion and humanitarian aid to the people they serve. Their values and ideologies are directly tied to their religious beliefs, and so their humanitarian goals are often delivered alongside their proselytizing and conversion goals. Although they work with both government and community leaders, they most often seek to connect with local churches in the regions they are serving in order to expand and increase their connection with local communities.

Non-religious nonprofits are not necessarily anti-religion. Each has its own set of values and ideologies, but they are not tied with any one religious viewpoint. Their

efforts are strictly limited to delivery of aid, and there is less of an effort to convert aid recipients to an ideology that may be different from their own.

International humanitarian aid requires nonprofits to develop a unique set of skills and approaches. Both long-term and short-term projects are challenging when a nonprofit from a developed country seeks to help a lesser developed country. There are many different approaches to managing a nonprofit organization and just as many humanitarian needs to address. The nonprofit sector is a thriving and important part of American social life, and its effects are international. The nonprofit sector has seen incredible growth in recent years, and yet, there are still poor, homeless, sick, and dying people around the world desperately in need of the support of organizations such as these. As the nonprofit sector increases in power and influence in the coming century, there is great hope that these needs may be accurately assessed, addressed, and alleviated.

International Humanitarian Aid

Global economies and air transportation tell us the world is small, yet, it's not a small world at all (Krotz 2009).

After many generations of storytelling and dreaming about adventurers who traversed the ends of the earth, the time has come when ordinary people can fly to the other side of the earth for vacation or call from the U.S. for a video chat with a friend in China for free on-line. In the midst of this global expansion and the race for global dominance and economic control, the awareness of international humanitarian needs has grown exponentially. The opportunity to do good in distant and needy cultures is virtually unlimited, but the impact of human nature on the development and economic outcomes of countries cannot be overlooked.

There is a clear gap between developing and developed countries and between rich and poor (Bahmani-Oskooee and Oyolola 2009). When the rich from developed countries try to help the poor in developing countries, the cultural differences become apparent. The cliché “money is power” is a very real factor in international humanitarian aid. Because of their money, skills and connections, U.S. based nonprofits and humanitarians have the power drop in almost anywhere they choose (Krotz 2009). They support politics, finances, economies, technical systems, and cultural advances within developing countries. It is easy for recipients of aid to become dependent on that aid and support, and foreign aid can become intrinsic in their socioeconomic systems (Kema 2008).

It is easy to find ways to criticize international humanitarian aid. It can seem trivial or ineffectual, especially when looked at from a distance (Krotz 2009). Yet in the midst of the criticism, international aid organizations are relied upon by many developing countries for everything from disease control to governmental transformation. International aid organizations often try to find a balance between what is good for developed countries like the U.S. and what is good for developing countries such as Cameroon that they are trying to help. The aid that was instrumental in the quick recovery of the Western nations after WWII has not had the same satisfactory results in developing countries that are struggling to improve their living standards (Bahmani-Oskooee and Oyolola 2009).

International nonprofits use both long and short term projects to meet the needs they encounter around the world. Whether the project is focused on a specific goal such as building a house for orphans or working toward meeting larger goals such as re-

establishing a community after a natural disaster, helping the needy people of the world often comes down to the basic need of alleviating poverty. Long-term projects tend to be very effective in the big picture of community transformation while short-term projects can be very effective in accomplishing a specific goal. No matter how long the term of the project, every project comes face to face with basic human needs. Christian missionaries preaching salvation to the needy; economic counselors working to help developing governments get on their feet; and nutritionists training community leaders how to improve the quality of their food all have one thing in common. Basic needs such as food and water, shelter, and healthcare must be addressed before projects like church planting, economic development, or nutrition counseling can be effective. Because of this, poverty reduction must become a core initiative for most international aid organizations.

One approach to reducing poverty in developing countries is a collaboration amongst Heads of State of developed and developing countries, the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Together, they made a commitment in May of 2000 to what they called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One of the eight MDGs is to cut worldwide poverty in half by 2015 (Bahmani-Oskooee and Oyolola 2009). Although these are indeed noble goals, they still have a long way to go toward reaching this goal, especially in Africa. In 2008 the World Bank's Global Monitoring Report (GMR) revealed that on current trends, most of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa will not meet any of the MDGs that the collaborators had set back in 2000 (Chitereka 2008).

Another effort began in May 2001 when USAID began a large-scale experiment in partnerships between public and private corporations that do not function as USAID contractors. USAID forms alliances with these public and private corporations to work toward solving two main problems in foreign aid: (1) how to design and develop projects that can thrive after government funding ends and (2) how to expand small yet successful projects to help millions of people. After eight years, USAID made 680 alliances which they value at over nine billion dollars in combined resources. They learned that removal of barriers to this type of cooperation is imperative, including low risk tolerances, excessive bureaucracy, and narrow perspectives on partnerships, and that having the right incentives for building alliances are important as well. Nontraditional partnerships such as these can help to stimulate economies, alleviate poverty, preserve environment, and protect human rights. This USAID experiment encourages other government aid agencies to participate in these types of partnerships (Natsios 2009).

Government agencies are beginning to join forces with corporations and nonprofits to fight global poverty. This has greatly increased private U.S. dollars flowing to developing countries without decreasing U.S. foreign aid (Natsios 2009). The globalization of the world economy and the realization that governments in developing countries have issues with spending aid well are both encouraging this shift in government aid partnerships. This new generation of development alliances is moving away from short-term, stand-alone, multi-partner projects and heading toward a more efficient model of long-term projects that can exist even after government agencies have exited (Natsios 2009).

Each international aid organization has a different approach to alleviating poverty. Each must consider both their personal perspective and the perspectives of the recipients of their help. Cultural values and traditions govern what humanitarians believe and prescribe how they act both in communities and as individuals (Krotz 2009). The social expenditures they provide and the quality of institutions they establish can have dramatic effects on poverty reduction positive, as intended, and negative. Rampant levels of corruption from both the provider and the recipient can deeply influence how social expenditures are received and even whether or not they reach their intended recipients. The lack of methods to measure the quality of institutions fuels the debate about their effectiveness (Krotz 2009). These are some of the many factors in the success or failure of Western aid organizations working around the world and, especially, in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Humanitarian Aid in Africa

Africa has often existed for the non-African only in the imagination. Tourists seek the adventure of seeing a wild animal in an untamed land. Scientists look for everything from the beginning of man to the discovery of a cure for a deadly virus. Missionaries, broadly including those thousands who work in foreign aid, want to help however they can and make a difference. When visitors visit Africa, they do so painfully aware of the balancing act between fascination and fear (Krotz 2009). Whatever the reason Westerners visit Africa, they are the recipients of the gift of an incredible adventure. All projects, activities, and actions can be justified by the fact that they are on an earnest and serious expedition meant to deliver good to a continent in need (Krotz 2009).

Although many things have changed over the centuries of Westerners visiting Africa, the relationship between the non-African and the African remains surprisingly the same. There are inherent assumptions relating to the inequality of power that remain not that much altered. (Krotz 2009). Westerners pleading for aid in Africa often unintentionally perpetuate the image of Africa as a helpless victim. There is some element of truth to this image as Africa does suffer from epidemics such as Malaria and HIV/AIDS, and many children are orphaned by such diseases. Although the stereotypes reflect truth on some level, Westerners have managed to infantilize an entire continent. Whether the intention is to do as much good as possible or to plunder an entire region, the notion of Africa as a child is difficult to overcome (Krotz 2009).

One of the most visible humanitarian crises in Africa is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Dr. Lucy Y. Steinitz (2007) conducted a ten year study on HIV related social services in Southern and Eastern Africa. Paraphrased below are eight lessons she learned from her study:

- (1) The fight against HIV and the fight against poverty must go hand-in-hand;
- (2) Underlying social dynamics should be incorporated into an effective HIV-prevention strategy;
- (3) Listen and act upon what the people who are most affected have to say;
- (4) Take a bottom up approach and build on what is already working;
- (5) Answer the call to care by partnering with the church (or mosque or temple);
- (6) Invest in your volunteers and keep them from burning out;
- (7) Remember that most orphans are teenagers and plan accordingly; and
- (8) If it's not a quality-driven service, it's not worth doing.

Dr. Steinitz (2007) visited many local, grass-roots organizations and heard two common themes: (1) you can't preach to an empty stomach and (2) teaching prevention to a hungry teenager is like telling a mother to ignore the cries of her newborn child. Her study showed that humanitarian aid must address more than just one or two issues hand-

picked by the organization for short-term or long-term projects. Aid workers must recognize that the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa stems from deep-seated habits and cultural values that require extreme sensitivity to address. Addressing these issues will be most effective and make a lasting impact in Africa if the aid delivery is centered around strengthening core traditions, especially concerning family-based care and community support, while addressing some of the traditional customs that increase the threat of poverty, HIV/AIDS and other issues that limit development in Africa (Steinitz 2007).

Through years of humanitarian aid coming from out Africa, Africa has developed a dependency syndrome that has limited its own ability to develop independent of outside aid (Chitereka 2008). This dependency syndrome can be traced back for generations. Starting in the 1800s, the Western World invaded Africa with colonization, slave trade, and religious crusaders. This agitated the already tumultuous African culture and encouraged a dependency on the outside world either by requiring it through slavery or by the promise of riches and salvation for changing their ways. This dependency has grown in modern times. It is fueled by local and international competition for valuable resources; lack of structure and economic stability; and the politics of race, religion, and class. Co-dependence inevitably gets built into the structure of any engagement between non-Africans and Africans no matter how short or long (Krotz 2009).

Public administration and social management encounter the greatest obstacles in Africa due to informal political and economic practices that manage to evade or be overlooked by official controls (Olivier de Sardan 2005). There are not enough enterprising individuals and organizations inside Africa that are willing to do the work

without any outside help. So, they look to non-Africans for this structure and support. Some say that if there were no outside help, Africans would just wallow in poverty (Chitereka 2008).

Dependency is an enduring obstacle for most modern humanitarian aid organizations. Whether international institutions, co-operating governments, or nonprofits, decisions of each organization are affected by dependency issues, and therefore, the focus must be primarily on development (Olivier de Sardan 2005). The language, funding, agents, infrastructures, and methods of development coming from non-Africans are fundamental aspects of contemporary Africa in rural and urban areas alike (Olivier de Sardan 2005). Although many modern humanitarians are working toward empowering Africans to do the work of poverty alleviation and development without outside aid, they inevitably hold the purse and therefore the power. Dependency has to be confronted and managed by humanitarian aid organizations in order to empower a new generation of Africans ready and able to make an impact in their own countries.

In an article entitled *Strengthening African Leadership*, Rickert I. Rotberg (2004) suggest focusing on developing effective leadership in response to Africa's immense needs. He paints a depressing picture of despotic rule and lack of integrity in African leaders for the last few decades. However, he gave a few examples of leaders who have broken out of this pattern through the help of missionaries and international partnerships that have taught them principles on how to be effective leaders. Although Rotberg says, "Too few African leaders have followed the examples [of effective leaders]" (Rotberg 2004:2), he demonstrates hope in organizations such as the London Missionary Society who focuses on strengthening peaceful, effective political leaders. He also mentions the

African Leadership Council that was formed in 2003. Rotberg writes that, “Together they will serve the continent by advising international organizations, individual countries, and donor agencies on how to improve leadership.” (Rotberg 2004:3) Together, nonprofit organizations and partnerships such as these can fight against corruption and help Africa work toward positive development as they work to overcome deep-rooted challenges.

Another interesting consideration when looking at humanitarian aid in Africa is the distinction between missionary service, NGO activity, and government projects. Matthew Parris wrote an insightful article concerning the effects of Christianity on African humanitarian aid entitled “As an Atheist, I truly Believe Africa Needs God: Missionaries, not aid money, are the solution to Africa’s biggest problem – the crushing passivity of the people’s mindset” (2008). His perspective comes from his early years growing up in Malawi, his Western education, his return to Africa after 45 years in the west, and his many years of travel across the continent. He clearly stated that he is a confirmed atheist. Still, he has become convinced that Christian evangelism makes a significant contribution in Africa with the unique distinction of changing people’s hearts. NGOs and governments provide aid, but Christian missionaries provide a rebirth and spiritual transformation that goes deeper. He wrote, “The Christians were always different...Their faith appears to have liberated and relaxed them. There was a liveliness, a curiosity, an engagement with the world – a directness in their dealings with others – that seemed to be missing in traditional African life. They stood tall.” (Parris 2008:1) This type of spiritual and emotional change is difficult to evaluate but extremely valuable to humanitarian aid efforts in Africa.

Whether religious or non-religious, agents delivering some form of humanitarian aid can be found in almost any village in Africa. They do work ranging from livestock and agriculture management to medical to educational development projects (Olivier de Sardan 2005). They provide the muscle, or money, vital to many projects' success. If organizations are to succeed, they must consider the recipients' culture, expectations, and needs based on local cultures. Short-term even more than long-term projects must intentionally look to the bigger picture and cultural relevance of the projects to which they feel called. Evaluating the effectiveness of short-term trips and projects will help workers answer these types of questions. Evaluation is an extremely important part of providing humanitarian aid in Africa.

Angola had bedeviled us. What we thought we knew, we didn't actually know at all. But by the time I understood how little I understood, it was too late...The work of my crew had allowed me to return to North America with stirring pictures and succinct interviews, yet somewhere along the way we had missed something crucial...All we outsiders had been no more than, what, hopeful tourists? (Krotz 2009:51)

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Aid

With so many approaches to the delivery of humanitarian aid, one would assume there are specific guidelines to measuring their effectiveness. However, the diversity of these approaches and often intangible benefits, such as cultural enlightenment or community morale, make measuring the effectiveness of humanitarian aid difficult. What one might consider effective could be ineffective from another point of view.

There is no single definition of what it means for humanitarian aid to be effective, especially as it relates to Africa. Due to their donor obligations, nonprofit organizations tend to report on the positive aspects of their aid and minimize the negative. Some organizations tend to focus on the big picture and global efforts while others look to

specific project outcomes to define their effectiveness. Each nonprofit has their own perspective on what is effective, but most nonprofits agree that the transfer of their values and ideologies is a good measure of their effectiveness. Government and business organizations, on the other hand, tend to look for facts and figures to define their effectiveness.

An important measure of the effectiveness of all types of humanitarian aid is expense versus benefit. For example, although statistics show nearly one trillion dollars has been given in foreign aid to Africa over the last fifty years, poverty has increased (Pomerantz 2004). Financial aid has not been enough to change the lives of most poor Africans. However, this does not necessarily mean the financial delivery mechanisms were completely ineffective. There are other factors such as the increased availability of data on African poverty and the increasing awareness of the needs of Africans that affect the ability of researchers to define effectiveness solely based on a comparison of financial distribution and poverty reduction. It is difficult to put a financial value on cultural and educational improvements in Africa.

Is it possible that the Western notion of linear progress may not apply in such a complex continent as Africa? If a short-term team builds a much needed road in a poor town, that does not mean the road will still be there or in the same place ten years from now (Pomerantz 2004). Depending on perspective, this road may or may not have been an effective use of resources. From one perspective, it was a waste of time and money, but from another perspective, it was a tool to train local workers how to build their own road in the future. Whether short-term or long-term, the measurement of effective aid

projects in Africa can be difficult and problematic. However, this opens the door for creative and virtually unlimited methods that can be used to measure effectiveness.

The complexity of African cultures has left much to the imagination in centuries past, but in modern times, researchers have much more information at their fingertips. Extensive research has gone into defining the need and causes of the problems Africans face. There is also extensive research on projects that may help alleviate the problems (Muriithi 1997). Still, there is no consensus on what is effective. Researchers agree that money is too often wasted on ineffective humanitarian efforts. They also agree that dollar for dollar, the effectiveness of the overall financial investment in African aid cannot be easily measured.

Measuring the effectiveness of long-term humanitarian aid projects can be daunting, but measuring the effectiveness of short-term projects can seem impossible. There must be a successful relationship connecting support, expectations, and good intentions with the recipient for any level of effectiveness is to remain beyond the term of a short-term project. According to Krotz (2009), these relationships are the key to truly lasting results of any project. Do donor expectations accurately define what is effective? If recipient feedback is different from donor expectations, can nonprofits and/or volunteers retain their donor support if they adjust the project to more accurately meet the need? Can nonprofits and volunteers see what is effective through the eyes of their recipients in such a short time?

Larry Krotz (2009) is a journalist, filmmaker, and author who has traveled extensively in various African countries and had conducted first-hand observation research on many of the effects of short term projects. When he received a call that his

niece, a university student, had been invited to travel with a group of young students to Malawi, he had to pause. Expecting his immediate approval, she proudly stated that she would be doing a short-term project to provide AIDS awareness to children and give advice on forestation. Krotz found it hard to find fault in such good intentions, but to him, this type of announcement, given with such conviction, was unsettling.

He pictured the group of young people in matching t-shirts with a logo of the charity driving into the village struggling to remain good-natured in the unfamiliar and uncomfortable African terrain. They would be ecstatic when the children of the villages greeted them with a gleeful response, and they would exude selfless and pure motives during their adventure. Krotz (2009) recalled what he had seen on his trips to Africa and considered how Africa had become a receptacle of good intentions, whether or not effective to the needy people of Africa that they were there to help. His response to his niece was to simply say that she should expect to receive much more from her experiences than she was ever going to give and that she would learn much more than she would ever teach (Krotz 2009:167). To Krotz, part of defining the effectiveness of this type of short-term project was its effect on the volunteers.

When trying to define what is effective, Western humanitarians working in Africa and other needy regions around the globe must be aware of their different perspectives from those they are trying to serve. While asking about and clearly defining what it means for their project to be effective, they must be open to a wide variety of answers (Krotz 2009). They must try to answer the question, “For whom is this project meant to be effective?” They must be aware of their motivations because, like missionaries and

explorers before, one might assume their own motivations are faultlessly self-evident. In fact, they never are according to Krotz (2009).

As Krotz reflected on the educational film he had made for students and the general public in North America, he considered what it had all meant. The foreigners were constantly flying in and out of the lives of the people in Africa but nothing seemed to be changing. Krotz taught through his films about the disaster in various African countries, but nothing was improving. In fact, things seemed to be more of a disaster than ever.

Hundreds and thousands of person hours had been invested in work and research, millions of words had been spilled in articles and books and speeches arguing and telling the story, millions of dollars had been expended, and things remained as they had always been (Krotz 2009:104-105).

The definition of effectiveness for Krotz's short-term projects was not clearly defined from the start. The need was seen, awareness was spread, films were made, and efforts were initiated to relieve the need. Still, the question remained – was it effective? Even if an organization came to define what effectiveness looks like for their project(s), the task still remains of how to evaluate that effectiveness.

The difficulty of defining the effectiveness of humanitarian aid is compounded by the lack of established techniques for evaluating that effectiveness in concrete ways. There is not an agreed upon standard for evaluating effectiveness of these types of projects, and due to a lack of accountability measurements, the organizations administering aid are often in the unique position of self-regulation (Piechowski 2010). Self-regulation can include anything from detailed reports to a funding source to the general expression of positive feelings about the outcome of a project. It is rarely

designed for comparison with similar projects, and it leaves plenty of room for self-interpretation of the results.

External regulation could be a viable option, but it could seem inappropriate to some due to the extreme diversity of humanitarian projects that are carried out by the nonprofit sector. Nonprofit organizations and individuals can rationally argue that external regulators do not understand the nature, vision, or purpose of their project. However, if organizations are unaware of their effectiveness based on appropriate measurement from external sources, how can they improve their social impact (Piechowski 2010)?

Nonprofit organizations and evaluators have used a variety of methods in their attempts to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of both long-term and short-term projects. These methods can be very valuable for accountability, awareness, regulation, and improvements. There are limitations to each method, especially as they relate to short-term projects, but if employed appropriately, they can be of tremendous value in evaluating the effectiveness of humanitarian aid projects.

One way the effectiveness of humanitarian aid projects has been evaluated is by calculating the Social Return on Investment (SROI). Nonprofits see or assume the benefits of their work first-hand, but it is difficult to quantify and communicate these benefits in concrete ways. SROI is a process of monetizing the social value and impact of a project or organization (Boyd 2004). The goal is to measure the social outputs that reflect the interests of the organization and its stakeholders and compare them to the expense and effort that was required. Monetizing social value is difficult, especially when the project is not tied directly to a measurable monetary outcome. SROI is found

mostly in academic circles rather than being grounded in practical application (Piechowski 2010). Although expressing SROI in monetary terms can be difficult, considering how to measure SROI in a way that is applicable to the organization could be of great value.

Another method evaluators have used to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid projects is comparing financial contributions with perceived results. In 2006, Mathematical Policy Research, Inc. published an article concerning the effect that external aid has on children's health development in four countries, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Egypt, and Indonesia (Beatty, Croghan, and Ron 2006). In this study, they compared health and development literature with several worldwide databases recording information for these four countries to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of children's health projects between the years 1991 and 2000. Their findings suggested that targeted health intervention, foreign aid, and technical assistance on long-term projects matter more than do contextual factors including the degree of economic development, good governance, and strong health systems. The researchers were unable to find a difference in the nature of relationships between successful countries and donors and between less successful countries and donors. However, there were indicators that successful countries had more effective relationships with donors than did less successful countries.

This effort to evaluate using financial statistics was limited by the increasing tendency of aid to bypass the government in favor of direct allocation through nonprofits. The accuracy of their findings was limited by difficulties in tracking accurate amounts of financial donations (Beatty et al. 2006). As organizations grow larger and projects focus

on long-term goals, financial records become more reliable as a means for measuring the effectiveness of long-term humanitarian aid efforts.

On-site data collection is another method used to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid projects. Dr. Phyllis R. Pomerantz is an international development scholar who has worked with World Bank since 1979. Pomerantz compared government and large-scale aid projects to find a connection between three important dilemmas: foreign help versus cultural relevance, donor support versus partnerships, and research versus application (Pomerantz 2004). Her findings show limited positive effects of short-term aid, the effectiveness of partnerships and cultural relevance, and the need for coordinated organization of projects. The value of this method for evaluating long-term projects is very positive. There is a limitation for short-term projects because it is more difficult to collect on-site data when the foreign projects begin and end quickly. This limitation may be overcome with preparation specifically planned for the length of the project.

Evaluators have also attempted to measure the effectiveness of humanitarian aid projects by comparing the past and present voluntary and development service directories. Dr. Dorteia E. Woods (1980) of Switzerland analyzed the changes and growth of the international volunteer service movement based on the directories of many international voluntary service organizations. She was able to identify a general trend in the growth, but with so many variables affecting past and present directories and no mention of short-term work, the results were a general statement of the growth of the international volunteer service movement without a specific application.

Some evaluators use interviews with those directly involved in the delivery of humanitarian aid as a source for acquiring evaluation data. Katrin Maier (2004) is the former managing editor of the *Journal of Children and Poverty*, an interdisciplinary publication focused on researching the causes and effects of children and poverty. Maier used samples from interviews with volunteer orphanage workers concerning the needs of orphaned and abandoned children in Russia and Romania to understand the needs and structure of various projects. The interviews also revealed some information about foreign aid. Although her questions did not probe into the effectiveness of foreign aid, some of the participants brought up effectiveness issues. Concerning help on an intervention program from international nonprofits, one respondent said, “The staff was interviewed after a specific training program; and they would say that they considered it silly; and they did not want to do things this way” (Maier 2004:71). Maier focused on the needs of the children rather than the foreign aid they received. It is difficult to find research data on effectiveness of projects using this method, especially short-term projects. However, this approach to data collection could offer valuable insight into this question of how to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid from the perspective of the delivery agent (Maier 2004).

Recipient interviews can be very effective as an evaluation tool for assessing the effectiveness of aid. Too often, however, they have been more focused on the need than the effectiveness of the projects. Advocate and author Devi Dee (2004) was raised in an orphanage in Zimbabwe called the House for Boys. As a young man, he was able to pursue higher education at a university in Canada. In 2003, after ten years of educational and professional development in Canada, he returned to the boy’s home with the goal of

developing a program of cross-cultural professional training for youth in residential care between his orphanage and his university. After gaining professional child and youth care training in Canada, he became an advocate and a catalyst for change in order to assist the Director and Board of the House for Boys.

Dee (2004) proposed a structure in response to the needs. The effect of his proposed structure may have been very positive, but he made no mention in his reports of any measure of effectiveness. He mentioned quotes from the boys living in the home and personal reflections of his early years in Zimbabwe, but a connection was not made between their experiences and the effectiveness of his new structure. This type of direct data collection can be very effective in measuring needs, but it is difficult to find data focused on the effectiveness of the projects in meeting those needs. To ascertain effectiveness in this way, it is important to focus intentionally on effectiveness rather than the attention grabbing needs of the interviewees.

One more example of a method for gathering data to evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid projects is conducting a review of the overall project with the goal of suggesting general improvements. Carol Matthews (2008) did a study based on reflections of her friends Adrienne and Rick who are humanitarians working in Cambodia. The memory of their 21 year old daughter who was killed by a drunken driver gave the couple the inspiration to volunteer for a children's hospital, an orphanage, and a children's center in Cambodia. In her research, Matthews described how the work of this couple has transformed the lives of the people in the region. Along with her report, Matthews offered some general suggestions on ways for other Western do-gooders to do things better for the world and others. The weakness of this approach is the

non-specific nature of the recommendations. However, as demonstrated in the examples above, there can be useful data gained from direct communication with volunteers and an honest approach focused on specific results.

With the many ways to evaluate effectiveness, why is there not a consensus as to how researchers can effectively evaluate these projects? The answer may be found in the nature of humanitarian projects themselves. Poverty reduction, for example, is not something that development institutions, governments, nor nonprofit organizations can do for the poor. The poor and needy have the responsibility to be agents of their own change and development (Chitereka 2008:119). Why then should these organizations continue to provide aid if it is the responsibility of the recipients to change? The answer may be to work together with aid recipients to evaluate the effectiveness of their projects to clearly assess the effects, value, and opportunities for improvement of each project. Working together with their recipients, organizations can learn to better evaluate the effectiveness of their projects, both long and short-term, and therefore move beyond doing good and into a more effective approach to humanitarian aid based on accurate evaluations. As nonprofits and volunteers consistently and honestly evaluate their projects, they may begin to move toward a consensus on how to work together to evaluate other similar projects.

Theoretical Background

Many sociological theories have influenced the data collection and analysis for this project. This project focuses on a small orphanage located in Northwest Cameroon. The Kom tribe is the dominant tribe of the region, and they can be found in Northwest Cameroon and up into some parts of Nigeria. Their cultural heritage dates back many

centuries before the white people made their first footprint on their land. Although the culture of the Kom is uniquely African, they have been affected in many ways by the Western influence in their daily lives that has come from modernization, globalization, colonialism, and Western domination.

As mentioned above, Modernization Theory has a general assumption that effective poverty alleviation efforts will eventually spread sufficiently to most people due to the Westernization of developing countries. Although Westernization has not proven itself to be the miracle cure to poverty alleviation, Ezekiel Mphahlele (1964) supported it in an article he wrote entitled “The Fabric of African Cultures” during the mid-1960s when the popularity of this theory had begun to wane. The article gives some insights that are extremely applicable to the Kom region in which the orphanage is located. He pointed out that Africans were developing an “African Personality” that merged Western ideas with the traditional African lifestyle (Mphahlele 1964:4). He said that people are surrounded with traditional African ideas while they are learning Western techniques and lifestyle. “Somewhere they must find a point of integration” (Mphahlele 1964:9). As observed during the researcher’s data collection trip in June 2011 as well as in previous trips to the region, the Kom people are working hard to be more Western while trying to hold onto their own identity as Africans.

Globalization Theory focuses on the autonomy of global processes (Ritzer 2000). It moves beyond traditional theories of development and embraces the current state of international relationships. As communication, travel, and exchange of ideas have become easier, economic development of underdeveloped cultures has changed.

Although this theoretical approach can be extremely valuable to this research project, there are some drawbacks as well.

Some researchers believe that globalization can accelerate the underdevelopment of periphery cultures. When Western volunteers come into underdeveloped communities, such as the Kom region of Northwest Cameroon, they bring with them their own expectations, motivations, ambitions, and beliefs. Irogbe Kema (2008) did a study of volunteers who served primarily in Nigeria. From the perspective of Globalization Theory, he showed that dependency and socio-economic factors increased the subordination of lesser developed cultures to Western volunteers.

Christopher Chitereka (2008), however, looks to globalization as the beginning of an answer for how to deal with poverty in Africa. Chitereka contends that conventional theories of development and modernization have failed. Understanding where Africa fits into the global scene is critical to solving the problem of poverty in Africa, and he suggests that African governments and people need to play a critical role in any program meant to alleviate poverty. According to Chitereka, Globalization Theory offers some valuable insight into the way Africans work with outside volunteers.

The Kom are considered by many to be a periphery culture that has been drastically affected by globalization. You can see the effects of globalization on every corner of the one paved road through Fundong, the main town near the NHCH. It is not uncommon to see a traditionally dressed African woman carrying firewood on her head and wearing traditional African clothing while talking on a cell phone or heading to a computer room to check for email from a friend in another country. Globalization

Theory offers some context for understanding the ramifications of this new world in which they now live.

Postcolonial Theory is an approach that uses the literature produced by countries that were once colonies of other countries to understand the concepts of otherness and resistance. This theory helps researchers understand the continuing effects of the colonial era. It examines the ways writers from colonized countries articulate their cultural identities in an attempt to reclaim them from their colonizers. It also looks at the ways colonial powers have justified colonization and images of the colonized as inferior. Mphahlele (1964:10) refers to the need for Africans to “decolonize his mind.” He says that if nothing else, it is certain that the African wants to determine his own cultural identity. This idea that was true in 1964 still has a hold on Africans today. It also relates to the dependency issues discussed previously. Postcolonial Theory helps researchers understand the effects and aftermaths of colonization from the perspective of the colonized.

Haines and Jackson (2007) did a study of some post-colonial South African communities in which they explored the issues involved in cross-cultural management in light of the region’s colonial history. They found that in South Africa, there was a resistance to results-oriented principles of managing people. In order to work with the cultures they studied in South Africa, Jackson emphasized a need for a hybrid type of management system that is sensitive to local, humanistic values and expectations (Haines and Jackson 2007).

Nigeria and Northwest Cameroon were one British colony throughout most of the 1900s. Missionaries and traders were also active in this region and attempted to blend

Western customs with African traditions. When the colonizers left the region, they not only left behind Western customs and religion, but they also left behind identity and inferiority issues that remain to this day.

William Pfaff (1995) had an interesting perspective on how to address postcolonial issues in his article *A New Colonialism?* His premise was that because the West was responsible for so many issues and “immense human tragedy” in Africa, it is the West’s responsibility to fix it (Pfaff 1995:1). “Colonialism lasted long enough to destroy the preexisting social and political institutions, but not long enough to put anything solid and lasting in their place” (Pfaff 1995:3). Some ways he proposed dealing with these issues were helping to create the virtually non-existent middle class to strengthen democracy, supporting peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts, and rebuilding administrative and economic infrastructure. He called this “earning redemption” (Pfaff 1995:4).

Pfaff’s ideas are interesting, but would they create a perpetual dependency of the Africans on Western aid? If an inequality was created by colonization and early missionary efforts, will the Western world’s desire to earn redemption not continue to enforce this inequality? Pfaff does offer some ideas on how to avoid inequality by having a partnership approach, and his ideas can give insight into both the negative and positive effects of humanitarian aid as researchers consider the differences between colonization and current humanitarian aid efforts. The Kom region was severely affected by colonization, but the effects were not all bad. There is this unfinished quality about the region that humanitarian workers are seeking to help remedy.

By considering Postcolonial Theory, researchers can begin to understand both the struggle for cultural identity and the struggle of an inferior culture seeking equality with Westerners. This theory does not address questions of effectiveness directly, but studies like Jackson's and Pfaff's can shed light on some of the issues that both volunteers and local staff face when working on projects with the Kom and other tribes throughout Africa.

The Modern World-System Theory looks at globalization as a broad economic entity with a division of labor that is not circumscribed by either political or cultural boundaries. It is held together by inherent tensions that also have the potential to tear the system apart (Ritzer 2000). This division of labor has a "core" of dominant classes that are supported by strong states which exploit labor, resources and trade opportunities (Lechner and Boli 2008). The most notable exploitation happens to the "peripheral" areas which primarily provide raw materials for the core. The "semiperiphery" are somewhere in between the exploiting and the exploited. The central idea is that international division of labor is defined by economic division of labor in the world rather than by cultural or state borders.

From his Marxian perspective, Wallerstein argued that there have thus far been two types of world-systems: the world empire which is driven by political and military domination and the capitalist world-economy which relies on economic domination. The modern world-system is a capitalist world-economy that is laden with conflict (Ritzer 2000). There is a clear division of labor in the modern world system which consists of the core which is characterized by free labor, the periphery which is characterized by forced labor, and the semiperiphery which is somewhere in between. A fourth group is

the “external zones” that exist outside the system. Still, they are linked to the system. These external zones were able to resist the reciprocal import of manufactured goods from the core, but as they become more a part of the world-system, they move into the economic function of the periphery.

Wallerstein saw West Africa as part of this external zone. As the world-system expanded throughout Africa, West Africa, including Cameroon, was drawn into the world-system because of its economic advantages. Although there was been some resistance to imports in centuries past, West Africa and many other parts of Africa have been unable to resist the financial benefits allowing the core to dominate its exports and economic partnerships. This willingness to allow domination relates directly to the Kom of Cameroon. The Kom look to all Western visitors as potential benefactors or as a means of gaining wealth through manipulation and theft.

Modern World-System Theory has influenced the approach to data collection for this project and the interpretation of the many approaches to delivering humanitarian aid. In recent years, researchers and humanitarians serving in NW Cameroon have become more sensitive to the on-going dominance issues between the NW Cameroon and the Western world. While Westerners have power over the Kom simply because of money, education, and resources, the Kom have cultural pride and traditions that Westerners cannot and should not change.

Understanding the history of Westerners dominating the region from the perspective of Modern World-System Theory can help both researchers and humanitarians understand the dynamics and often times tense relationships between themselves and those they are trying to serve. It can also help researchers understand the

economic issues that permeate every part of African culture as it relates to the Western world – the core – including how it presents itself to Western researchers and what motivates their answers.

In this project, a consideration must be made for the natural role of a nonprofit organization that supports an orphanage. The role of a supporting organization is by its very nature that of a parent or dominant partner that provides funding and direction for the other. In using the Modern World-System Theory for this project, the researcher makes a distinction between this natural role of a nonprofit and the dominance/subordinance created by the division of labor defined by this theory.

In the 1970s, Timothy Lehmann and T.R. Young (1974) published a paper that presented a systematic approach to social research which emphasized the need for clarified relationships between the sociologist and those being studied as well as the need to understand the social world as interpreted by those people in their daily lives. It is important for a researcher to understand the differences between groups and to allow the members of groups to express their perspectives separately (Danziger 1958).

Modernization, Globalization, Postcolonial, and Modern World-Systems Theories, amongst other theories and perspectives, provide a background for understanding and analyzing the Kom as well as the organization and volunteers that seek to help the orphans at NHCH. They serve as a guide for data analysis leading toward a deeper understanding of those involved in short-term projects with HFC.

Gaps in the Literature

The primary element missing from the research is an awareness of unique characteristics of short-term projects. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find information

about how to apply evaluation theories and approaches to short-term projects specifically. It is important to evaluate short-term projects, but there are also some drawbacks to implementing more formal evaluation methods.

Many reports have been written and published about how long-term projects are meeting their goals or about whether or not the needs are decreasing because of this work. Long-term evaluation is complicated, but due to the extended evaluation time, it is possible to gather good data and deliver accurate reports on effectiveness. It gets more complicated when evaluating short-term projects because of the limited time to collect data and the fact that many short-term projects are not connected to long-term goals.

Nonprofits sending short-term volunteers on international projects need honest evaluation to understand their effect, learn from their mistakes, and report accurately about their effectiveness to their funding sources. Due to the lack of research on short-term evaluation, nonprofits too often rely on the feelings of their volunteers and the images they bring back of smiling faces and bags of rice. Many forget to ask who benefitted from the rice or if the smiles remained on their faces after the volunteers left. In the same way researchers have written about the evaluation of long-term projects, this research project records important information for short-term projects based on an ethnographic case study or an orphanage in Northwest Cameroon.

This research project uses many of the approaches described above to gather and analyze data for evaluating short-term projects. The primary tools that will be used are recipient interviews, volunteer and board discussions, participant observation, and on-site data collection. Each of these tools were specifically designed to capture the maximum

amount of data for each short-term project and to determine what levels of effectiveness these projects have had in the past and may have in the future.

The information presented in this paper concerning the short-term work of volunteers in Fundong will begin to fill the gap in the literature concerning short-term projects. The new information that will be available upon publication will offer a starting point for future study on evaluating short-term humanitarian aid projects. This new information along with the new approaches that will be developed to gather this information will enhance the understanding in academia on the subject of evaluating short-term humanitarian aid and highlight more considerations for future research.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This research project is focused on humanitarian and missionary work done by volunteers for an orphanage we will call New Hope Children's Home (NHCH) located in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. This orphanage is supported and managed by a small, U.S. based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization made up of volunteers which we will call Hope For Cameroon (HFC). HFC uses short-term trips to accomplish long-term humanitarian goals. HFC's mission is to support ongoing ministries in Cameroon financially and logistically from a Christian perspective which includes fund raising, direct ministry, and prayer efforts. HFC manages several community projects in addition to NHCH which include a medical clinic, community conferences, and pastoral training. The founder of HFC established this orphanage to bring hope to children orphaned by AIDS, Malaria, and other illnesses. Through NHCH, Hope For Cameroon is able to provide nutrition, education, and healthcare to 60-70 children in a loving compound with nine paid staff members.

The NHCH local staff are all Cameroonians. Although they have been paid a consistent salary for the past year or so, they worked for the previous five or six years as volunteers. HFC relies heavily on both in-country and U.S. based volunteers to carry out their work. They recruit volunteers through their website and word of mouth. Each year,

HFC sends two to three short-term teams that stay for two weeks each doing projects such as building repair and construction, religious training, needs assessment, clothing distribution, health and hygiene check-ups, skills training, community relations, and other projects as needed. The staff at NHCH relies heavily on the supplies, support, and encouragement from these short-term projects and their supporters in the United States.

Data for this project were collected and analyzed using an ethnographic research approach primarily focused on in-depth interviews and supplemented by participant observation by the researcher. As described by Kristin G. Esterberg, “This kind of research entails immersing yourself in the social life of a group, observing, and writing about what you see” (2002: 58). The researcher has worked with HFC for over five years participating in or sending several trips to Cameroon per year with the goal of developing an understanding of the culture and needs of the people of Cameroon as well as delivering aid. The in-depth interviews were conducted before, during and after the researcher’s fourth trip to Cameroon in June/July 2011. The ethnographic approach helped the researcher understand the sociological factors affecting the work done by HFC on a first-hand basis and to apply this understanding to the collection and analysis of the data.

The use of qualitative methods was an important tool in the analysis of this initial research project focused on one organization using short-term humanitarian trips to deliver aid. According to the *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, random field experiments may not succeed without qualitative work (Wholey 1994:185). The role of this qualitative project is to lead the researcher toward a better understanding of the need for research on this topic, to identify the most appropriate research questions, and to

develop a theoretical approach for future research. This smaller qualitative study will provide a basis for future, large-scale research projects.

The researcher for this project is a board member and experienced volunteer with HFC. As such, there is a pre-existing relationship with each interview participant. According to Kristin G. Esterberg (2002), it is important to gain trust and develop relationships with the people you are interviewing. In her book, Esterberg says that some studies have shown that these types of relationships can be exploitative. The relationship of a researcher with the participants could appear to be friendship from the participant's perspective, but sometimes, it is only the researcher that gains from the relationship.

Esterberg described a study by Judith Stacey in which Stacey demonstrated that these types of close, personal relationships can be beneficial to both parties (2002). Participants often gain from the relationship with the researcher by enjoying the opportunity to talk about themselves or the encouragement of someone interested in their lives. In the case of HFC, the benefits were mutual. Both parties gained knowledge and increased their understanding of how evaluation may help the organization both now and in the future. The interviews also allowed and created an opportunity for the participants to express their personal feelings which is not easy for many of them to do.

According to Esterberg, other ethical issues could arise from this type of research such as issues concerning covert research, possible harm to the participants, changes resulting from bringing negative attention to a group, or uncovering illegal activity (2002). These specific issues were not problematic for this study, but precautions were taken to avoid other potential ethical issues.

To minimize the possibility of obligatory answers, each participant was asked to answer honestly and without regard to whether or not the researcher was familiar with the issue or answer. They were all encouraged to feel free to decline to answer any question that made them feel uncomfortable and told they could end the interview at any time. The researcher was careful to clarify that her role in the interviews was strictly to be the researcher. All the participants expressed feelings of comfort with the researcher and trust that the information will not be used to slander them or the organization. They also expressed their trust in the researcher to appropriately avoid and/or respond to ethical issues that could arise from having close relationships with the participants.

Sample Interview Groups

The project is an ethnographic, qualitative assessment of how volunteers, staff, and board members perceive and evaluate the effectiveness of short-term trips sent by HFC to work at NHCH and the surrounding community. It has been approved by the Texas State University Institutional Review Board as evidenced by the certificates in the Appendix.

The sample for this study was taken from three groups of volunteer interview subjects for the appropriate type of data collection techniques: in-depth interviews with volunteer trip participants, conversations with volunteer members of the board of directors for HFC, and on-location interviews with NHCH paid staff members. All but one of the volunteers and board members are from the United States. The founder of HFC and president of the board is a Cameroonian that was educated and now lives in the United States, and all NHCH staff members are locals from Cameroon that have never visited a country beyond their own.

Each participant was asked a series of open-ended questions that were adapted for their respective group. Each signed a consent form allowing researcher full use of the interview, and all participants were notified of the project purposes. The goal of using in-depth interviews was to record each participant's unique perspective, opinions, and other relevant information and compare it with the data collected from the other two groups in light of the researchers personal insights gained through participant observation.

In-depth interviews with ten NHCH trip volunteers consisted of one-on-one interview sessions conducted by the researcher via Skype or on the phone. The researcher asked questions from the appropriate questionnaire and offered an opportunity at the end of the interview session for each volunteer to offer additional information. All of the trip volunteers have participated in at least one short-term trip with HFC to NHCH within the past five years.

The researcher contacted twenty HFC volunteers by sending a group email announcing the study and offering an opportunity to participate. Several volunteers responded immediately, and others were contacted via phone or email with a personal request to participate. The researcher intentionally selected participants from a variety of levels of involvement with the organization and trips. The final group of ten participants included some that had become actively involved in the organization and others that had not contacted HFC since their trip. It also included some that had participated in only one trip and some that return annually. The various levels of involvement allowed for a variety of perspectives on the subject of evaluating the effectiveness of these types of trips. The interviews were scheduled individually and conducted via speaker phone to enable recording for subsequent transcription.

Conversations with volunteer members of HFC's board consisted of one-on-one phone interviews with each board member and one group discussion. Each board member is a volunteer with a commitment to supporting NHCH long-term. The goal of the interviews with the board was to gather data from the perspective of the organization as a sending agency, and specifically, to gather information on how they evaluate the effectiveness of the many short-term trips and projects they support. The questionnaire created for these conversations was adjusted to allow the board members to offer their own insights into the research questions from the perspective of sender rather than participant. Six of the seven board members were interviewed, and the seventh board member is the researcher for this project.

The board discussed this research project with the researcher several times prior to the request for interviews, so when the researcher requested individual interviews with board members in a board meeting, the board unanimously agreed. They also agreed to hold a brief discussion group led by the researcher in one of their monthly staff meetings. All but one of the current board members has participated in one or more short-term trip to NHCH. Three of the six board members that were interviewed have participated in more than one short-term trip to NHCH, and they all actively support HFC and the trip planning process for each trip. The interviews were scheduled individually and conducted via speaker phone to allow for recording for subsequent transcription. The discussion group was conducted via Skype and recorded for subsequent transcription.

On-location interviews with NHCH staff were conducted in person during the researcher's trip to Cameroon in June/July 2011. Each of the staff members have participated in welcoming at least one short-term humanitarian trip to NHCH. Most of

the staff have coordinated, hosted, planned for, and cleaned up after at least two trips per year for five or more years. Eight of the nine staff members were interviewed. The questionnaire for the staff was created in the same format as the one for the other two groups, but it was adapted to accommodate the recipient's perspective. The researcher was able to collect stories and examples of projects that have been carried out by HFC volunteers at NHCH with the goal of understanding effectiveness from the perspective of the staff.

The researcher requested interviews with the staff by emailing the Director of NHCH an explanation of the project and a request to conduct interviews with his staff. After receiving a positive response from all staff members, research interviews were added as one of the projects for the researcher's trip to Cameroon in June/July of 2011. Each interview was scheduled and conducted individually and in person once the researcher arrived at NHCH. All staff members except for the night watchman were able to participate, and all interviews were recorded for subsequent transcription.

The following is a complete list of interview participants sorted by group which includes the pseudonyms and number of trips that each participant participated in, sent, or hosted:

Table 4. List of Interview Participants

group	name	# trips
Board 1	Rick	0
Board 2	Joe	2
Board 3	Victor	3+
Board 4	Sarah	1
Board 5	Matt	1
Board 6	Jeremy	3
Staff 1	Cook 1	4+
Staff 2	Manager	37-40 people
Staff 3	Director	15

Staff 4	Matron 1	6
Staff 5	Matron 2	10-15
Staff 6	Cook 2	“So many”
Staff 7	Personnel Manager	4 since 2010
Staff 8	Nurse	10
vol 1	Sally	2
vol 2	Kim	1
vol 3	Chelsea	1
vol 4	Mac	1
vol 5	Carol	2
vol 6	Don	5
vol 7	Monica	1
vol 8	Catherine	1
vol 9	Kelly	1
vol 10	Melanie	2

Access and Approvals

Approval for requesting interviews, access to volunteer and project information, and conducting interviews with the staff was granted by the board of HFC. HFC is extremely interested in the subject matter and has encouraged all involved to support this research project as far as they felt comfortable in doing so. The board not only supported but also encouraged the data collection and analysis of their evaluation efforts. The board also requested a summary of the findings in order to apply them to HFC’s efforts to become more effective with its short-term trips and projects.

Questionnaires and Interview Process

Questionnaires were created to help answer the primary research questions for this project:

How do workers define effectiveness?

- What are the goals for the trip(s)?
- Who defines effectiveness for each trip - volunteers, sponsors, NGOs?

How do workers assess/measure effectiveness?

- Is it an informal process of each individual, if so, how do they determine if they have been successful?
- Is it subjective, or is there a concrete objective measure they use?
- Is it a formal process of the organization and if so, how do they determine if it has been successful? Or don't they?

According to these measures, are the trips successful? Is there consensus?

Can those receiving the aid help to measure the effectiveness of the trips?

Are there unmet needs for evaluation?

- How might it be constructed?
- What could we learn?
- What are the drawbacks to implementing more formal evaluation methods?

Other important ideas/topics brought up in interviews

As mentioned above, each of the three groups had a unique questionnaire worded for their particular experience. There were four main sections to each questionnaire.

- 1) **General.** This section asked general questions about their level of participation. This included questions concerning how many trips they had hosted or participated in and how long these trips are on average.
- 2) **Goals.** The second section included questions about the goals of the trips, who established the goals, and whether or not they were clearly defined. All of the participants were asked to expand upon their answers to whether or not the goals were clearly defined.
- 3) **Evaluating Effectiveness.** The effectiveness section asked about whether or not the effectiveness was evaluated and what were benefits and drawbacks of a more systematic evaluation. The questions for each group in this section were almost identical.
- 4) **Personal Opinions about Effectiveness.** Each participant was asked about their opinion on whether or not the trips were effective and what they thought other

groups may think about the effectiveness of these trips. For instance, the volunteers were asked whether or not the staff felt the trips were effective and so on.

Adjustments within these four main sections were minimal, but they were necessary in some instances. As an example, it was important to ask volunteers about the goals for their own trip, but the staff members were asked to comment on what they thought the goals were for the various groups of volunteers they had received.

Whether on the phone or in person, the researcher simply read the questions from the questionnaire and explained as necessary. Explanation was especially necessary for some of the staff members as they were unfamiliar with the Western concepts of evaluation and effectiveness. Due to many years of experience in Africa, the researcher was able to offer explanations that helped them understand the basic idea of each question. After explanations were given to the staff and some participants that required it, the answers came easily. Participants were encouraged to answer however they deemed best, and when they were concerned that they may not have the right answers, they were encouraged that there were no wrong answers.

Data Analysis

As described above, each of these data collection methods was used to gather data specifically focused on answering the research questions using the appropriate questionnaire included in the Appendix. All three interview groups provided a unique perspective that will be analyzed, compared, and discussed in the next section using qualitative methods.

Qualitative analysis methods allowed the researcher to get behind the numbers that a quantitative analysis would have provided, and these methods allowed the researcher to discern what participants really think about the topic (Schutt 2006). Upon completion of the in-depth interviews, the interview transcripts were analyzed and organized according to patterns and connections that emerged during the analysis. The researcher used progressive focusing, interacting with the data to gradually refine her focus (Schutt 2006), to move from raw data toward the key findings described in the next section. Because the researcher used participant observation as a tool for data collection, the researcher was able to perform a deeper analysis of the data, enabling more insightful findings. These key findings focus on the meaning behind the answers and lead to authentic conclusions and opportunities for future study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Each interview session began with a quick overview concerning the participant's involvement in various short-term trips with HFC. Although all participants from all three groups gave a fairly clear answer as to how many short-term trips they had either participated in or received, the total number of trips they reported varied significantly. It was clear that there has not been a central location for trip records in years past. Even with this uncertainty, each board member made it clear that things were beginning to change in their structure concerning trip records and evaluations. The general consensus was that HFC sends two to three trips per year that last one to three weeks each, but 2011 was an exception with only one trip sent by HFC to the region.

Delivering Happiness

The most common reason that participants from all three groups gave to demonstrate the effectiveness of the short-term trips was that they make the children and staff feel happy and loved. It was clear that they meant this as much deeper than just a superficial happiness. The happiness reflected in their responses related to a broad spectrum of personal impacts ranging from the initial, temporary excitement of the children when visitors arrive to a drastic, permanent change in the heart of a child that had previously felt abandoned and alone. The Personnel Manager said, "They [visitors]

will give to the children and make them very happy, and make the children love. [They] feel that they are alone that they don't have parents. When they come, they make the children to understand that they are not really orphans. That they have parents who care." Similarly, the Director said that because of these trips, the children have reason to believe that they will not be abandoned to themselves.

All participants tried to demonstrate that the love and happiness the trip volunteers bring to the children and staff make long-lasting impressions on them. The volunteers and board members made comments about how the children's minds are open to many new ideas; they have a sense of belonging; and they have a hope for the future. Joe said, "[The trips are] effective because the kids know that there's a bigger community in the world that is watching and caring for them." Except for the Director and Manager who have had extensive experience communicating with Western visitors, the staff most often summarized these ideas in one word – happy. In their language, this word encompasses many deeper feelings and can imply long-lasting happiness.

As a participant observer, I witnessed many examples of this long-lasting impression. A seven year old girl who lives at NHCH whom we will call Jessica came to me one day and said, "When I grow up, I want to be a doctor." This penniless orphaned child in rural Cameroon has had her mind opened so much that she thinks she can do anything. She does not just think this. She believes it. This is a direct result of the influence of HFC volunteers that have visited regularly during the five years she has lived at the orphanage.

It is both personal connections she and others have made with visitors as well as the multiplication of efforts from the various teams over the years that has made these

impressions on the children. All participants value relationship building, especially with the children, and they all mentioned relationships as one of the key indicators of an effective trip. These relationships make the staff, children, and volunteers happy, very happy. Interview participants often mentioned this repetitive pattern of love, care, and support changes the lives of the children and staff for good, and the positive change pours out into the community as well.

Is there a reason the locals cannot make the children feel happy and loved without the help from non-Africans? Why does the staff look to HFC volunteers to deliver this benefit? Why do staff and board members feel it is their responsibility to deliver it?

In my research and experience with Africans, I have observed that the family is strong. Even the most extended family members are responsible for the well-being of the others. I have been told by several officials in Cameroon that no child is an orphan in Cameroon because there is always an extended family member who should be responsible to care for that child. The community expects the families to support their own. When children become orphans, they are too often separated from their extended families and therefore alienated from the care and love they need. It is not comfortable to accept that the traditional family-centered African way of caring for children is not working for orphaned children, of which there are so many, and so unfortunately, many have decided it is not their responsibility to do so.

Part of the goal in delivering the happiness described above is to set an example to the staff and community in Cameroon and to teach them how to deliver orphan care to their own orphans. The goal is not to “infantize the whole continent” by treating adult Africans as children who need someone to do the work for them, as Larry Krotz

(2009:53) suggested. The goal is to provide this care in a way that empowers and challenges the staff and community to provide the care and support they need. This is why the participants pointed to teaching as a primary goal of the trips. They provide practical advice, on-location examples, and guidance teaching the staff and community how to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the children and community.

The Risk of Dependency

Most of interview participants expressed effectiveness as something the HFC volunteers did for NHCH. It was clear in their interviews that the staff at NHCH are not offended by non-Africans coming to do the work for them. The Personnel Manager said, “We are taking examples from [volunteers] and HFC because we are really taking example from you to try to take care of these children. I’m sure, if you did not initiate this, I’m not sure that our work here would be able to do that.” Interview participants reported both tangible and intangible benefits of the HFC, as a parent, providing care and support for NHCH, the child. Many of the less experienced interview participants are happy to provide this type of parental support, but the more experienced participants mentioned the need to help the child become more independent.

Dependency issues are certainly a concern for short-term trips with HFC to Cameroon. Because of better education and financial status, Western visitors can easily come across as superior to the people in Cameroon, especially in rural settings such as Northwest Cameroon. The researcher has observed that this air of superiority is often assumed by Western visitors and expected by the Cameroonians. When they meet a Western visitor, Cameroonians often have an automatic expectation of a financial reward for help with transportation, carrying baggage, or simply as a charity gift. Western

visitors may also be invited into places where Cameroonians may not be invited such as high level government offices or regional church directors' homes. There is a certain amount of celebrity and power naturally given to Western visitors in Cameroon, and HFC is working to harness this power and re-direct it toward breaking the cycle of dependency by training the workers and community to do the work themselves.

Although the primary focus of the interview participants' answers was on what HFC does for NHCH, the leaders of both the board and the orphanage expressed a desire to move toward a more reciprocal and independent parent/child relationship. During the 2011 trip, the researcher met with the staff a few times to discuss job descriptions and clarify their roles. Although the staff leadership would like to independently manage NHCH, there were many issues that are beyond their current level of management skills. They need outside training and help to resolve these issues. After the trip, the board began weekly training calls with the Director to help him learn how to manage the staff on his own and fix some of the issues that had arisen. The goal was not initiated by the staff, but because visitors from HFC observed the issues, HFC was able to act as a parent teaching their child to become more independent. It may not be possible to transition away from the financial dependency of NHCH on HFC in the near future, but HFC is working toward a more independent NHCH in terms of emotional and physical care of the children, community and government relationship building, and management development.

The board was specifically asked about dependency in the group interview, and they all agreed that this was something to be aware of and work hard to overcome as they send volunteers on these short-term trips. The staff and children can form dependencies

on the donations and financial support given to them by the volunteers. Both the staff and volunteers need to be taught about the dangers of dependency, and the board feels it is their responsibility to teach them how to avoid perpetuating dependencies. Sarah said, “[The volunteers] should go with the attitude that I’m gonna teach so that when I leave, they can function better than when I got there because they’ve learned from me, and they are not dependent on me. They need to go with an attitude of teaching and not having people rely on them.” The board often discusses ways that HFC can minimize these dependencies over time, and they all agreed that they should try to do a better job training volunteers and staff on how to do so as well.

Unclear Trip Goals

The ability of HFC to evaluate the effectiveness of its short-term trips is directly related to the clarity of the trip goals and who is responsible to set the goals for each trip. This was a confusing topic for many of the interview participants. The clarity of the trip goals affects whether or not participants think trips are effective, and unclear goals can limit the organization’s ability to evaluate them. Sally said, “I just didn’t have clearly defined in my head what we wanted to do going in, and so I felt like I came out not really having done anything.” Participating in a trip with unclear goals leaves volunteers wondering what they accomplished when they return. It also leaves board members and staff uncertain about what was or was not effective.

Kelly participated on a trip in 2009 led by the researcher that is a good example of the effect unclear goals have on the evaluation of effectiveness. The trip included four college students on their first trip with Cry Cameroon, the researcher, and the researcher’s fifteen year old brother. As the team leader and only experienced volunteer,

the researcher helped to set the pre-trip goals of initiating construction of the new kitchen building (the primary project), conducting a Vacation Bible School (VBS) for the community, helping volunteers develop new relationships with the children and staff, and managing the daily devotions for the children. The team members understood these goals, but after arrival in Cameroon, the implementation of the goals changed. Kelly said, “I felt like we had a few goals going into it, but kind of established a few new ones once we got there. I think there was a good balance between having it really set out and being willing to fix it on the fly.”

One key adjustment to the trip goals was that instead of building the kitchen, the team helped to plan for future construction. This left the team looking for more projects to accomplish in place of the time we had scheduled for construction projects. The team was able to help with re-painting some school chalk boards, painting the NHCH dorm rooms, creating unique murals for each room, and preparing the ground/foundation for the new kitchen. Adjustments themselves were not necessarily an issue, but post-trip, the team had a difficult time putting into words what they had accomplished. The projects on this trip had some benefit, but we had no way to evaluate them upon return because the goals had not been carefully planned from start to finish. The board was unable to specifically assess the trip’s effectiveness. Still, they were glad to hear some positive reports from the trip participants about some of the things that were accomplished.

Throughout the interviews, participants said that pre-trip planning and clear goal setting were important factors in having effective trips. Not having the post-trip review nor a plan to evaluate leaves the trips unfinished. Sally said about her first trip, “In looking back, I’m like, “Did that really help the kids at all?” Many of the participants

gave these types of uncertain answers concerning their own effectiveness, and most of them followed-up by saying that they would be more certain of their own effectiveness and the effectiveness of short-term trips as a whole if the goals were more clearly defined.

Most of the more experienced interview participants felt that the goals of each trip should build upon the long-term goals of HFC. There was one trip that did this well back in 2009. Catherine led a medical team with clearly defined goals based on HFC's long-term goal of improving the medical care of the children and community. Her team planned to work with the nurse on some public health initiatives and learn about what the small NHCH medical clinic was doing to offer medical care to the children. The team brought over medical supplies, performed basic physical exams on the children, and implemented a new medical reporting process. The clear, pre-trip goals enabled them to do the work they had set out to do and report back to the board both on the work they did in Cameroon and on the follow-up reporting process they had set up. Because they had clearly defined goals, the team, staff, and board members were able to review the trip and evaluate its effectiveness.

Valentin captured the opinions of the more experienced volunteers, board members, and staff leadership by saying the purpose of the board is to establish goals for the trips that align with the long-term goals of HFC. Establishing these goals allows for more structured methods for evaluation. He said, "Once we have had these evaluations and all these things, we know exactly what works and what does not work, and we try to improve on what has been successful." This comparison would then affect the way trips are planned in the future and help to improve future trip effectiveness. Most experienced

interview participants agreed that trip effectiveness was in this way directly to how the trips helped to accomplish the long-term goals of HFC.

Some of the long-term goals of HFC expressed by the board members throughout the interviews were the physical and spiritual development of the children, staff training, improving facilities, improved health and nutrition for the children and the community, growing community impact, developing local support and cooperation, and improved education. After discussing these ideas with the board, it is clear that HFC believes they can accomplish these goals through the multiplication of efforts of recurring short-term trips. As long as the trip goals align with these and other long-term goals of HFC, they can be beneficial. Without clear goals, however, the trips will be minimally effective or not effective at all. The board member Joe said, “[The trips are] effective for the board. [They are] effective for our supporters because they [demonstrate the] longevity of what we do. The consistency of what we’ve been doing speaks for itself long-term. I think that’s the main benefit.”

Because there has not been a formalized planning process in the past, the interview participants did not fully agree on who is responsible for goal planning. Many of the volunteers said that they created their own goals, did not have adequate trip goals, or did not have clear goals. The volunteers as a whole expressed confusion about to who is supposed to create the goals, but most of them said they do rely on at least some input from the board. The board member Sarah agreed with this assessment. She said, “Unfortunately, mostly it’s the team that establishes these goals which leaves [Hope For Cameroon] almost at the mercy of these teams and what they want to do.” Other board members and more experienced participants made similar comments, but they all pointed

out that this is how it has been in the past. HFC is in the midst of a transition phase where the board is becoming the primary initiator of trip goals. Once the trip goals are established, it is up to the board member responsible for coordinating trips to work in collaboration with the volunteers and NHCH staff to customize the goals for a particular group's interests and abilities.

Even with differing perspectives on how trips are planned, there is a consensus that all three groups, staff, board, and volunteers, are involved on some level in the planning and execution of the goals for every trip. There is a need for leadership in this collaboration process in order to alleviate this confusion over who is responsible for creating and implementing the trip goals. The organization is intentionally making a move toward more clearly defined goals in hopes of alleviating this confusion and improving the effectiveness of the short-term trips.

Experience

Interview participants that have either been on more than one trip, received or sent more than one trip, or have become more involved in the organization expressed a significantly different perspective than those that had only participated in or received one trip. These experienced participants include the board members, most of the staff, and four of the ten volunteers. The Personnel Manager and six of the ten volunteers have been on only one trip or have been minimally involved in the overall work of HFC, and therefore are considered inexperienced participants. The key finding concerning experience is that experience affects how participants perceive the effectiveness of short-term trips and whether or not they view their efforts as adding to the long-term efforts of HFC.

Whether experienced or not, participants gave the general answer of “yes, my trip was effective.” When asked to elaborate, interview participants who mentioned their first or only trip said that their first trip may have been minimally effective or that they were uncertain of its effectiveness. These first trips were described as “touristy” by one of the board members, and another board members said that the first time trip volunteers often come back with “glossy eyed” feelings of effectiveness. Sally, a two time volunteer that hopes to return in coming years, said that on her first trip to Cameroon, she had no idea what she was really getting into. “The first trip might have been effective. I just didn’t have clearly defined in my head what we wanted to do going in.” First trips were not written off as complete failures, though. They are beneficial as an introduction of volunteers to HFC and NHCH, and they have brought in many new supporters for HFC. Some of the more experienced volunteers said first trips were effectiveness when they help to accomplish the on-going goals of HFC, whether or not the first time volunteer realized the significance.

The perspectives of inexperienced participants tended to be more individualistic than the more experienced volunteers. They had one trip to focus on and minimal follow-up with HFC which limited their understanding of the on-going work of HFC. When asked what the goals were for her trip, Kim said, “My goals when I went were to grow closer to God and to rely on Him for everything and to love on the kids and just gain that experience just being in a different country and being with orphans and out of my element.” The goals mentioned by this and other one-time volunteers had to do with personal experiences, excitement about the children, and feelings of fulfillment. The Director pointed out that some less effective trip volunteers that never return had made

little effort on their trip. Still, even their limited efforts add to the overall benefit of the recurring short-term trips.

The more involved participants began to focus more on the overall benefit to NHCH and how their work affected the long-term goals of HFC. Joe, a founding board member that has been to Cameroon twice, said, “For the people that go all the time, or frequently, I think they...have a more pragmatic look at it as incremental growth.” Experienced volunteers see their effectiveness through the lens of a multiplication of efforts rather than a one-time snapshot. The more involved a trip volunteer became in the planning process, the more effective they felt their personal efforts were. However, this involvement also helped them see some of the ineffective efforts done by some of the first time trip volunteers.

A good example of how experience affects how participants perceive their effectiveness related to the on-going efforts of HFC is in the way they perceive the relationships they build with the people of Cameroon. Whether more experienced or not, all interview participants felt that the relationships they started with the staff, children, and community during their respective trips were evidence of a successful trip. The volunteers that had made little effort to follow-up with the relationships they had started mostly focused on how these relationships affected them personally. When asked about the long-term benefits of short-term trips, Chelsea, a one-time volunteer with HFC, said, “A long-term benefit for me is that I’m always going to financially support this organization. I’m always going to think about those kids. I want to go back. It changed me and made me more aware of what the world is like which I think is a huge benefit in

the long-term.” The relationships were valuable because they had affected her personally.

The volunteers that had followed-up on the relationships they started by writing letters or sending gifts focused more on how these relationships affected the staff, children, and community in the long run. Although Sarah has only been on one trip, her involvement in HFC has been significant. Her answer to the same question about long-term benefits was, “The long-term benefits are just the relationships that are being built, and the training that the staff is getting each year. I realize it’s only once a year, sometimes twice a year depending on what teams go, but I think that overall, those do add up over a longer term. I think, too, sending teams year after year really communicates that this orphanage is cared for by others outside of the community.” The evidence of effectiveness for Sarah was how the relationships affected the people in Cameroon in the long-run.

One exception in the differences between the less and more experienced interview participants was the way Catherine had planned and evaluated her trip. As a self-proclaimed “type A personality”, she relies on concrete measures to feel personally successful. She led a team focused on the medical needs of NHCH. When the trip ended, she left evaluation forms for monthly assessment and follow-up from the nurse and other staff members. This gave her a record of what worked and what did not work from her trip, and it also created a way for her to help the staff continue using what they had learned. So, although she has not yet returned for a follow-up trip, she has stayed involved in the relationship with the staff and HFC. This has given her a long-term

perspective on the effectiveness of her uncharacteristic of the other less experienced volunteers.

What is Effective?

There was a consensus among the staff, board members, and many of the volunteers that the efforts of effective short-term trips last longer than the trip itself. In their interviews, many participants mentioned the kitchen project which was started in 2009 and is scheduled to be completed in 2012. Matron 2 said, “This kitchen is built here is something that will last for long, yes.” The short-term trips have made it possible to plan, prepare, and execute of these types of long-term projects, and all that are involved in the projects can look back years later and can say, “I helped to accomplish that, and it is still there.”

Many of the interview participants, including both the Director and Manager of NHCH, mentioned that the children, staff, and community are being mentored through the multiplication of efforts of these recurring short-term trips. They staff are learning from the example of the volunteers how to love, care for, and manage the orphanage. The children are learning about integrity, healthy lifestyles, and self-esteem. The Director put this idea into words very clearly when he spoke about how HFC volunteers are effective in the community. He said, “To a large extent, they are effective in that mentoring the community where the orphanage is situated to a common concern. What is going on now is that the purpose of the community, the churches, you know, and even opinion leaders have seen what the missionaries do, and they are copying it. So that from time to time, they drop in to visit; drop in to give advice; drop in to give support; drop in to maybe find out just what...they are curious to see what is going on [at NHCH]. That

is important.” The interview participants believe that this multiplication of efforts over time can have long lasting, positive effects on the children, staff, and community whether or not they get repeated affection from one particular volunteer.

When trying to define effectiveness, interview participants seemed most comfortable listing accomplishments to define what is effective. Matron 1 said, “They are effective in the sense that whether long-term or short-term something must be accomplished.” Tasks mentioned by interview participants ranged from leading a children’s program to building a kitchen. They included things such as painting, planting trees, clothing repair, and facility maintenance. The trips also enabled the delivery of goods, distribution of donations and food, direct ministry with the children, and development projects.

Intangible accomplishments included teaching the children Biblical principles, integrity, leadership skills, and nutrition. Monica said, “If you just do the humanitarian part, I feel you have not reached the entire person.” Similar to what Matthew Parris (2008) said in his article *As an Atheist, I truly Believe Africa Needs God*, the interview participants clearly believe that they have a duty to deliver more than just humanitarian support to the people of Cameroon. Their mission is more than just accomplishing certain tasks, and so it is difficult for many of them to put into words the deeper truths such as hope and purpose that they are so passionate about delivering.

Many of the board members mentioned staff accountability as an important of short-term trips because they allow the board to have a first-hand look at the way the staff is managing the financial support and services they provide. The short-term trips bring back updated pictures, feedback, project analysis, and results from face-to-face

discussions. The board relies on reports from the trips to evaluate performance, set future goals, and update its supporters. Joe said that because of short-term trips, “They [the staff] know that we’re not going to stop looking at the performance, and they know that there are measures being taken that...the board will enforce based on the data they gather from the trip.” The trips are also used as teaching tools for the staff in how to implement and use the financial support, and they provide a venue for reliable communication, collaborative planning, and first-hand exposure to the variables to consider for on-going projects.

Feelings were one of the primary ways that interview participants expressed these deeper truths or difficult to describe effects of these types of short-term trips. Melanie described this well when she said, “You know, when you’re happy, it’s just an internal fulfillment that you cannot express in words, but you just know that some kind of mission has been achieved or a purpose has been achieved.” All interview participants gave examples of personal feelings of satisfaction as evidence of an effective trip whether or not they gave any concrete details about why they felt the trips were effective.

The trips allow volunteers to express feelings of love for the children. They feel good when they see changes in the attitudes of the children or the joy on their faces when they arrive. They miss the children when they leave, and their hearts are changed by having been with the children. It is easy to dismiss feelings when trying to systematically evaluate effectiveness, but positive feelings were the most common answer to the question of what is effective from all three groups. An effective tool for evaluating the effectiveness of short-term trips should include a mechanism for categorizing or interpreting these positive feelings.

The Value of Evaluating Effectiveness

Without effective evaluation methods, most agreed that the effectiveness of trips would remain unclear, and potentially, the organization would be unable to identify effective projects. One of the volunteers said, “If you’re not evaluating what you’re doing then...there’s not a point to what you’re doing because you don’t know if it’s working or not. Not that there’s no point, but just that you have no idea of whether or not it’s working.” With effective evaluation measures, however, all involved would be able to understand what impact they’ve made and therefore stay more involved in the continuing work of the organization.

Although there has not been a consistent effort to evaluate trips in the past, there are a few informal evaluation techniques currently being used by HFC such as reports, discussion, and interviews. Trips are deemed effective if they accomplished a certain goal or created a certain level of enthusiasm, but there is not a formal way of recording the information from these techniques.

The board currently relies upon reports and interviews to evaluate each trip. Joe calls it, “A robust feedback process.” This feedback does not always have information about what trips could have done better, but it does usually present ideas for future improvements. The feedback from the researcher’s trip in 2009 consisted of reports on the work with the children, staff meetings, and church gatherings. The team brought back a few suggestions for future projects and information about moving forward with the kitchen project, but the report was mostly positive feedback on what was accomplished. Beyond getting a few ideas for future discussion, the board does not have a systematic way to analyze these reports and interviews in order to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts.

A couple of the more experienced interview participants have their own evaluation processes that are more formal. Don relies on a series of team meetings, reporting, and formal debriefs to assess the effectiveness of his trips. Jeremy uses a more personal process which involves journaling, analyzing interactions with the locals, before/after comparisons, and building relationships with the children to help him measure whether or not his trip has been effective. As mentioned above, the more experienced participants tend to see their work as it relates to the overall work of HFC. Because of this, many of them are beginning to work with HFC to come up with a more cohesive way to evaluate these trips.

The staff use discussion and positive reports to evaluate trips. The Director said that they have meetings with the staff and visitors both during and after the trips; they have discussions about projects; they ask visitors to write in their book of impressions which includes a space for suggested improvements; and the Director summarizes ideas in a formal report to the board. The staff are happy with their current evaluation methods which they feel are very thorough. Some of the staff communicated that they understood that they were not coming up with tangible ideas for improvement, but they would prefer to offer positive suggestions and thankfulness for the work rather than criticize the effort.

Whether or not an interview participant fully understood the idea of improving evaluation through more systematic methods, it was apparent that the more involved they had been with receiving, sending, or participating in trips over the years, the more excited they were about improving the way they evaluate the short-term trips as a way to increase their effectiveness. There was a consensus among all the interview participants that more systematic evaluations will lead to better planning, better performance, and more

effective outcomes. Melanie said, “You can’t do that [be effective] by just walking in. You have to have something structured to implement, to evaluate.” It is difficult, though, to capture intangible things like instilling values or measuring spiritual growth which are both very important to the organization’s efforts.

One recurring caution to the idea of systematically evaluating the effectiveness of these trips was that a systematic evaluation may not be culturally sensitive. The fact that the staff had a hard time understanding the question demonstrates that this concern is not unfounded. The Nurse commented on this saying that the volunteers and board members may not understand the perspective of the staff. She said that if you tell the staff that they have to evaluate a certain way, “They will not really be happy because, you know, they [non-staff] are not the people who are keeping these children here.” The answers differed between the staff and the other two groups on how to evaluate, why evaluate, the role of evaluation, and what is effective. Evaluation of effectiveness looks different to the African than to an American. Efforts to evaluate the trips must take this caution into consideration so as not to perpetuate the dependencies discussed above by forcing the staff to conform to a Western way of evaluating effectiveness.

Another caution to implementing more systematic evaluation methods was that it could easily become a burden on both the staff and trip volunteers. According to the very experienced trip volunteer Don, requiring more detailed reports could, “draw away from the relational ministry time when you’re there.” The intuitive part of the work could suffer with strict requirements for evaluation, and the intangible things that are important to these types of trips may be lost if the evaluation methods are not flexible. Because of these things, the effectiveness of trips could actually diminish if the evaluations were not

done appropriately. However, the consensus amongst all the interview participants is that the value outweighs the potential risks involved in establishing more systematic ways to measure the effectiveness of the trips.

HFC is in the midst of a change process moving toward more clearly defined goals and intentional communication concerning the effectiveness of their short-term trips. The board members made it clear that although they have not always led in the establishment of trip goals, they now set the goals and expectations for every trip to NHCH working closely with the trip leaders and staff to prioritize these goals. Another formal process that has begun is the transition from individual projects to long-term, sustainable projects. Minimal requirements, lack of reporting, and limited evaluation have been characteristics of short-term trips with HFC in the past. HFC has begun to use short-term trips to both establish and accomplish their long-term goals. The clear structure will require more systematic methods of evaluation in order to ensure the effectiveness of each trip toward achieving the long-term goals of the organization.

All of the board members saw great value in developing a more systematic way of measuring effectiveness, but they were unsure of what was the best way to do it. Many mentioned the need to find or create the right evaluation tool that would capture the tangible, intangible, and often flexible goals. Matt said, “Well, I can’t really see any drawbacks except the effectiveness of the tool, you know. If you develop a formal way to assess trips, that’s good, but if the tool is weak, then it’s not going to capture what you want.” Although difficult, most board members and volunteers think that creating or finding the appropriate tool could be possible.

HFC has the potential to begin effective evaluation efforts in the coming year. There is enough interest and desire to move ahead with some more systematic evaluation tools such as pre and post trip evaluation forms and scheduled analysis of reports. As suggested by various interview participants, HFC could record lists of donations and accomplishments, create a set of key deliverables for each trip, and have a specific plan for on-going and future projects. Many of the interview participants felt that if the board, volunteers, staff, and supporters worked toward a more systematic form of evaluation, it would lead to more effective trips.

There was one interesting exception to this agreement that more systematic evaluation efforts for these short-term trips would be valuable. Rick, a board member that has sent many trips but not participated in one himself, said that from his standpoint, just having people there is effective. He said, "I think the number one thing for a person like me, a board member who is a continent, an ocean away, is just to get a feel for the generalities of the ministry." Rick feels it is an effective trip if the people in Cameroon know the board was watching and if HFC gets first-hand reports on the needs and how HFC was meeting the needs. This is not to say that the other work that is done is not important, but he feels that if the only thing a trip did was to bring back information that would help HFC with its long-term goals, then he would consider that trip effective.

This brings up the question of what a formal evaluation should consider effective. As Matt pointed out, having the right tool or method for evaluation would be extremely important. With the wrong tool, a trip could be formally deemed ineffective when it informally accomplished an extremely important goal such as bringing back first-hand verbal reports on how the orphanage is functioning. There were enough examples given

in the interviews to support Rick's idea that one achieved goal may make an entire trip effective. Certain variables would affect this, such as how many volunteers were on the trip and how much money was spent on just one important result. How to select appropriate evaluation tools to capture these types of variables would be an interesting subject for further research.

There was a difference in how the three groups relayed negative experiences or lack of results. When a less experienced volunteer expressed uncertainty about a trip's effectiveness, they would quickly change the subject to their own feelings of joy or fulfillment. When a board member or experienced volunteer mentioned this type of uncertainty, they often changed the subject to what they hoped to do in the future. When the staff were asked about negative experiences, many of them said there were none. The few staff members that admitted there had been a negative experience in the past said that it was an exception to the usually extremely beneficial trips. Although some mentioned negative results or ineffective trips in the past, all groups felt that the negative concerns did not make the trips ineffective.

The staff prefer to use evaluation only as an encouragement to volunteers and to give positive feedback to the board. They are concerned that if they were to evaluate and find something negative, it may hinder the relationship or jeopardize their job. Melanie, an interview participant that is from the region but now lives in the United States, was a bit more straightforward about her critique of the staff. She said, "If they already have existing issues, and you come short-term and you leave, they may get more angry because they expect you to bring solutions to come and assist." Inappropriate expectations can leave the staff unsatisfied with the work that was done, but according to

Melanie, even if they become angry about the trip, the volunteers and board may never hear about it. This limits the ability of all three groups to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the trips because they are missing some of the most constructive data.

The Nurse gave an example that confirmed Melanie's assertion that the staff may not appreciate what is done, but they may never tell you. The Nurse mentioned that some volunteers may have delivered poor clothing in the past, "like rags" she said. The staff did not want to say anything about it to either the volunteers or the board. "We will only take it and try to disregard it, or we lose their passion." Because the staff does not want to offend their gracious visitors and financial supporters, they will hesitate in giving honest feedback. It is possible, however, that if there were more systematic ways to measure whether or not the clothing that each trip brought was an effective use of resources, it could help the staff to communicate their needs and expectations to the volunteers without feeling that they might offend them.

The Manager was an exception to the staff's reticence to give an honest assessment of the trips. He has had the most interaction with Western visitors of all the staff, and he made a point to talk about the need for honest assessments in order to improve the work that HFC is able to do through its short-term trips. He said that he does not "talk freely" or honestly with all the volunteers because he feels he cannot. However, he thinks this is an important element to a good evaluation. He also talked about having a committee work toward a systematic evaluation process for the trips. If he were able to "talk freely" with a few people on this committee, they would be able to exchange valuable information that does not always get reported.

Working together to create a safe environment for honest communication will help all involved create a stronger and more systematic way to evaluate these short-term trips. Trying to evaluate the effectiveness of these trips without honest feedback will not be beneficial. Likewise, an evaluation method that does not reflect both the tangible and intangible work that HFC does will not be beneficial either. It is clear that all parties desire to make the short-term trips with HFC more effective, and they agree that implementing more systematic evaluation methods will help to identify ways to improve. Keeping in mind the cautions mentioned above, HFC has the potential to implement some evaluation methods in the coming year that will be extremely helpful in improving the long-term effectiveness of their short-term trips.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This research project involved using interviews and participant observation methods to facilitate direct contact with participants that have been personally involved in short-term humanitarian trips with Hope For Cameroon (HFC). These were extremely willing participants that not only wanted to give input on the topic, but they also wanted to consider ways to improve the effectiveness of HFC trips through the use of better evaluation methods. This project has initiated discussions among the participants about the need for evaluation and has encouraged them to work toward achieving more effective results from their short-term trips.

When analyzing answers from all three groups and considering observations of the researcher while doing research in Cameroon, it was apparent that there are lingering effects of the colonial era in this postcolonial time for the people of Cameroon. Modernization and globalization are sweeping through Northwest Cameroon at an increasing speed. Although the British are no longer in control of Northwest Cameroon, the people of Cameroon look to the West for help with development projects, humanitarian needs, and other community concerns. HFC is situated in a prime spot to help the people of this region navigate their way toward more productive and sustainable lives. The answers from the staff demonstrated that they feel they need the help provided by HFC in order for them to be successful. Their hesitancy to give constructive answers

was due to their concern that any negative response may affect the amount of humanitarian, financial, spiritual, and emotional support that is given by HFC and its volunteers. The results demonstrate that the people receiving aid in Cameroon may need to decolonize their minds as Mphahlele suggested (1964:10). However, focusing only on postcolonial issues may present a limitation on appropriate interpretation of the results. There may be reasons beyond colonialization that account for this reliance on the West such as the nature of poor versus rich and educated versus uneducated.

The economic divisions of labor reflected in Wallerstein's Modern World-Systems Theory were also demonstrated throughout the discussions. This region of Cameroon fits into the external zone as defined by Wallerstein, and there are very real advantages to of letting the core, obviously represented by HFC, dominate because of the money, education and resources they can provide. HFC, however, wears this power lightly. There is a clear drive to strengthen and train the children, staff, and community to eventually support themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The domination that can happen based upon economic differences is minimized by this genuine desire to raise up a new generation of self-sustaining Cameroonians that will make a difference in their community.

Dependency Theory comes closest to explaining the relationship between HFC and NHCH but with an expanded interpretation. The parent child relationship is evident in the relationship between HFC and NHCH, but the difference comes in the desire of HFC to work toward an independent NHCH and an empowered, self-sustaining community in Northwest Cameroon. If handled appropriately, this "twisted" dependency theory can help researchers understand how HFC can use its dominant position as a

training tool for passing on life-skills. This perspective is more akin to a parent helping its child prepare for independence. As evidenced in numerous answers, NHCH and the surrounding community are learning from HFC visitors. Although many rely on the support coming from HFC, this expanded dependency perspective demonstrates that a dependency working toward independence does not necessarily make the trips ineffective. In fact, it has the potential to make the short-term trips more effective in the long-run.

The board members and volunteers feel a responsibility to help the people of Cameroon even though they were not the cause of the problems. The staff wish to continue this support to help improve their own lives and the lives of the children and community. Dependency theory must be applied in a way that allows a movement beyond the assumption that the poor are being exploited by the rich (Chitereka 2008), and allows for an understanding that the dependency may be interpreted in light of this movement toward independence. The fact that the people of Cameroon welcome the help from the West does not necessarily mean that they want to be dependent. It does mean, however, that they see a benefit in their reliance upon the West to do for them what they feel they cannot or may not be able to do themselves. This naturally forms dependencies, but with a goal of eventual independence from organizations like HFC, these dependencies could be used for positive development in underdeveloped regions of the world.

All those involved with HFC are proud of their work whether or not they can demonstrate that their work is effective. They are certain that in the long-run, their efforts are helping the people of the region move toward positive cultural development.

Even without concrete measurements, those working with HFC and NHCH feel that their work is effective because they see happiness, improved lives, and spiritual development.

As mentioned previously, Matthew Parris (2008) feels that Africa needs Christian missionaries because they offer a rebirth and spiritual transformation. He says that what Christians offer more than humanitarian relief. They also offer a deeper, positive change in the hearts of Africans that is missing in the traditional African lifestyle. The fact that almost all interview participants relied on feelings to express whether or not short-term trips were effective is evidence of this idea. Part of the effectiveness of short-term trips with HFC comes from something deeper than measurable tasks or accomplishments. Returning volunteers have the advantage of seeing some of the results of these intangible effects on their subsequent trips. They often see on-going results such as improved living conditions of the children, positive attitudes, staff cooperation, and spiritual development in the community.

Most interview participants feel that although the trips are currently effective, they could be much more effective if they were more systematic in the planning and evaluation of the trips. The goals for the short-term trips with HFC have not been clearly defined in the past, and this has been a hindrance to HFC's ability to evaluate their effectiveness. However, the current movement toward clarified trip goals will allow for more systematic evaluations and improved effectiveness. The goals must take into account the multiplication of efforts that happens as subsequent trips build upon the goals that previous trips began, and each goal, whether long-term or short-term must be connected in some way with the long-term objectives of the organization.

The tendency only to report the good has to be overcome during this process of improving evaluation. When creating the evaluation tool(s), attention must also be given to cultural differences and the experience of those involved with the evaluation. The ability of HFC, NHCH, and its volunteers to work together will be a critical part of moving toward more effective evaluation methods. With greater trust, as Pomerantz (2004) says, the psychological wall between donors and aid recipients can be removed. This will allow evaluation efforts to be more successful and will help to improve the effectiveness of the short-term trips.

There is a need for more research on the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid. Much of the short-term aid is delivered through short-term trips which have been the focus on this project. Some questions to consider in future research on short-term trips are: Do aid recipients want to be independent? Does the size or purpose of the organization affect whether or not short-term trips are effective? Whose responsibility is it to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term trips? What do donors/supporters think about the effectiveness of short-term trips?

An expansion of this project should involve the study of other organizations that do work similar to HFC in different locations. A quantitative project would be an effective way to compare the evaluation methods, or lack thereof, of many organizations. Some expanded research topics could be the various delivery methods, types of short-term aid, the size and religious affiliation of nonprofit organizations, different locations for aid delivery, and for-profit aid delivery. It could also be valuable to create an evaluation tool for short-term trips based on the results of this initial research, and then compare the evaluations of several different groups and organizations. Future research

such as this would be valuable to the study of how to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid, and could potentially be expanded into comparison research with the existing data on long-term humanitarian aid.

APPENDIX

IRB Approvals

Survey Questionnaires

- Survey Questionnaire (1) In-depth interviews with NHCH volunteer trip participants
- Survey Questionnaire (2): On-location interviews with NHCH paid staff
- Survey Questionnaire (3): Conversations with HFC board members

Consent Forms

IRB Approvals

 <p>TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SAN MARCOS <i>The rising STAR of Texas</i></p>	
<p>Institutional Review Board Application</p>	
<p>Certificate of Approval</p>	
<p>Applicant: Christi Delgatty</p>	
<p>Application Number : 2010S6577</p>	
<p>Project Title: Quantitative Survey</p>	
<p>Date of Approval: 04/23/10 19:36:54</p>	
<p>Expiration Date: 04/23/11</p>	
	
<p>Assistant Vice President for Research and Federal Relations</p>	<p>Chair, Institutional Review Board</p>

 <p>TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SAN MARCOS <i>The rising STAR of Texas</i></p>	
<p>Institutional Review Board</p>	
<p>Continuation/Change</p>	
<p>Certificate of Approval</p>	
<p>Applicant: Christi Delgatty</p>	
<p>Original IRB Application Number : 2010S6577</p>	
<p>Date of Approval: 10/20/10</p>	
<p>Expiration Date: 10/20/11</p>	
	
<p>Assistant Vice President for Research and Federal Relations</p>	<p>Chair, Institutional Review Board</p>



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Christi Delgatty

IRB Application Status

Application Title: Volunteer Participation in Humanitarian Projects in West Africa: A Qualitative Study

Application Number: 2009Z6016

Status: Applicant Requested Continuation

Faculty Approved Submission? Yes

Application Submitted Date	10/01/09 09:51:12
IRB Administrator Sent Request for HSP Training Date	
Application Sent to IRB Chair for Review Date	10/01/09 17:03:53
Application Sent to Reviewers for Review Date	10/01/09 18:37:47
Last Request for Revision Date	10/21/09 13:50:14
Last Application Revision/Update Received Date	10/27/09 18:39:57
Date of Application Approved by IRB Chairs	11/04/09 15:20:46

Reviewers' Evaluation

Reviewers	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2
Approved?	Yes	Yes
Date of Approval	11/04/09 14:15:40	10/27/09 21:35:48

Action Log

10/01/09 09:51:12 delgatty:
Submitted the application.

10/01/09 10:21:07 faculty member Patti Giuffre:
reviewed the application.

10/01/09 17:03:53 irbadmin:
IRB administrator confirmed HSP Training being finished. The applicant and the IRB Chairs were informed that the application was sent for review.

IRB Administrator/Chairs Email Messages to Applicant



Survey Questionnaire (1): In-depth interviews with NHCH volunteer trip participants

Topic: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Short-term Humanitarian Trips

Focus Group: Volunteers working at New Hope Children's Home, Cameroon (NHCH)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal of this project is to gather information from participants about how to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid trips. This interview is meant to allow you the freedom to give honest answers in a confidential setting. The questions are simple and straightforward, so please feel free to answer as you see fit. So to begin...

1. General

How many short-term humanitarian trips have you participated with HFC?

How long ago was your trip(s)?

On average, how long were your trips?

2. Goals

What were the goals for your most recent trip?

Who established these goals?

Were they clearly defined? Why or why not?

3. Effectiveness

Did you have a specific way of evaluating the effectiveness of your trip, whether formally or informally? If so, please explain.

What do you think are the benefits and/or drawbacks of having a more systematic way of measuring the effectiveness of these types of trips?

4. Personal Opinions

Do you think your trip(s) was effective? Why or why not?

Do you think NHCH staff and residents think these trips are effective? Why or why not?

Describe what you think are the long-term and short-term benefits of these types of short-term trips with HFC.

Do you have anything else you would like to share on the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian trips?

Thank you for participating.

Survey Questionnaire (2): On-location interviews with NHCH paid staff

Topic: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Short-term Humanitarian Trips

Focus Group: Native staff members of New Hope Children's Home in Cameroon (NHCH)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal of this project is to gather information from participants about how to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid trips. This interview is meant to allow you the freedom to give honest answers in a confidential setting. The questions are simple and straightforward, so please feel free to answer as you see fit. So to begin...

1. General

How many short-term humanitarian trips have you received, hosted, or participated in at NHCH?

What are the most common reasons for these visits?

On average, how long are these trips?

2. Goals

Do you think these trips have clearly defined goals?

If so, what do you think they are?

Who do you think establishes these goals?

3. Effectiveness

Do you have a specific way of evaluating whether or not these short-term trips are effective, formally or informally? If so, how?

What do you think are the benefits and/or drawbacks of having a more systematic way of measuring the effectiveness of these types of trips?

4. Personal Opinions

Do you think these trips are effective? Why or why not?

Do you think trip participants think their efforts are effective? Why or why not?

Describe what you think are the long-term and short-term benefits of these types of short-term trips with HFC.

Do you have anything else you would like to share on the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian trips? If yes, please do so here.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Survey Questionnaire (3): Conversations with HFC board members

Topic: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Short-term Humanitarian Trips

Focus Group: Board members of HFC, which manages/supports New Hope Children's Home, Cameroon (NHCH)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal of this project is to gather information from participants about how to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian aid trips. This interview is meant to allow you the freedom to give honest answers in a confidential setting. The questions are simple and straightforward, so please feel free to answer as you see fit. So to begin...

1. General

How many short-term humanitarian trips has HFC sent to NHCH?

On average, how many trips does HFC send per year?

On average, what is the length of these trips?

2. Goals

What are the goals for this/these trips?

Who establishes these goals?

Are the goals clearly defined? Why or why not?

3. Effectiveness

Do you have a specific way of evaluating whether or not these short-term trips are effective, whether formally or informally? If so, please explain.

What do you think are the benefits and/or drawbacks of having a more systematic way of measuring the effectiveness of these types of trips?

4. Personal Opinions

Do you think these types of trips are effective? Why or why not?

Do you think trip participants think their efforts are effective? Why or why not?

Do you think NHCH staff and residents think these trips are effective? Why or why not?

Describe what you think are the long-term and short-term benefits of these types of short-term trips with HFC.

Do you have anything else you would like to share on the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian trips?

Thank you for participating.

Consent Form

Research Topic: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Short-Term Humanitarian Trips
IRB Application Numbers: 2010S6577 and 2009Z6016

Please give your consent at the bottom of the page to the following information:

You are invited to participate in a research survey concerning how to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term humanitarian work. The researcher is Christi Delgatty who is a graduate student at Texas State University in the Department of Sociology working on a new research study. Her contact information is: 719-761-5145 or delgatty@yahoo.com. The supervising professor is Dr. Toni Watt. Her contact information is: 512-245-3287 or tw15@txstate.edu.

You were selected as a possible participant through the researcher's contacts list and/or by a referral from a mutual acquaintance. You will be one of up to 30 people participating in this research project which includes focused questions on about your participation in, sending, or receiving of short-term humanitarian trips to NHCH in Fundong, Cameroon. The questions will be primarily about goals, meeting the goals, and overall effectiveness the trip(s) of which you have been a part.

This study will benefit both the education community as well as the non-profit, missionary, and humanitarian aid communities by revealing ways that volunteers currently view and evaluate the effectiveness of their short-term humanitarian trips. A benefit for you is the satisfaction of being part of research that will help identify key factors in making future short trips become more effective.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked a series of open-ended questions by the researcher. You will have the option of skipping any questions you find uncomfortable. You may also stop doing the survey at any time if you like. Skipping questions or early termination of the survey will not jeopardize your relationship with Texas State University or the researcher. If you feel you need counseling or psychological help upon completing this survey, please contact a professional in your community. If you are a Texas State University student or faculty member, there are resources directly available to you by contacting the Counseling Center at counsellngcenter@txstate.edu or 512-245-2208.

All individual information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain strictly confidential. The data collected will be processed by the researcher keeping all answers anonymous with no identifying factors included in either the survey or the data report. The data will be imported into SPSS with appropriate coding, and made available for use in future research and educational projects only.

The Texas State Institutional Review Board has approved this study. You can confirm this approval or get further information by contacting them at ospirb@txstate.edu or 512-245-2314. You may access to the results of this study by contacting Christi Delgatty at the information provided above.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this study. By signing below, you are indicating that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time after signing this form should you choose to do so, and you may print this consent form for your records if desired.

Sign here if you agree to participate in this research project and give your consent for the information you provide to be used in the manner and for the purpose described above.

Name/Date

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VITA

Christina Ruth Delgatty was born in Visalia, California, on September 17, 1974, the daughter of Roy William Delgatty and Gloria Dawn Delgatty. She completed her work at Jack C. Hays High School, Buda, Texas, in 1992, and subsequently completed a Bachelor of Arts degree at Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas, in 1996. After completing a Masters of Divinity Degree at SouthWestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in 2000, she worked for Focus on the Family, 501(c)(3), in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In September 2008, she entered the Graduate College of Texas State.

Permanent Email Address: delgatty@yahoo.com

This thesis was typed by Christi Delgatty.