

Framing Development: Community and NGO Perspectives in Mali

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, this paper analyzes how development is articulated by three distinct groups of actors, donors/development sponsors, facilitators/program staff, and the beneficiaries/local village residents, within a specific development situation in the Ouelessebougou region of Mali, West Africa. The findings indicate some overlap among these groups regarding what the development process is intended to produce, i.e. self-reliance. However, there are important disparities in the specific meanings attached to development by each group of actors. Similarly, there was little consensus regarding stakeholder views of the role that they played in the development process. This case study suggests that persistent failures with development can be attributed, in part, to this incongruence of approaches and worldviews and concludes with several recommendations for a more nuanced and responsive approach.