COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Progress or Regression?
How Poverty and Development are Portrayed in Advertising

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to show how organizations portray the developing world and development support in advertisements and how it relates to the criticism existing against development support. What messages are sent to the reader? Do the advertisements contradict the existing criticism against development support or do they reinforce stereotypes and prejudices?

Four organizations are analyzed: the Red Cross; Save the Children; PLAN Sweden; and We Effect. The main focus is on their campaigns and outreaching work connected to these campaigns. The analysis is based on a qualitative discourse analysis of the material complemented by a semiotic approach.

The developing world is presented as old-fashioned and out obsolete. The problems existing there are simplified and insufficient solutions are offered. Children are commonly occurring and often presented as the main receivers of the support even though the support is available for all ages. Women are over-represented, while men are rarely occurring. However, men are indirect portrayed as the perpetrators and thus the notion of men is present, presenting them as dangerous and irresponsible. The women on the other hand are associated with traditional work e.g. cleaning and sewing as well as caring about the family. Despite that the organizations work all over the world the pictures mainly show black women and children.

Overall the developing world is depicted as dependent on others to reach positive development. Difference is accentuated, which could increase prejudices and stereotypes. It is mainly rural environment that is portrayed, which could be seen as depicting the development world as old-fashion and timeless. Positive images of Sweden are used while negative images of other places creating a huge gap between the readers and the people and places presented.
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Introduction

Development organizations play an important role in producing the public view of development and poverty, mainly through media and marketing (Smith, 2004: 742). It is not only a western view of development but the perception of people living in these areas as well that is created. Criticisms against how development organizations portray the ‘developing’ countries have been debated for decades. It has been argued that a negative imagery, especially of Africa, reinforced colonial stereotypes which led to policy changes within the development organizations (Dogra, 2012: 5).

Surveys conducted by Clark (2003) show that organizations believe that their imageries of development have improved – the uses of negative pictures of helplessness and passivity have been replaced with positive and active images. However, the results of the surveys show that even though awareness seems to have increased, little has actually changed. Other studies of organization's imagery have shown uncertain, contradictory, results. E.g. at the same time as empowerment is emphasized, negative images appear and contradict the texts (Smith, 2004).

Representation is used to understand the world. It does not only represent facts but forms them as well. Dogra (2012) argues that we “...derivate our understanding of global poverty from our 'stock of knowledge' which includes what we see, hear, know, believe and feel about it. Representations, which include what aid agencies and NGOs tell us, are key ingredients of this knowledge, our awareness of global inequalities and our very conscience”(1). Thus, how things are represented by development organizations influences people's concept of development as well as geographical areas and the people living there.

Aim & Research Question

The aim of this paper is to show how organizations portray the developing world and development support in advertisements and how it relates to the criticism existing against development support. What messages do the advertisements send to the reader? Do they contradict the existing criticism against development support or do they reinforce
stereotypes and prejudices?

I have chosen to focus on four different organizations and their outreaching work using a qualitative discourse analysis of the material complemented by a semiotic approach. The main focus is on their campaigns and the outreaching work connected to these campaigns. This includes e.g. advertisements, commercials and debate articles. The result is then compared to the criticism against development support. Thus, my aim is to see how the organizations represent themselves and their efforts in their outreaching work, as well as the people and surroundings represented, contra the criticism of development support.

I contacted the organizations I have focused on and asked them about their campaigns - questions about marketing, target audience, distribution of money (international/national), picture policies and awareness of representation. Unfortunately not all organizations responded and the answers I did received are rather insufficient. However the answers I did receive is used as a complement to the analysis.

The main research question I attempt to answer with this essay is:

- How do organizations portray the developing world and development support in their outreaching work, and how is this in relation to the criticism existing against development support?

In order to answer this question I will use the following questions as an outline for the essay.

- How is development support represented by development organizations in campaigns, commercials and other outreaching work?

- Does the outreaching work simplify and/or reinforce stereotypes?

- What is the criticism against development support?

- How is the outreaching work in relation to the critique against development support?
Organizations

Many development organizations that are visible in media have Swedish branches or associations, but the organizations are international. In order to narrow it down I will only focus on the Swedish part of the organizations and their outreaching work, and only on organizations that have a Swedish branch. Thus, the analysis of the Swedish organizations' outreaching work does not necessarily reflect the work of the international organizations or their branches in other countries.

My main focus has been on the campaigns and the material connected to these campaigns. This primarily includes advertisements, commercials, press releases connected to the campaigns and debate articles in Swedish and published on their Swedish webpage. This could however be commercials for international aid, but their main target is a Swedish audience. I have looked at all the campaigns published on the organizations webpages for a period of six months: between 1 May 2012 – 31 October 2012. I have also included how the organizations describe their work and approaches to development on their webpages since I believe it is the foundation for the campaigns.

I have chosen to focus on four different organizations: the Red Cross; We Effect (formerly known as the Swedish Cooperative Centre); PLAN Sweden; and Save the Children. I have chosen these organizations due to that they all operate in Sweden, are well-known organizations, have a large focus on outreaching work and their campaigns and material are easy to access online. They work in several countries and have done so for a long time.

The Red Cross

The Red Cross is an international organization existing all over the world and is based on the same fundamental values and goals in every country, to prevent and alleviate human suffering. The organization is said to be the world's largest humanitarian network and is present in almost every country in the world. Unifying and common for the entire organization are the seven fundamental principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality,
independence, voluntary service, unity and universality\textsuperscript{1}.

\textit{We Effect}

We Effect recently changed name from the Swedish Cooperative Centre. It is founded in Sweden and is a cooperation of about 60 organizations and companies. It works in approximately 20 countries and the main focus is on rural development. The organization is working with self-help and aims at providing people with the tools they need to change their situation themselves. The organization states that two out of three people living in poverty are living in rural areas, and it is towards these people the organization's aid work is directed. In Sweden the organization is mainly working with advocacy and lobbying.

\textit{Save the Children}

Save the Children is an international organization with international values and goals, trying to make UN’s Convention on the Rights of the Child a reality for children around the world. The organization has a large focus on outreaching work and its main work is to drive advocacy and create public opinion on the situation of children. In order to achieve sustainable change the work is done in close collaboration with members, local organizations and international agencies and is based on people's own desire to influence and change their conditions.

\textit{PLAN Sweden}

PLAN is an international organization founded in Great Britain but with an independent Swedish branch. It focuses on collecting money in Sweden to finance, support and further develop the vulnerable situation for children around the world. PLAN Sweden has been working in Sweden for 15 years and is present in more than 50 countries. The organization collects money to finance, support and develop the situation for children in vulnerable positions internationally, as well as opinion-forming nationally.\textsuperscript{2} The organization argues that the most important factor for development is empowerment – for people to understand that they can contribute to a positive development and improve their ways of living\textsuperscript{3}, and that "...those closest to the problems are the best to solve them".\textsuperscript{4} The

\textsuperscript{1}http://redcross.se/teman/
\textsuperscript{2}http://plansverige.org/om-plan
\textsuperscript{3}http://plansverige.org/fragor-och-svar
\textsuperscript{4}Http://plansverige.org/fragor-och-svar (translated from Swedish)
main support comes from child sponsors – private persons that chose to sponsor a child in a development area.

**Clarifications**

To avoid misunderstandings there will follow some short clarifications about things that otherwise could be perceived as ambiguous.

**Development Support**

Different words to describe the organizations work have changed over time. Terms that have been used are e.g. development cooperation, foreign aid, development aid or development assistance. Common for all of the organizations are that they are said to cooperate with organizations and governments in order to achieve further development. However, when describing the work they do, the word support is the one most commonly used. Therefore I have chosen to call it development support throughout the paper, since I believe development cooperation could easily be seen as misguiding the reader and some of the other expressions are out of date.

**Stereotypes**

One of the questions I ask in the outline for this paper is if advertising reinforce stereotypes. Therefore I believe that a definition and short discussion about stereotyping is needed. In order to make sense of the world we need to put things into categories. It is however not until we define people as only a few characteristics this becomes stereotyping. E.g. a person is not only a parent, a lover, or poor - one could be all of them at the same time. According to Hall (1997) stereotyping "...reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature" (257) and according to Dogra (2012) stereotypes are "... a collection of traits thought to characterize or typify a group, in its physical and mental aspects and in its behaviour patterns" (198). Thus, stereotypes reduce and simplify people. It is also said to accentuate differences and arise where inequalities of power exist (Hall, 1997: 258).

**The Developing World**

An expression used throughout the paper is the developing world. I am not fond of this
A way of describing parts of the world but it is used since there is a lack of a better expression. In most countries receiving development support there are possibilities to improve certain things and they are either developing or in need of development. This however does not mean that they have to develop in a ‘western’ direction.

Readers
In order to keep it simple I have chosen to refer to the people watching the commercials or reading the advertising for readers. This involves viewing commercials and pictures and reading the text. Thus, it is the person who the advertising is addressing.
Development

In order to understand development support it is important to understand the concept of development. Development can be defined as "...the organized intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement" (Pieterse, 2010: 3). These interventions and improvement varies depending on e.g. culture, relations of power, historical context and class (4). The definition, or idea, of development has varied over time. Depending on time and theory there are different dimensions of development. Historical and political contexts matter, as well as representation and the cultural preferences (8).

It is not only the representation of development and poverty that have been debated but development support at large as well. Sida, the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation, argues that development support reduces poverty and that “when a rich country … helps poor countries with expertise and money these countries grow, both economically and politically. Then they can strengthen or develop a democratic social order and create conditions for reducing poverty”5. However this gives the impression that it is very easy to do so. Different circumstances require different approaches and the goals can differ as well. Outside expertise do not have to be superior to local knowledge.

Criticism against Development Support

The effects of development support have been contested. One argument against development support is that it is supposed to benefit states and systems that are negative for the economic development and that it distorts economic incentives. Some assistance goes to weak states which fail in the development efforts, and such assistance will reduce the state accountability. Segerfeldt (2011) argues that development support can only work where it is not needed and that we cannot develop political systems in other countries when we dictate what kind of politics they should engage in.

According to post-development theory development harms rather than benefits people and societies. Sachs (1992) as well as Escobar (1992) criticize development for being

5http://www.sida.se/Svenska/Bistand--utveckling/Detta-ar-svenskt-bistandin/
strongly associated with industrialization, urbanization, modernization and ‘westernization’ where the western societies are perceived as the ultimate achievement.

Even the word development has been critiqued since it is said to embed “…the idea that it is a state that can be achieved through technical interventions…” (Warah, 2008: 8). It is said to be a reminder for people living in the ‘developing’ world of what they are not - developed. In order to escape this state they are dependent on support (8). Escobar argues that it is when defining the developing world as underdeveloped, and treating it according to this, that it becomes a problem. He also argues that development creates abnormalities, e.g. poor, illiterate or landless, which then become the problems to treat or reform (1992b: 22-24). Labeling problems, and thus people and places as well, is to simplify the problems occurring. It makes it look like there are similar problems in different areas and that they could be fixed in similar ways. However depending on area the causes can vary and similar approaches are not likely to succeed. Things that are considered problems in one area might not be so in another.

Aid dependency is a way for rich countries to keep control over developing countries. Support given as a loan provides advantages such as low prices for raw material and political influence (Warah, 2008: 12). However these ‘helpful’ measures are argued to help the sending countries rather than the receiving.

Warah (2008) argues that, since the birth of the United Nations, “…the notion of development has become a sacred cow within the international community, one that can not and must not be questioned”. Nevertheless she summarizes some of the criticism occurring against development support during the last decades. She describes it as revolving around three basic arguments:

- The development business and those working in it are “…motivated by the need to impose new systems of domination on people of the Third World…”.
- The development models “… favour the rich at the expense of the poor…” and are therefore one of the reasons to why poverty cannot be eradicated.
- The intentions of “…development practitioners are paternalistic, arrogant and totally ignorant of the reality of poor people’s lives” (7-8).
It can thus be argued that the development support is just a new, different sort of colonialism, only more accepted in society. Warah strongly critiques development support by arguing:

“If results mattered, then many donor agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) would have closed shop years ago when confronted with the face that their work had neither reduced poverty in many countries, nor had it made people living in them less dependent on aid – which ultimately, should be the main objective of any organization aiming to lift people out of poverty”

Warah, 2008: 9

It could hence be claimed that, despite intentions, problems are not solved regardless of how much money is donated. I will not go into why this is, and I do not intend to present solutions to it. But obviously there is strong critique against development support, and it is this criticism that will be compared with the results of the analysis later in this paper.
Advertising

Nearly twenty years ago O’Barr (1994) described advertising for development support. He argued that even though the appeals varied, certain patterns kept occurring.

“… children appear in black-and-white close-ups that bring the audience into an uncomfortable degree of intimacy with the children and their problems. …The copy conveys the message that the reader holds the ability to modify the children’s circumstances and is thus responsible to some extent for their plight. This is compelling advertising; it communicates its message forcefully. … The needy children are depicted without social relationships of any sort. As far as the reader can tell, they have no parents, no siblings, no families at all. There is no indication that their governments provide any sort of assistance. The children stand alone. … Also not addressed in this advertising are the fundamental causes of the problems of world poverty in the first place”.

O’Barr, 1994: 100

How have it differed since? As mentioned before surveys have shown that organizations believe that their imageries of development have improved – the uses of negative pictures of helplessness and passivity have been replaced with positive and active images. Unfortunately however, even though awareness seems to have increased, little has actually changed (Clark 2003).

Common for all advertisements and commercials are that they are directed towards consumers. The difference between advertisements and commercials is that advertisements are sales messages in print whereas commercials are sales messages in electronic media (Berger, 2004: 9). In advertisements and commercials the message is often simple. But does it differ when it comes to advertisements for organizations focusing on development support? Paired opposites are used to explain a far more complex world, e.g. rich and poor, rural and urban, donors and beneficiaries. However, these polarities might be displaced since social reality definitely is more complicated (Crewe and Harris, 2002: 4).

Williamson (1978) argues that advertisement produces knowledge and claims that this knowledge is “…always produced from something already known, that acts as guarantee … for the 'truth' in the ad itself” (99). Could it then be said that organizations reinforce stereotypes and present them as truth in their sales messages?

Why do people donate money?

Advertisements for development support differ from 'traditional' advertisements, since
they, in a way, do not provide the buyer with any products or services. According to traditional economic theory people are driven by self-interest. So what can make them donate money? Are people driven by altruism or do they do it based on selfishness? My aim in this essay is not to explain why people chose to donate money, but presenting a few reasons seems to be in order since it most likely affects the way advertising is shaped.

According to Berger (2004) advertising reminds people of what they do not have. When our basic needs have been taken care of we focus on the things we do not need but want (34-35). It can also function as a reminder for people of what they do have. Williamson (2005) connects consumption with class and argues that "...instead of being identified with what they produce, people are made to identify themselves with what they consume" (13). According to Lester (1998) “...the best advertising may tell us not only something about the product but also something about ourselves” (20). Is it then that 'consuming' support makes people identify themselves in more positive ways?

Another reason for donating money could be that people believe that they will profit from it in the future, e.g. donate money for cancer science since one could be affected by it later in life. An additional alternative is that an organization offers a service that one is using, or has been using, e.g. a religious assembly, a school, or a museum one likes to visit (Breman, 2008: 16). Yet another possibility is to achieve higher status, or to avoid seeming avaricious if turning it down.

It could also be explained by arguing that performing altruistic actions provide a sense of well-being for people. Andreoni (1990) calls this warm glow giving and shows theoretically how this could motivate people to donate money to charity (464). Thus, some people donate money for purely selfish reasons, while others do it because it makes them feel good about themselves and some because they truly care for the cause. Most likely people tend to do it for a mix of the above mentioned.

**Power and Inequality in Advertising**

Cohen (2001) strongly criticizes the way development support used to be presented. He describes it as “pathetic images of starving children, helpless and dependent, perpetuated
a patronizing, offensive and misleading view of the developing world as a spectacle of tragedy, disaster, disease and cruelty” (178) where the people became objects. However, he raises an interesting question: "If people are portrayed as not asking for your help, why should you offer this help?” (180). Portraying people and societies are difficult. Advertisements are usually just a picture and a few sentences and in order to convey the message it sometimes simplifies and uses stereotypical images.

Advertising does not create inequality but “…by circulating and recirculating certain myths advertising shapes our attitudes and beliefs…” (Frith, 1998: 13). Thus, how things are represented in advertisements affects our view of things. According to O’Barr (1994):

“Equality is not precluded as a possible message in the discourse of advertising. Rather, it is simply the case that most messages are about dominance and subordination, about power and submission to it. … Depictions of society in advertisements have their bases in the social order, and the social order is continually re-created by reference to ideals in advertisements and elsewhere about what it should be”

O’Barr, 1994: 4

The developing world is depicted as inferior to ‘the western world’. Even though it does not create inequalities it could be argued to create prejudices and stereotypes since stereotypes are more likely to arise where inequalities of power exist (Hall, 1997: 258).
Methods

When analyzing advertisements it "...involves interpreting both verbal and visual aspects of the advertising text to determine not only the primary sales message but also additional secondary social or cultural messages. Advertisements reflect society … and by undressing or demystifying ads we can begin to see the role advertising plays in the creation of culture” (Frith, 1998: 4). According to Fairclough (2003) media analysis can illuminate three sets of questions about media output: how is the world represented; what identities are set up for those involved in the text; and what relationships are set up between those involved (124).

The relationship between representation, identity and relations are interesting to look at when analyzing advertisements and commercials focusing on development support. How are the people in the ads represented? Which identities or stereotypes show up? Which myths occur? Do the texts and images lack stereotypes as well as myths about ‘the others’? What is the relationship between the reader and the ‘object’, as well as the relationship between sender and receiver?

Representation is said to be "...the production of meaning through language" (Hall, 1997: 28). It connects meaning and culture to language and enables us to refer to things and people. In order to explain how the representation works there are mainly three theories: the reflective; the intentional; and the constructionist approach. The reflective approach functions like a mirror. Language reflects meanings that already exist. The intentional approach on the other hand argues that people impose their meaning to things. Words mean what one intends for them to mean. The third approach is the constructional approach. It acknowledges that neither people nor things can have a fixed meaning in language but it is we who construct it (Hall, 1997: 15, 24-25). Two different variants of the constructionist approach are the semiotic approach and the discursive approach which both will be used as the foundation for the analysis in this paper.

I have chosen to do a discourse analysis complemented by a semiotic analysis since I want to focus on a qualitative research rather than a quantitative. There are similarities as well as differences between discourse analysis and semiotics. As mentioned above they
are both part of the constructionist approach. Discourse analysis focuses on the effects and consequences of representation, its politics, whereas semiotic analysis focuses on how language produces meaning (Hall, 1997: 6). Semiotic analysis is in contrast to discourse analysis since it “…begins by theoretically separating out the realm of the symbolic, including language and other sign systems such as the meaning of images, from the realm of the social. Meaning is produced through an arbitrary system of difference” (Matheson, 2005: 40). Discourse analysis on the other hand includes the interpretation of language (Hesmondhalgh, 2006: 154), and focuses on revealing hidden meanings (121). The intention is that the combination of the two methods will cover more aspects of the texts and images and they will both contribute to a qualitative analysis.

**Discourse analysis**

Discourse is a term that can be used in several ways. According to Fairclough (1995) discourse is seen as “…social action and interaction, people interacting together in real social situations” (18) and is thus focusing on language and how it can be used. It can be seen as a social construction of society which determines what is acceptable in different contexts (Hesmondhalgh, 2006: 122).

Discourse is founded on the idea that the world is constructed by how we perceive it. A shared world of culture is partly constructed by the people in it as well as by institutions such as newspapers and other media. Discourse analysis helps us to describe and evaluate the shared meaning in detail - which representations are dominant, what kind of interactions are there between the people and the world and how is meaning created in different contexts (Matheson, 2005:1). It differs from formal linguistics since there is more focus on language’s central role in social life (3). Matheson argues that “….language is ideological … to the extent that it causes us to think in ways that support the interests of powerful groups” (5). Foucault was concerned with the production of knowledge through discourse rather than meaning through language (Hall, 1997: 42-43) and argued that “…we should not study texts as documents that is part of something else
but as discourse that is part of a network of relations of power and identity” (Matheson, 2005: 9).

According to Nederveen Pieterse (2010) discourse as a method can be used to "...add a level of reflexivity, theoretical refinement and sophistication to development studies, and thus to open up the politics of development to a more profound engagement" (15).

Jörgensen and Phillips (2002) argue that discourse is “...an important form of social practice which contributes to the constitution of the social world including social identities and social relations” (63). The relations between men/women, developing/developed, rich/poor and urban/rural are just a few examples of what are interesting to look at.

**Semiotics**

Semiotics is the theory of signs and it investigates the connection between language and social power (Gripsrud, 2006: 28). These signs could be "...anything that can be used or stand for something else, to deliver some kind of message, to generate some kind of meaning” (Berger, 2004: 127). It has been of great importance for making it clear that our values and believes are social rather than individual in nature. Semiotics can show that it is a cultural process and not just the way things are that creates meaning. The codes we share make us see things in certain ways. It gets us to read texts not only for their obvious content but for what they have to say (Gripsrud, 2006: 39). These codes fix the relations between concepts and signs and stabilize meaning within different languages and cultures (Hall, 1997: 21).

Saussure described language as a system of signs. When words, paintings, pictures etc. are used to express ideas they function as signs. The sign could be divided into two different elements. There is the form, e.g. an image, sound or even object⁶, and then there is the idea or concepts in our mind with which the former was associated. The image in this case thus becomes the signifier and the perception of the picture the signified (Hall,

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⁶ Clothes is an example of objects functioning as signifiers (Hall, 1997: 37)
Saussure also argues that signs do not possess a fixed meaning. It is the difference between signs, or the relationship between them, that defines them (31). Thus, the relation between signifiers and signifies are arbitrary. As Berger (2004) argues, the relation between signifiers and signifieds are "...based on convention and has to be learned: it is not natural and universal” (128).

According to Barthes representation takes place in two separate but connected processes. In the first process the signifiers and the signifieds come together to form a sign with a simple denoted message. In the second stage the first meaning is linked to a second set of signifieds and this level of signification is described as the myth (Hall, 1997: 39). He used semiotics to "...reveal the structure relationships within sign systems and how those relationships generate meanings; thus he was able to show how our common sense understandings are constructed by discourses such as race, nationality, class, or gender” (Lester, 1998: 21).

Cultures change as globalization increases. In the same way culture can change, so can meanings. Meanings are determined by place, time and purpose of communication, and are depending on senders and receivers. That is, who is sending and who is receiving. The sender might be an author, writer, speaker etc. whereas receivers could be viewers, readers or e.g. audience. Signs are always used and perceived in historical, social and cultural situations. Whereas denotative meanings are more or less constant, connotative meanings can vary and is thus of importance to all forms of communication (Gripsrud, 2006: 18-19). Thus, meaning must be interpreted, which resolves in an imprecision in language. The interpretation of the text/images is therefore most likely to differ between the different receivers, as well as between the receivers and the sender (Hall, 1997: 32). Denotative meanings as well as connotative meanings are regulated by codes. However codes are likely to be fluid and can change rapidly. The notion of ‘code’ is therefore crucial to semiology, since it is tied to certain cultural communities that share the conversations. Culture can, at least in this context, simply be defined as a community of codes (Gripsrud, 2006: 19). A reason for the development of the distinction between denotation and connotation is since meanings and signifiers tend to change over time (16: Hall, 1997: 38).
The meaning of a concept or word is often defined in relation to its direct opposite. Binary opposites are most likely to be a pair and can be argued to reduce and simplify meanings. Most often there is a power relation within the pair where one part is dominant, as in male/female, citizen/alien and lower class/upper class (Hall, 1997: 235). In the context of advertising for development support the contradictory pair traditional/modern, urban/rural as well as us/them is interesting to look at and obviously also the relation between developing/developed.
Analysis

The analysis is divided into five parts, one for each organization, followed by a brief summary of the findings. Each part has a short description of the organization, as well as descriptions of the campaigns and how the organizations present their work on their webpages. I have been in contact with the organizations to get their views of representation in advertising, but unfortunately not all organizations have responded. However, the answers I did receive are included in the analysis as well.

Plan Sweden

The organization has been working in Sweden for 15 years and is present in more than 50 countries. It collects money to finance, support and develop the situation for children in vulnerable positions internationally, as well as opinion-forming nationally. The organization argues that the most important factor for development is empowerment – for people to understand that they can contribute to a positive development and improve their ways of living, and that "...those closest to the problems are the best to solve them". The main support comes from child sponsors – private persons that choose to sponsor a child in a development area. However, the sponsoring of a single child instead of the entire community has been criticized. In response to this the money given does not go to one particular child but sponsors projects in the community the child lives in. By improving the standard of living in the community, the child's situation is thought to improve as well.

The projects aim at being sustainable and when Plan leaves an area the people living there are supposed to operate and further develop the projects. The organization clearly disapproves of development support that is conducted by outside experts who decide what is best for the community, since it is said to lead to dependency and passivity. Plan Sweden's focus on outreaching work differs a bit from some of the other...
organizations. The main donors are private persons reached through face-to-face fundraising, fundraising galas on television as well as through advertisements and commercials.

_Because I am a Girl_

During the fall of 2012 Plan has had a campaign called 'Because I am a Girl'. It is an international campaign focusing on 'Pushpa', a 13 years old girl living in a rural community in India. 5 pictures complemented by short texts describe her everyday life and the horrors young females face in India. The main arguments of the campaign are "Because I am a girl: others decide my future; I am too afraid to go to school; others decide over my body; others decide over my life; I will quit school if I get married off".

The first picture is a close-up of Pushpa looking serious and the text briefly describes her situation. The second picture shows Pushpa walking in a deserted street on her way to school. The text says that she has a long way to walk to school and it increases the risk of being raped, which would dishonor her family and force them to move. The third picture shows Pushpa with a woman, assumably her mother, sitting in front of a sewing machine. There is no furniture and the women are sitting on the floor next to the machine. The text says that if Pushpa gets married off there is a risk of her getting pregnant. It also says that child marriages can resulted in pregnancy, and pregnancy related deaths are the most common way for girls between the ages of 15-19 to die. The fourth picture shows Pushpa with two other girls in the same age, sitting on the floor in what seems to be an otherwise empty room. The text says "Give me the chance and support the fight for the rights of girls, where the goal is to educate every girl! With your help, I and other children can take our families out of poverty". The fifth picture shows Pushpa sweeping the floor next to the fireplace, still no furniture visible. The text below says that she wants to finish primary school as her brothers but if she will be forced to marry she will have to quit and that would decrease her chances of succeeding in life.11

When reading the texts where the organization describes their work and vision I was positively surprised. Even though their main income is from child sponsorship,

11http://plansverige.org/flicka/
something that could be seen as patronizing and possessive (Dogra, 2012: 35), the organization seemed to have good values and high awareness about the representation of people living in the areas in need of support. However, after studying the campaign I argue that there are certain things that contradict this.

The pictures show 'Pushpa' by herself or surrounded by other women, there are no men in these pictures. Even though the pictures and texts only focus on 'Pushpa' and other women, it still suggests something about the men in this place. What does it imply about the men living there if young girls cannot walk to school and feel safe, without the risk of being raped? Who are the women, or even girls, forced to marry and conceive children with at a very young age? Dogra (2012) argues that the developing world’s men and women often are stereotyped and naturalized. Either men are invisible or portrayed as 'bad' or 'irresponsible'. While “…men are shown to lack the good male values but have all the bad values and dangers associated with the male in general … women become more virtuous and are valorised for imbibing all good feminine values…” (46).

Without even directly mentioning men in these ads, it still implies that they are dangerous and not trustworthy. The women on the other hand are associated with traditional work e.g. cleaning and sewing as well as caring about the family. It does not have to be negative showing women in advertising - however it creates a distorted picture of the developing world since the women make up an inexplicable number of people (45) and it could create an image of women so busy surviving that they do not have time for other things, e.g. political activism or local development (51).

I would argue that the text quoted above that says to give Pushpa the chance and support to fight for the rights of girls with the help of the reader and to take their families out of poverty do not send the image of the independent, empowered receivers that Plan Sweden is trying to present. It rather reinforces the stereotype of people in the developing world as needy and dependent on others to reach positive development. "Because I am a girl: others decide my future; I am too afraid to go to school; others decide over my body; others decide over my life; I will quit school if I get married off" do not show someone

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12 There is a commercial with Pushpa and her father, but this was released after the 31st of October 2012 and is thus not added to the analysis.
empowered but rather someone who is dependent on others and lacking control over their life.

When looking at the ad I cannot help but wonder if it is the girls that need education? How does one learn how to avoid being raped or how to avoid being married off? It is said that by educating girls they can escape these problems. I agree that information is essential in order to avoid certain things, e.g. avoid getting pregnant and knowing about the consequences it could have at a young age, avoid STDs or the importance of education. However most of the problems described are not problems girls can avoid by relying on knowledge. Nevertheless this could be argued to be the message in the advertisement. In a way it is simplifying the problems when arguing that educating the girls will improve the living conditions as well as putting the blame on them. If they are the answer to the solution, are they the cause for the problems as well?

When reading the text at their webpage the education is not limited to the girls. It is only the ad that focuses on the girls. The education is available for women and men of all ages. This is obviously positive, but in a way it is deceiving the reader since believing that the money donated will go to educating young girls. Using children as symbols and representatives for the problems and need for change could be argued to infantilize the developing world and “… attributes to it in several contradictory ideas associated with children such as 'positive' notions of innocence and a child-like state and 'negative' connotations of paternalism, ignorance and under-development” (Dogra, 2012: 38).

The advertisement sends a distort picture - Pushpa is either isolated from other people or only surrounded by women. This does not reflect the demographics of the area at all. The campaign could be argued to reinforce stereotypes since depicting the girls as victims unable to solve the existing problems without external help. Men are not present in the pictures or mentioned in the texts but the notion of them as dangerous and untrustworthy is very distinct. Women on the other hand are presented as doing ‘traditional women’s work’, e.g. cleaning and sewing. The problems occurring in the area are described as having an easy solution, education, which is simplifying the problems. This is in a way patronizing the people living there – if a problem is so easy to solve, how come it has not
been solved before?

**Save the Children**

The organization has a large focus on outreaching work which they argue that the organization has to have in order to attract new donors as well as keeping the old ones\(^\text{13}\). The organization’s main work is to drive advocacy and create public opinion on the situation of children and collaborates with local and national organizations, since they are said to be the experts on the situation of children in their communities. It is said that it is by strengthening the national forces and initiatives that long-term improvements to children's lives can be achieved\(^\text{14}\). In order to achieve sustainable change the work is done in close collaboration with members, local organizations and international agencies and is based on people's own desire to influence and change their conditions. By empowering partner organizations they can act as reviewers and promoters in relation to the government and administration. The organization claims to raise public opinion and influence policy makers to see the children\(^\text{15}\).

**The Life's Lottery**

This is a web-based campaign aiming to show how the situation differs for children depending on where in the world they are born. By spinning a wheel one can see where one is 'born' this time. When the wheel stops spinning information about illiteracy, child labor, child mortality, child marriage as well as female genital mutilation and poverty show up. If the reader is interested there are texts showing more information about these subjects, e.g. how many people it affects and how Save the Children is working to defeat these problems\(^\text{16}\). By using ICTs such as facebook and twitter the campaign is said to reach further and increase people's knowledge about Save the Children.

There are two advertisements promoting the website\(^\text{17}\). In the first ad one sees a young,

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\(^{13}\)http://raddabarnen.se/SiteCollectionDocuments/Information/Kostnad%20f%C3%B6r%20reklam.pdf

\(^{14}\)http://www.rb.se/OMRADDABARNEN/Pages/default.aspx

\(^{15}\)http://www.rb.se/omraddabarnen/Pages/hurviarbetar.aspx

\(^{16}\)http://www.livetslotteri.se

\(^{17}\)http://www.raddabarnen.se/PageFiles/10265/Bildmaterial.pdf
skinny, black boy standing on an empty street aiming a big gun towards something the reader does not see. In the background there is a ruined car and the street is filthy. The text is saying: "Where would you end up if you were born again?" On the opposite side of the text there is a young, white boy sitting on a rock by the water fishing, the woods showing in the background.

The next ad has the same outline but with different pictures. It shows several men running over a field and there is a big smoke cloud in the background. Thus implies that they are running from the smoke to safety. The other picture shows a blond woman running next to a field, however with a jogging outfit on.

I would argue that these ads represent 'the worse' of certain places while 'the best' of others. The pictures to the right almost look like tourist advertisements: ‘Visit Sweden’, while the pictures to the left clearly indicate ‘Do not go there’. Sweden is represented as an idyll while the other places are represented as disasters. I am not arguing that there are similar problems all over the world, or that they are as severe in all places. However, some people living in Sweden could have worse problems than certain people living in these areas. The ads create a huge gap between the Swedish audience and ‘the others’ in the pictures18.

When looking at the campaign online, there are links to Wikipedia and Flickr. By using these links the reader could easily find out more about the places and get a more subtle opinion. However, this presupposes that the reader first sees the ads, then visits the webpage and after that decides to read further about this. There is a big risk of people only seeing the ads and thus only understanding the places in a stereotypical way.

The ads are using binary opposites to position themselves. According to Ashcroft (2000) binary positioning are problematic since "...they suppress ambiguous or interstitial spaces between the opposed categories, so that any overlapping region that may appear, say, between the categories man/woman, child/adult or friend/alien, becomes impossible according to binary logic..."(19). Dogra argues that binaries suppress in-between spaces,

18 http://www.rb.se/press/annonsmaterial/Pages/default.aspx
and thus construct more difference or 'distance' (26).

Difference is emphasized throughout the campaign. But why is difference important? According to Hall (1997) "...‘difference’ matters because it is essential to meaning; without it, meaning could not exist"(234), and that “...the 'Other' is fundamental to the constitution of the self, to us as subjects..." (237). Dogra (2012) argues that development organizations "...construct and connect the developed and developing worlds through a dualism of 'difference' and 'oneness' in their public messages"(25). The opposites highlight the difference between the people in the developing world and the reader without viewing the similarities. This could easily increase prejudices and stereotypes. O’Barr (1994) argues that when “…drawing indifferences about the advertised product, what is to stop the reader from drawing inference about people and other cultures as well?” (45). In this case this becomes even more difficult to prevent since reflecting the society in a misleading way.

**The World is Upside Down – Help us turn it Right Again!**

The organization argues that "Money that could be used to teach all children to read and write is spent on war. The EU Parliament legislates on duties and taxes, but in eleven member states it is still legal to hit children. The world is upside down". The campaign looks at four different areas where children are hurt: corporal punishment; trafficking; children in institutions and prisons; and bullying. The campaign is to highlight the work Save the Children does and tell about the problems children around the world is facing. To each area there is a picture connected.

The first picture represents corporal punishment. It shows a boy standing close to a wall in what looks to be his bedroom. The rest of the picture is 'upside down' – the bed and the rest of the furniture are in the ceiling. The second picture represents trafficking. It shows a girl placed on a bed while the rest of the room, including a man, is upside down. The third picture shows a dirty room with five children in it, and the toilet and sink are in the ceiling. The picture is used to represent children in institutions and prisons. The last picture, representing bullying, shows a girl sitting by herself at a table while several other

children are sitting at another table that is upside down.

The ad is highlighting problems children can have. They do not represent all the problems as distant ‘foreign’ problems but as problems children have despite origin. The pictures are quite obviously connected to the campaigns slogan – the world is upside down. The only thing I could comment on is that two of the problems are problems that definitely occur in Sweden as well: corporal punishment and bullying. The pictures connected to these problems show much nicer surroundings – everything looks clean, the children looks health and are dressed nicely, while in the other two pictures the surroundings are rather filthy and the children are dirty. I am not saying that trafficking or children in prisons should be portrayed in a nice way, but especially the picture showing children in institutions and prisons looks miserable and I do not believe it has to look like this\textsuperscript{20}. The school showing is rather the opposite; I have never seen a school look so clean and the children so tidy. In a way the ‘others’ problems are portrayed as worse the problems occurring in Sweden. Trafficking, as well as other sexual abuse of children is occurring in Sweden as well. However, in the ad this is rather presented as a foreign problem.

\textit{Answer from Save the Children}

The campaigns are according to employees at Save the Children directed towards a wider public audience, between the ages of 20-60. Their goal is to present people in a respectful manner in their campaigns with great variation in age, ethnicity, gender and status. They want the message depict to be ‘a real and true moment’, preferably from a child’s angle.

It is surprising how the two campaigns can differ that much. While the first campaign highlights the differences between ‘us and them’ the second campaign focuses on children’s issues without regard of origin, age or gender. The ads for \textit{The Life’s Lottery} are presenting the ‘developing world’ as disaster areas while depicting Sweden as an idyll. In the picture presenting bullying in \textit{The World is upside down}, the surroundings and other parts of the child’s life seem ok and when looking at the picture of children in institutions everything is depicted as bad. The Swedish problems appear to be less severe than the ‘foreign’ problems. The surroundings in Sweden are appearing to be cleaner and

\textsuperscript{20}http://www.rb.se/press/kampanjer/Pages/varlden_ar_upp_och_ner.aspx
nicer looking than in real life, while the pictures representing the developing world are highlighting problems.

**We Effect**

The organization is working with self-help and argues that they provide people with the tools they need to change their situation themselves. The organization states that two out of three people living in poverty are living in rural areas, and it is towards these people the organization's support is directed. In Sweden the organization is mainly working with advocacy and lobbying.

Throughout the text describing the organization the cooperation between We Effect and local organizations in developing countries is highlighted. However, the word most commonly occurring is support. The organization supports this, the organization supports that. Is the term cooperation really appropriate when the support seems to go just one way?

There are mainly two posters that have been used in the last year to show We Effect’s work. The first picture shows a woman and a child putting stones in a bucket. In the background there is another woman. The text says "Do you think that the world's poor should manage on their own? So do we"\(^21\). The second picture shows several women working on a field and the text says "We help poor fight poverty"\(^22\).

The pictures only show black women and children. However, the organization works in 24 different countries, in Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa\(^23\). Is it only in Africa there are poor people? And is it only the women living there that are poor? Since working in different areas, should not the advertisements reflect this better? When describing their work on their webpage there are several pictures to illustrate the work the organization does. However, there is not one single white person in any of the pictures – the majority is black people. According to the World Bank’s report *Attacking Poverty* the majority of people living in poverty is not living in Africa, which could easily be assumed when watching these ads. According to their figures 24 percent of the people living on less than


\(^23\) [http://www.utangranser.se/det-har-ar-vil/](http://www.utangranser.se/det-har-ar-vil/)
$1 are living in sub-Saharan Africa while Asia hosts more than 65 percent\(^{24}\).

Warah (2008) argues that the international focus on Africa rather than other parts of the world might “…have to do with the fact that African problems are easier to “compartmentalize” (10). It might seem easy to identify the problems existing in parts of Africa and put them in different folders than e.g. problems occurring in eastern Asia.

Once again men seem to have disappeared while the women are presented as working hard while at the same time taking care of children. Since the organization focuses on rural development it is understandable that the pictures show a rural environment. However the distance between the developing world and the developed world could be enhanced by showing rural environment since it portrays the developing world as timeless and old fashioned (Dogra, 2012: 68).

The developing world is depicted as traditional. The picture of women working on a field seems old-fashioned and the way they work seems to be out of date. There are no modern appliances and nothing indicates that the pictures are contemporary, e.g. clothes or surroundings. Women and children are the only people present which sends a distort picture. Are there no men? Or are the men living there letting the women do all the hard work? Since working in different areas this should preferably be shown in the advertising as well. The ads now show women in Africa. This is misleading since the organization is working in more than 20 countries in different parts of the world. It sends a message to the reader that it is in the ‘underdeveloped Africa’ that problems are occurring.

The Red Cross

The organization is said to be the world's largest humanitarian network and is present in almost every country in the world. Their goal is to prevent and alleviate human suffering\(^{25}\). Unifying and common for the entire organization are the seven fundamental principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and


\(^{25}\)http://redcross.se/om-oss/
During the period of time I have chosen to conduct the analysis the Swedish Red Cross had two current campaigns. One campaign is focusing on family reunification and the other one focusing on involuntary solitude.

**Family Reunification - Help Children Find their way Home!**

The campaign for family reunion has mainly three different ads. It focuses on families being separated from each other due to conflicts, wars and disasters. One of the ads in this campaign shows a picture of four people: a man and a woman in their 30s, a girl and a baby. The way they stand makes one assume it is a family. The baby is sitting in the man's lap and the woman has her arms around the girl. It looks like a picture taken at home by a friend or a relative. The only thing that differs from a photo from a photo album is that the picture is torn so the older child, the girl, is 'alone' on one half of the picture. The text ask the reader to help children find their home and to become a monthly donor. There is another picture with the same text as well, showing a man and a woman in their 30s, a boy who is about 10 years old, another child that is about three and a baby. The woman is standing next to the man holding the baby and the young child stand between the two adults. The older boy stands next to the man and the picture is torn so the boy ends up alone on one side. As with the previous mentioned ad, this looks like a family and a photo taken from a family album.

Common for both these ads are that there is a text published about the reunification on the Red Cross webpage, along with other stories about how the Red Cross has helped to reunite families. There are also some stories about families still separated. When looking at the ads one assumes that it is the children that are missing since they are torn away from the rest of the family in the pictures. However when reading the texts related to the ads it shows that it is not the children that are missing in the real life but in both cases it is one of the parents. The way the picture is torn implies that the child was the one being separated from the family which is not the case. The pictures are most likely torn the way

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26 [http://redcross.se/teman/](http://redcross.se/teman/)
27 [http://redcross.se/PageFiles/3473/RodaKorset_190x125.pdf?epslanguage=sv](http://redcross.se/PageFiles/3473/RodaKorset_190x125.pdf?epslanguage=sv)
they are to have a larger effect on the reader. A missing child is more likely to attract attention by the reader than a missing parent.

The other ad for the campaign, 'Have you seen Samuel', focuses on a father trying to find his son that disappeared after the earthquake in Port-au-Prince. This ad is produced as a wanted-note and the text is written in a font resembling a hand-written text. There is a wrinkled black-and-white photo of a serious looking boy, presumably Samuel. It is a close-up and he is looking straight into the camera. The text tells the reader how Samuel looks and what he was wearing the day of the disappearance. Connected to the ad is a touching commercial where the father tells the story about what happened the day Samuel disappeared and his struggles to find his son.

This is one of the few ads portraying an urban area; however all the pictures are showing the city only days after the earthquake and the chaos that existed then. This is also one of the few cases where a man is one of the main characters and is furthermore portrayed as caring for his child, which is an attribute most commonly ascribed to women in advertising otherwise.

Never alone
The organization's vision is that no one should have to be involuntarily alone. By supporting patients and families in hospitals across Sweden, visiting lonely elderly, having a hotline available for people to call and provide homework assistance for children they hope to prevent people from feeling lonely.

The ad shows 'Åke', an older man properly dressed in pullover, shirt and a tie. The background shows an ordinary 'Swedish' living room. What makes the picture interesting is that 'Åke' is shown in 4 different 'poses' which implies that the only one he has to keep him company is himself. The picture shows three Åke sitting by the table having coffee and cookies while the fourth is standing ready to serve more coffee. The text says ”Give Åke someone other than himself to spend time with”, and argues that many elderly

29 http://redcross.se/PageFiles/3473/3_RODK80_Efterlysning_lapp.pdf?epslanguage=sv
30 http://redcross.se/teman/familjeaterforening/las-om-fler-familjer-som-fatt-aterforenas/i-jordavningen-forsvann-samuel/
31 http://redcross.se/PageFiles/3473/RK_80x88_text.pdf?epslanguage=sv
people suffer from loneliness. By asking the reader to contribute, it is said that more people could be visited.\textsuperscript{32}

The next ad resembles the previous mentioned ad with Åke. This one shows 'Eva' laying a hospital bed, 'Eva' sitting next to the hospital bed, 'Eva' fixing the pillow and 'Eva' bringing coffee to the other 'Evas'. The text says to “Give Eva someone other than herself to share her concerns with” and argues that many people suffer through long hospital stays with no family at their side and by contributing more people could be helped.\textsuperscript{33}

There are two commercials connected to involuntary solitude as well showing two different people in different situations. One with an older man placed in a hospital bed and one can see his daughter accompanied by her husband and two children coming with flowers and asking how he is. The ‘weird’ part is that she has the same voice as her father, and so do the other characters in the clip. Suddenly they all disappear and the man is left alone in the hospital. The second video is an older woman having a family get-together. The grandchildren are running around, the adults are sitting by the table talking and the woman socializes with everybody. However, as with the previous commercial, everything that is said is said with her voice and suddenly all the people disappear and she is sitting by her kitchen table alone. It gives the viewer the notion that they are alone and just dreaming about how it could be, how they want it to be.\textsuperscript{34}

These ads have a Swedish focus. They are directed to help people living in Sweden. However, is it only old or sick people who are alone? Even though the focus here is on people in Sweden, it is still portrayed as certain groups are the only ones to have these problems. Are there not young people in Sweden that feel alone? The ads are still using stereotypes to represent people and according to these ads you are more likely to be lonely if you are old or sick. Would lonely, healthy, young people contact the organization to receive help or does it create a stigma when not 'fitting the profile'?

\textsuperscript{32}http://redcross.se/PageFiles/3473/RK_248x372_textobild.pdf?epslanguage=sv
\textsuperscript{33}http://redcross.se/PageFiles/3473/RK_248x178_Eva.pdf?epslanguage=sv
\textsuperscript{34}http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3kRgqGZyJ0&feature=autoplay&list=PLD783E1533715089D&play next=2
This campaign differs from the rest of the campaigns since it focuses on a Swedish audience and is not directed to fight poverty but focuses on loneliness. One might ask if it is relevant in this paper since not focusing on foreign development. However, I chose to analyze all campaigns during this period of time and I consider it refreshing that the organization is focusing on ‘Swedish’ problems and not just problems ‘others’ have.

*Answer from the Red Cross*

The response I got from the Red Cross was that all images, as well as text, always and under all circumstances should show respect for the people in the ads. The message was said to be important and the pictures are chosen to express those messages. Each image is important since it represents and contributes to an overall picture of what the Red Cross stands for.

The Red Cross has succeeded in terms of keeping the respect for the persons depict in the advertisements. However, the ads focusing on family reunification are slightly misleading the reader since giving the impression that it is children who are missing, but overall they are objective and do not present the people depict as victims or needing to rely on other to solve their problems. When just glancing the ‘Have you seen Samuel-ad’ one might get the impression that it is just another ‘traditional’ ad for development – a black and white picture of a child staring sadly into the camera, as to say ‘Help me’. However when reading the ad and the material connected to it, it turns out to refute other stereotypes. A devastated father searching for his child is not a common image of the developing world’s men. While the picture reinforces the stereotype of the development world as passive and in need of help the story behind it refutes stereotypes.

Never alone differs from the other campaign. It is only focusing on Sweden and the problem with involuntary solitude is presented as a Swedish problem. However, the problem is closely connected to two categories of people: old and sick people. In a sense the organization is stereotyping this problem as to only occur among old and sick. It is possible that these are the largest groups but these are problems that most likely occur within every age group and despite health.
Conclusion

In order to discuss and compare how the outreaching work is in relation to the criticism against development support a short repetition of the criticism against the organizations work follows. This will then be compared with the criticism of development support at large. I have only focused on some of the main findings and the criticism below is not applicable to all the advertisements I analyzed.

The main criticisms based on the analysis are:

- Men are rarely occurring. However the notions of them are presented as dangerous and irresponsible.

- Women are given traditional roles as mothers and taking care of the household.

- People in the developing world are portrayed as dependent on others to reach positive development.

- The problems existing in the developing world are presented as easy to fix, with clear solutions on how to do so.

- Children are often presented as the main receivers of the support and used as symbols for the entire developing world.

- The pictures mainly show black women and children. All the organizations I analyzed work in several countries all over the world, but this is not reflected in the advertising.

- It is mainly rural environment that is portrayed, which could be seen as depicting the development world as old-fashion and timeless.

- Positive images of Sweden are used while negative images of other places creating a huge gap between the readers and the people and places presented.

The main criticisms against development support are:

- Development is being strongly associated with ‘westernization’ where the western societies are perceived as the ultimate achievement.
• It benefits states and systems that are negative for the economic development and that it distorts economic incentives.
• It is a reminder for people living in the developing world of what they are not. It is when defining the developing world as underdeveloped, and treating it according to this, that it becomes a problem.
• Problems are simplified and clustered together.
• The development business and those involved are motivated by dominating people living in the developing world.
• The development models favor rich at the poor’s expense.
• Results are not achieved. If they were, poverty would be eradicated or at least decreasing.
• Aid dependency is used as a way to control the developing countries.

**Discussion**

Development is debated to be equal to westernization. In advertising it is mainly a rural environment that is portrayed, which could be perceived as obsolete and old-fashioned. It could thus be argued that advertising is emphasizing the differences and conveying a perception of modernization or westernization as something superior to rural, traditional living. This generates a distance between the ‘two worlds’ which do not necessarily have to exist. None of the campaigns portray the developing world as modern or in an urban setting. There are some sequences showing Port-au-Prince after the earth quake, but it is rather exposed as a disaster area than as a city. Hence there are no ads that portray the need for development in a ‘modern’ city in the developing world. The lack of urban areas and modern surroundings in the advertising is depicting the developing world as less developed than it actually is. This could be perceived as a way to maintain the prejudices of the developing world as old-fashioned and out-of-date while simultaneously highlighting difference.

It is argued that results are not achieved. If they were, poverty would be eradicated or at least decreasing, and if development support were to achieve the goals there would be no need to advertise for it. The fact that the advertising continues shows that the results are
Identifying the developing world as underdeveloped is argued to be a reminder for people living in the developing world of what they are not. Since I have focused on advertising addressing a Swedish audience the ads are not likely to serve as a reminder for the people living in the developing areas. However the advertising acts as a reminder for the reader. The developing world is commonly depicted as inferior and in need for help. Areas in need of development are in the limelight while other, more developed areas are concealed which creates a distort picture of the developing world.

Some ads represent 'the worse' of certain places while 'the best' of others and thus emphasizing differences. E.g. the Life’s Lottery is using binary opposites to position the differences. The opposites elucidate difference between people in the ads and the reader without demonstrating similarities. This could create a distance between the reader and the people depict and easily increase prejudices and stereotypes.

Children and women are commonly occurring in advertisement for development support. Children are often presented as the main receivers of the support even though the support is available for all ages. Using children as symbols for the developing world could be argued depicting the development world as in need of rescue and unable to manage on its own. This creates a paternalistic view of the people living there and portrays the reader as superior since being able to contribute to the development for others. The developing world is presented as dependent on others to reach positive development, and solutions to the problems are presented as well. This could be seen as simplifying the problems and once again patronizing the people living there.

None of the campaigns present the families as united. If the children are not portrayed alone, at least one of the parents is missing. This creates a notion of incomplete families in the developing world. Women are over-represented in the ads, while men are rarely occurring. However, there is a clear distinction between the different representations of men. Without even directly mentioning men, it is still implied that they are dangerous and irresponsible. In Because I am a Girl men are more or less presented as the cause for the problems existing there, in The World is Upside Down the only man present is associated
with trafficking and in We Effect’s advertising men are not present at all. There is one character that stands out when it comes to portraying men - the father in *Have you seen Samuel?* He is presented with qualities most commonly applied to women in advertising. The women on the other hand are associated with traditional work e.g. cleaning and sewing as well as caring about the family. Applying certain values to a gender could easily create or reinforce prejudices.

The developing world is presented as dependent on others to reach positive development. This could however be in order to get people to contribute – why would people donate money if they do not believe it is needed? There is often presented a solution to the problems as well, which could be seen as simplifying the problems and patronizing the people living there. When offering quick solutions to problems the campaigns are hinting that the people living there, as well as their government could not fix the problems but the organization knows how to do it and thus present themselves as superior. Problems are simplified and clustered together. By labeling people and problems from an external perspective matters earlier not considered problems can suddenly be perceived as it. The development business and those involved are said to be motivated by dominating people living in the developing world. Thus, the idea that the developing world needs to be rescued seems to be anchored in theory as well as in advertising.

Not all problems are presented as distant ‘foreign’ problems but as problems occurring in Sweden as well. However the need for development in Sweden is represented in a more subtle way than ‘foreign’ problems. The developing world is reduced to a few simple characteristics with clearly identified problems, while Sweden is portrayed as far more advanced and versatile.

**Final conclusion**

The main question I attempted to answer with this essay was how organizations portray the developing world and how it relates to the criticism existing against development support. As an attempt to shortly answer this I would argue that, with exceptions, the organizations emphasize differences between the reader and the people depict in the ads.
Sweden is almost presented as a utopia while the developing areas represent disorder and insecurity. The organizations advocate modernization and westernization when presenting the developed world as something superior to rural, traditional living. As an addition to this the problems presented in the ads are simplified which results in inadequate solutions. Accentuating difference is a recurring theme throughout the analysis, and with the perception of difference originates a power struggle - the developing world is over and over presented as inferior to the ‘developed’ world.

In the introduction I asked how development support is represented and if it reinforces stereotypes. As mentioned above the developing world is constantly presented as inferior and development support is presented as an easy solution. When looking at the people occurring in the ads several stereotypes can be seen. Children are most commonly pictured alone while women are presented as working hard or as victims. The lack of men is substantial and families are rarely showed united. Positive images of Sweden are used while negative images of other places creating a distance between the readers and the people and places presented. The developing world is reduced to a few simple characteristics with clearly identified problems, while Sweden is portrayed as far more advanced and versatile. Even though that in itself does not create inequalities it could be argued to create prejudices and stereotypes since stereotypes are more likely to arise where inequalities of power exist.

Nowhere in the advertisements or on the webpages are the problems with portraying people and societies emphasized. The images sent to the reader are presented as the truth and the ads function as a reminder for the reader of the underdevelopment of the developing countries. Areas in need of development are in the limelight while other, more developed areas are concealed which creates a distort picture of the developing world. The organizations present the developing world in a stereotypical way to suite their purposes rather than giving an unbiased view of the areas and people living there.
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