

Abstracts

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The Concept of Sustainability and Tropical Timber Exploitation in Africa : A Case Study of Cameroon

Ndenecho Emmanuel Neba, Department of Geography, University of Yaounde I, ENS Annex Bambili, PO Box Bamenda, North West Province, Cameroon (email: ndenechon@yahoo.com), using Cameroon as a case study, argues that African countries like most developing countries depend on primary production. Economic growth measured in terms of gross national product is still the most common definition of development and almost always means an increase in consumption of natural resources. The study investigates whether the massive exploitation of tropical timber reserves has, in fact, initiated a sustained development of the sector. It concludes that although tropical timber may be renewable, it is not altogether clear that tropical forests are renewable. This is a semi-renewable resource whose massive exploitation generates a conflict with the principle of sustainability and the concept of sustainable development. It finally recommends that trade in tropical timber should be accompanied by environmental policy and international transfers necessary for mutual gain. This is certainly a solution to the developmental and global environmental problems and to conflicts between the industrialised North, concerned above all with environmental protection, and the developing South whose economic growth is more important.

Social Dialogue Discord: The Views of Key Informants in the Case of Zimbabwe

Oliver Mtapuri, School of Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban 4041, South Africa (e-mail : simbaomtapuri@yahoo.com), reviews the modalities of social dialogue in Zimbabwe to further the understanding of social dialogue in a turbulent political environment and to add to the literature on social dialogue. While trust, commitment and good faith are key ingredients for social dialogue, the author argues that political specificities also matter. In this study qualitative data were collected from key informants (labour practitioners, economists, government officials) who participate in the social dialogue process in Zimbabwe. The survey data point to the fact that social dialogue is a power game, in which partners engage in fights and re-fights for democratic and political space. While social dialogue needs to be institutionalised including the mechanisms of conflict resolution, the project is susceptible to appropriation by the elites, opportunists as well as external forces making détente a distant dream. The paper posits that social dialogue can best be attuned to multiparty democratic environments rather than in bipolar (two party) democracies.

Reparation or Recolonisation? MNCs, Foreign Investors and the New Euro-African Relations

Sheriff Folarin, Department of Policy and Strategic Studies, Covenant University, Canaanland, Ota, Nigeria (Email: sheryffolarin@yahoo.com) writes that the contemporary relationship between Africa and Europe is not simply that between two sovereign and ostensibly equal partners but also of enormous significance for the survival of the two continents. It is quite unlike in the past when it was that of the master and labourer—the labourer providing for the master's survival—from slavery to colonialism and neo-colonialism: developments that bred deep-seated resentment and racial contempt. In this paper the author looks at the new intense economic relationship between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa and appraises this with the view of determining whether the developments are new measures to appease Africa for the centuries of plunder, and cement Euro-African relationship; or whether they are just another set of strategies to further create a stranglehold on the continent economically and make it perpetually dependent. The paper pursues this task by examining the influx and intense activities, in Nigeria, of MNCs and foreign investors which, to many Third World scholars, are effective instruments of neo-colonisation.

Social Marketing and ICTs in Road Safety Promotion: A Pilot Study in South Africa

Mark Ivan Rieker and Simon Burton, both at the Sociology Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg 3201, South Africa (riekerm@ukzn.ac.za; and burton@ukzn.ac.za), recognising road safety as a development priority in South Africa, present the findings of a research project that compares the efficacy of the social marketing development communication approach with that of the education approach favoured by the National Department of Transport in road safety interventions. The research is driven by the identified need to explore the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in development. To this end, road safety “action kits” were developed using social marketing principles and incorporating the use of ICTs. Participants were learner drivers from Pietermaritzburg aged 25 years or more, with access to the required technology. The first experimental group received the action kits while the second experimental group received the educational intervention and a third control group received no intervention. The social marketing group scored higher than the education group across all categories (educational, attitudinal and behavioural). The authors conclude that the social marketing approach should be considered as an alternative to the current pedagogical approach in road safety communication interventions. It also provides the basis for further exploration of the uses of ICTs in development interventions and recognises the usefulness of social marketing in this regard.

Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of the Causes and Effects of HIV/AIDS: A Case Study of University of Ibadan, Nigeria: Implications for Counselling

O. M. Omoegun and Adesoji A. Oni (Emails: dromoegun@yahoo.com, aoluoni@yahoo.com), Department of Educational Foundations, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria, in their study seek to establish undergraduate students' perceptions of the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS. In Nigeria there has been an alarming increase in the number of HIV positive children in recent years and the HIV/AIDS infection rate among Nigerian youth is increasing daily. The rationale for the study was to establish the extent to which undergraduate students understand issues related to HIV/AIDS. The survey consisted of 500 undergraduate students: 255 males and 245 females. The study reveals that students had accurate factual information about HIV/AIDS but at the same time they had some misconceptions. Among other things the study shows that students perceived that HIV/AIDS is having medical, social, religious, political, economic, and psychological effects. Students also identify multiple sex partners, and rape, especially when they are unprotected, as the main cause. In the light of the study the author recommends that relevant stakeholders facilitate HIV/AIDS awareness and necessary attitude change among students both theoretically and practically. The implications for counselling were also stated.

Other Papers

Promoting and Sustaining Self Help Groups: An NGO Experience - Hubby Mathew and K. Velumani