

***PARTNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES: A THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT DIAGNOSIS OF THE TOLE TEA PROJECT***

**Patricia Ntendeme NKWETEYIM**

Department of Performing and Visual Arts, University of Buea, Cameroon

**Abstract**

Partnership and accountability are entrenched in development policies especially with the much drive for sustainability. Partnership assures the collaboration of players in any development project as well as advocates fair treatment of all stakeholders. The reality of these concepts which guarantee the possibility of local control and joint ownership of all the processes of any project is mostly in theory. In practice it is matched by unequal power relations especially in projects established in rural areas. Using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) as well as the Theatre for Development methodology on the privatized Cameroon Tea Estates (CTE), this article contends that partnership and accountability are vital development concepts for initiatives that have the people at heart and aim at sustainability. It argues that the difficulties that the Tole people are facing today and the threat on sustainability of the CTE are due to the non- or minimal existence of a good development plan. It is the hypotheses of this paper that accountability is engendered when partnership is established at the very beginning of a project and when there is accountability, the participation of all is automatic. Secondly, the participatory engagement of all the stakeholders will lead to sustainable fairness for all as well as the sustainability of the project.

**Keywords:** *Partnership, Accountability, Development, PAR, Tfd, Sustainability.*

**Background**

Tole is a small but densely populated tea-growing village on the outskirts of Buea. This community is the home of the Cameroon Tea Estates (CTE), originally established by the Germans in the late 1800s and later taken over by the Government of Cameroon. When the Germans were defeated in the First World War, the British allowed them to come back and manage their plantations for economic reasons. However, in 1946, the Nigerian Legislature, which extended to the British Cameroon, passed two ordinances. The first allowed the Governor of Nigeria, who doubled as Governor of British Cameroon, to purchase German-owned lands while the second created the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) to take over the ex-German plantations (Tande 2006a, 2006b). It was this corporation that the State of Cameroon managed until October 2002 when the tea

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

sector was privatized and given to a Cameroonian business magnate, who then changed the name to Cameroon Tea Estates (CTE). Since that time, it has been a story of one misery to the other for the people of Tole.

The claim in this article is that partnership and accountability are vital development concepts for initiatives that have the people at heart and aim at sustainability. It argues that the difficulties the Tole people are facing today and the threat on sustainability of the CTE are due to the non- or minimal existence of a good development plan. Following the Theatre for Development intervention undertaken in Tole in April 2017 and a follow-up of events there in 2020, it is pertinent to highlight the ways the tea estate has affected the indigenous people who owned the land and the local population that are part of the cheap labour hired for the project as well as the very aspects wherein the operations of the project need improvement. But first, knowledge of what the terms ‘partnership’, ‘accountability’ and ‘development’ mean is of paramount importance.

### **Partnership**

Generally speaking, a partnership is an arrangement in which two or more parties formally agree to manage or run a business and share its profits and losses. The UN (2013, p.4) defines partnership as “voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits.” Mohiddin (1998, p.5) considers partnership as the “highest stage of working relationship between different people brought together by commitment to common objectives, bonded by long experience of working together, and sustained by subscription to common visions”. Though Bailey and Dolan (2011, p.33) view partnership in terms of “equality, respect, reciprocity and ownership,” they indicate that some partnerships can be “abusive and unequal in practice”. Whatever the case, partnership should be the ground upon which all parties benefit from a project, are treated with respect, and are free to share ideas appropriate for development or advancement. It is by so doing that the sustainability of the project can be guaranteed.

### **Accountability**

Accountability has to do with stakeholders being aware of happenings in the organization they are involved in. According to Blagescu and Young (2005, p.4), accountability refers to a chain of relationships in which actors are “accountable upwards (to donors and other actors that have formal authority over the organisation); downwards (to target groups and beneficiaries but also to other groups and individuals that the organisation might affect directly and indirectly); and inwards (to organisational missions, vision and values)”. In this same light, Bovens (2007, p.447) explains that accountability is “a relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences.” To Hunt (2002, as cited in Bivins, 2006, p.21), accountability is the readiness or preparedness to “give an explanation or justification to relevant others (stakeholders) for one’s judgments, intentions, acts and omissions when appropriately called upon to do so” as well as to “have one’s actions judged by others and, where appropriate, accept responsibility for errors, misjudgments and negligence and recognition for competence, conscientiousness, excellence and wisdom . . . [and] to change in the light of improved understanding gained from others”. These definitions attest to the fact that accountability is a two-way street. It is not only employees who are expected to give accounts; employers and managers ought to as well.

### **The Concept of Development**

Development is a process that culminates in growth, progress, and positive change in a society through the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components. It is also a “comprehensive societal process” that moves underdeveloped nations from “economic backwardness and slow sociocultural change” to a dynamic state that is characterized by “sustained economic growth and sociocultural and political transformation that improves the quality of life of all members of society” (Rabie, 2016, p.8). Sen (1999, p.8) sees development as freedom. That is, ‘the “capabilities” of persons to lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value’. To him, development gives people the kind of freedom that makes them have the opportunity to exercise their reasoned agency. From these definitions, and in line with Mathur (1986, p.14), it is evident that the “goal of development is not to develop things but to develop man.”

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

A kind of development this article is interested in is participatory development (PD). This is the kind of development that is “underlined by participation as an overriding operational principle that underpins all development activities” (Dipholo, 2002, p.73). According to Castelloe (2002, p.130), “participatory development focuses on maximizing community participation in all stages of an improvement effort. It refers to the active participation of people in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of community development projects, activities and policies that affect them”. He further contends that participation, social justice, capacity building, community control and grassroots organization are the core of participatory development while the core attitudes and behavior of PD are: belief in everyday folk, drawing out people’s wisdom, listening, ensuring it comes from the people and building relationship (pp.133-134). Thus, PD is a development style that promotes, supports and sustains consensus, equity, responsiveness, broader participation, effective decision making and ownership among stakeholders without eliminating the fact that there is a sponsor and beneficiary in cases where such applies. It builds a mutual reinforcement between all involved for greater development realizations.

Another kind of development this article is interested in is integrated rural development (IRD). Rural development according to the World Bank (1975), is a strategy designed “to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural poor.” It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest (small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless) among those seeking a livelihood in the rural areas. A programme of rural development is expected to include a mix of activities plus programmes to increase agricultural productivity, provide employment, improve health, education and infrastructure, expand communications and improve housing. For a rural development programme to be successful, some form of ‘coordinated development’ is necessary at the rural level. This is where the concept of integrated rural development (IRD), which emphasizes the coordination of the “various sectoral actions of the state at the local level,” comes in. According to Baah-Dwomoh (2016, p.5), IRD is “a complex and multisectoral model whose success depends on the interaction of multiple factors and performance of different entities, whose integration are a necessary prerequisite to effective implementation”. IRD has its roots in endogenous development, which is “based

on local peoples' own criteria of development and takes into account the material, social and spiritual well-being of peoples. It takes local cultures as a critical starting point and posits those cultures as a central framework for social progress and cross-cultural exchanges" (Boonzaaijer and Apusigah 2008, p.9). Keane (1990, p.292) notes that the endogenous approach "represents a significant change from investment on physical capital to investment in developing the knowledge, the skills and the entrepreneurial abilities of the local population". The main emphasis of endogenous development is therefore on the "importance of participation, empowerment of local actors and unlocking of local resources" (Nemes 2005, p.22). Nemes further posits that integrated rural development is an ongoing process involving outside intervention and local aspirations; aiming to attain the betterment of groups of people living in rural areas and to sustain and improve rural values; through the redistribution of central resources, reducing comparative disadvantages for competition and finding new ways to reinforce and utilise rural resources. It tries to identify how "local development and/or the reconfiguration of rural resources can be helped by the centre; for the benefit of rural localities; at the same time maintaining rural values for the future" (Nemes 2005, p.23).

Participatory and integrated rural development would culminate in sustainable development. That is development that takes into consideration the livelihood and sustenance of not only the present generation but also of future generations to come. Brundtland (1987, p.43) succinctly states that sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". For any development to be sustainable, there must be "sustained cultural and environmental revivalism and preservation" (Nkweteyim 2019, p.25). Thus, any development initiative, like that of Tole, that fails to take into account the culture, environment, participation and wellbeing of the people (present and in the future) is not sustainable. And if going by Mathur's postulation that the "goal of development is not to develop things but to develop man," then, there is need that man be placed at the centre of every development project. By so doing, the concepts of participation and accountability would be natural occurrences, thus curbing marginality and unsustainability.

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

As stated earlier, partnership and accountability are vital development concepts for initiatives that have the people at heart and which aim at sustainability. This is because people who work together in a venture in which they all have stakes, will not only put in place systems of checks and balances (accountability), but will also do all in their power, to ensure that they or the ventures do not fail. On the contrary, if the initiative is from outside and without the people involved as stakeholders, they would never see the projects as theirs, and therefore, would expect only those who initiated and established it to sustain it (Okam 2014, p.2, Nkweteyim 2019, p.91). Thus, if partnership is voluntary, collaborative, mutually respectful and beneficial, then, there has never been any partnership in the case of the Tole Tea Estate. There have instead been diverse impositions on and neglect of the right of ownership and sense of belonging of the people on whose land the estate is established. There has also never been any form of accountability to the masses (workers and the indigenes who are affected directly or indirectly by the project). Nobody seems to have ever bothered to explain to them whatever it is that is happening.

First and foremost, the land was seized from the natives. When Cameroon became a German protectorate in 1884, the Germans, realizing that Tole and other villages around Mount Cameroon were very fertile and therefore, a paradise for agriculture, embarked on a mission to systematically confiscate the native lands. According to Tande (2006a, 2006b, 2008), they used coercion, brute force and repressive laws to eject the natives out of their land. By the end of the 1890s, the Germans had completely subjugated the Bakweri, grabbed 400 square miles (an equivalent of 256,000 Acres) of their most fertile lands and forced them to move into inaccessible, infertile, and disease-infested Native Reserves. This is pathetic as there was never a mutual agreement between the developers and the people neither was their culture or way of life taken into consideration. As a result, the Bakweri lost their sense of being. They were cut off from their means of livelihood, viz, their hunting grounds and fishing rights. The situation worsened when the Germans tried to force them to work in their plantations. Because of this abuse and inequality imposed on them, the people resisted and refused this forced labour on their captured land. The Germans in return, had no choice than “to move for thousands of miles into the hinterlands to recruit labor” (Ndeh 2016, p.46). This accounts for the significant number

of other ethnic groupings in Tole which has in no small way contributed to the indigenes almost losing all sense of tribal unity and cohesion. Secondly, when the State of Cameroon took over ownership and control of the plantations in 1946, the people were still not considered as partners or stakeholders in the project, talk less of being placed in important positions. The only role reserved for them was that of hired labourers. Finally, the situation got worse with privatization. Obale (2020) recounts how the privatization was met with stiff opposition from the elite and civil society organizations in Fako and the Anglophone Regions at large. The Fako Agricultural Workers Union (FAWU) argued that the tea sector could not be privatized without the workers' consent, given their enormous sacrifices in assisting the corporation to recover from the economic crisis that plagued the nation in the 80's and that the workers should be consulted to decide whether they would prefer to be paid off before or after negotiating new contracts with the CTE. The Bakweri Lands Claim Committee (BLCC) argued for consultation with and compensation of the land owners while the Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC) argued that the tea estate was located within its territorial boundaries and that Cameroon Government had no right to privatize, sell or transfer it to foreigners. All these yielded no fruits. The tea estate was privatized. At privatization, many hundred workers were laid off without prior notice or payment of severance dues. They demanded justice but had nobody to fight for them and all attempts to make the Cameroon Government look into their problem failed. Rather, they were completely marginalized and deprived of even basic social amenities.

The above is an indication that there has been no or very minimal sustainable development plan as far as the Tole Tea projects is concerned. This is partly because development in Africa is mostly externally driven. For reasons best known to them, only the management decide the objectives of the project and the ways (strategies) of realizing them. Yoon (1996, p.37) submits that development was thought to be "triggered by the wide-scale diffusion and adoption of modern technologies. Such modernization was planned in the national capitals under the guidance and direction of experts brought in from developed countries." It is no wonder therefore, that at their behest, the Government went ahead and privatized the tea sector of CDC despite oppositions from the citizens.

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

Privatization in Africa was undertaken, among others reasons, to increase economic efficiency, reduce government borrowing, widen share ownership, enhance competition, encourage market forces, generate government revenues, expand customers' choices, and improve service quality (Haque, 2000, p.221). Unfortunately, things never turned out as expected. Privatization instead led to increased levels of poverty, unemployment, declining wages, retrenchment, price increases, and subsidy and welfare cuts (Haque, 2000, p.227). The ensuing frustration that came upon the people of Tole, following the imposed privatization of the Tole tea estate, led to many deaths and illnesses. Musa's affirmation of this is true today as it was in 2016: "a majority of these former workers of Tole Tea Estate [. . .] have been home for [. . .] years now. Many are gradually dying but the government which laid them off after privatizing the company is yet to compensate them" (2016, para. 3). Had there been some form of partnership between the people and the development agents; had there been some minimal accountability to the local population; or had the people been prepared for this, things might certainly have been different and better.

### **Tole Tea Estate project**

The misery brought about by privatization of the Tole Tea Estate provoked the need to find out, through Participatory Action Research (PAR), what the exact situation on ground in Tole was as well as seek ways to ameliorate the circumstances of the people there.

According to Baum, MacDougall and Smith (2006, p.854), PAR is a "collective, self-reflective inquiry that researchers and participants undertake, so they can understand and improve upon the practices in which they participate and the situations in which they find themselves". This reflective process, they continue, is "directly linked to action, influenced by understanding of history, culture, and local context and embedded in social relationships". Thus, after obtaining permission from the gatekeepers (chief and traditional council) of Tole, this researcher and her team, together with some members of the community, undertook a two-day transect walk through the village. The aim was to listen to and discuss with people, both young and old; observe the vegetation, market, streets, lanes, houses, backyards, business premises, garbage points, community hall,



social amenities (schools, electricity, water taps, and health centre), etc. Key Informant Interviews were also conducted and Focus Group Discussions held with different groups of people (market women, town women, adult men, mixed gender groups, area boys, and young girls) and at different locations (market, homes, business premises, the community hall and open commons). This helped to establish a baseline. Also, in the course of the research, those who were found bold enough to express their views and who were willing to work with the team, were invited to a Theatre for Development workshop at the village community hall while the rest of the population was told to watch out for a play that would be produced at a venue and time that would be announced by the village town criers.

The PAR revealed that the local population had always been marginalized and their culture never taken into consideration. In a one-on-one interview, an above 90-year old man with initials N.J.E, was able to trace the history of Tole from the days of the colonial masters. According to him, Tole used to be referred to as Plantation. The first economic activity there was logging (the timber harvested was sent abroad by sea). When all the forest was gone, the Germans planted tea. He also said the disappearance of the forest had attendant problems like the scarcity of game, non-timber forest products, edible fruits and nuts, medicinal plants, etc., which used to help them in income generation. Today, if they must get these, they have to trek many kilometres into the forests beyond the tea farms. This claim was corroborated by one other respondent, a female traditional healer (aka Mami Manyi for Bone) who bemoaned the fact that she was almost no longer able to practice her gift of healing fractures and joining broken human bones because the herbs she used were found deep inside the forests and her strength had greatly waned. In addition to these, everyone spoken with during the entire PAR exercise lamented that the environment of Tole has greatly deteriorated especially since the privatization of the tea estate in 2002. There is congestion, pollution and poor sanitary conditions that cause disease and death. During focus group discussions, two women pointed out that the area which hosted the demolished camp has turned into a wilderness. Secondly, the tea farms that extend to the town are not being taken care of as in the days of CDC. Today they are invaded by weeds and have become a harbour for snakes and other reptiles which bite them and their children who go in there to play, causing illnesses which they can barely manage to treat, and even death. Other important environmental issues captured from the

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

discussions include the fact that since there is no other institution that employs besides CTE, local food crop farming and petty trading have become the major occupation and source of income of the people. This is not easy because they have to trek long distances and go beyond the plantation to look for farmlands, and these too are got on lease. The people complain that in the days of CDC, a farmland around Tole was rented for 2500 francs (\$5) and whatever was cultivated was meant for home consumption only. Unfortunately, today, a piece of farmland which is very far beyond the plantation can only be got on lease and for no less than 10,000–15,000 francs (\$20-\$30), and enough crops have to be cultivated for both subsistence and income generation. Many people, especially the elderly former tea workers cannot afford the money talk less of going that far. The result is the overuse of and consequent infertility of the little land around Tole. The cultivation of food crops here needs chemical fertilizer which many of the people cannot afford and so suffer poor crop yields, which thieves do not even allow them to enjoy. One female farmer cum trader attested to this when she said healthy bunches of plantains as she had could only be got from deep inside the forests beyond the tea farms.

### **Working Methodology**

The methodology used in this study was Theatre for Development (TfD), precisely the participatory model. This is the kind of theatre that “allows community members to participate in creating a story based on discussions that centre on their problems, needs and aspirations, and then dramatizing it in the presence of other community members (Nkweteyim 2019, p.29). According to Samba (2005, p.37), “such a theatre gives room for members of a community to collectively raise issues about it, analyse them, and propose solutions to existing problems”. It is hoped that at the end of a TfD project, there would be change “from an existing situation of oppression and deprivation to one of freedom and multiple possibilities, from a situation of abject poverty and degradation to one of both economic and psychological freedom” (Samba 2005, p.37). Abah (2005, p.xiv) postulates that this genre of theatre has “become an instrument for instigating people-centred development in the field outside of the academe . . . an instrument for mobilization and for instigation of participation in the development process”. The entire process includes: preliminary visits or advocacy, information gathering or research, analysis/interrogation of findings or data analysis and prioritization, scenario making or

play creation and rehearsal, performance, post-performance discussions, community action plans or follow-up, and evaluation of impact (Nkweteyim 2019, p. 33).

The information gathered through the PAR was presented to the participants in the two-day TfD workshop, for analysis and prioritization. The problems were grouped under cultural and environmental. The cultural problems include gossiping, alcoholism, human/ethnic conflicts, early pregnancies, acute poverty, sexual harassment/rape, joblessness and theft while the environmental problems were poor health facilities, poor crop yields, poor roads, poor housing, congestion, lack of arable land, and poor hygienic conditions evident in poor, dirty vicinities. Through problem-posing and dialogical processes they collectively brought forth possible solutions to these plaguing problems which had given rise to attendant socio-cultural challenges.

During the workshop, 15-year old Carine regretted the fact that the number of young girls like her who had dropped out of school and become single mothers had increased because many parents were unable to pay school fees for or take care of the basic needs of their wards. Other girls of her age group complained that the number of rape was on the rise in their community. A young mother, Pluscheri, corroborated their worries but added that in some cases the girls were the ones who put themselves in danger of being sexually assaulted. That sometimes, their scanty and provocative dress styles as well as their desire for material things which they cannot afford cause the boys and young men to take advantage of them. Another culture challenge raised by mostly the elderly and which Pa N.J.E. had earlier mentioned, was the fact that the social bond and communal spirit of the people had weakened. People have become very individualistic and self-centered. Everyone is mindful only of themselves and their families. In response, many of the young men, accused the chief of being the cause of disunity and strife among the people. The same accusation was heard during the focus group discussions. To these young men, the fact that the chief does not reside in Tole creates a vacuum as there is no one the people can take their problems to. They accused the Traditional Council of being corrupt and only interested in the cases of people who are able to give to them. As such, order has kind of broken down in the community and there is gross disrespect for elders and authority. This, to them, is culturally unacceptable. Furthermore, one of the Quarter Heads, Mr A., noted that they are gradually losing grip of their indigenous cultures

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

because for this to be effective, they need to travel back to their villages of origin and this is usually difficult due to the costs it entails.

It is evident from the above discussions that the people of Tole are an embittered, rootless lot. Their social environment and indigenous cultures have been greatly degraded by a development that was neither participatory nor integrated, and which never took their welfare and personal development into account. The project was marred from the onset by unequal power relations and grounds of operation between the locals and development drivers and there has never been any base for partnership between them. Today, the inhabitants of Tole lack basic skills and are socially excluded as their capacities were never built. Also, since there is no other institution that employs besides CTE, the culture that has been engendered is that of crime, suspicion and witch hunting.

It is in this light that a play, “The Lost Heritage”, was crafted and rehearsed by the workshop participants. It tells the story of a once biodiversity-rich, fertile and buoyant community plagued by greed and envy. An indigene or son-of-the soil, who is also a member of the Village Traditional Council, is not happy that settlers from the North West/Grass field Region (derogatorily called Grafis, short for Grass fielders) are farming on their land. Worse still, his wife has left him for one of such settlers. As he sits dreaming of the day one of them will ‘fall in his hands’, a friend of his and another Council member enters with news that some white men are looking for about 20 Hectares of land to buy for the purpose of setting up a tea plantation. He quickly invites the representatives of the Whites from whom he receives the paltry sum of CFA 25,000,000 francs (\$5,000,000) for the said piece of land. His idea is to frustrate the Grafis. The consequence of his action is that the entire community suffers as most parents can no longer pay school fees or feed their children because the land on which they depended for survival has been forcefully taken away from them. Some mothers even encourage their daughters to go into prostitution so as to make ends meet. Teenage pregnancy, rape, theft, alcoholism and other vices are on the rise. Besides the vices are environmental problems like congestion, rise in temperatures, pollution, poor garbage disposal, etc., birthing illnesses and diseases. The inhabitants blame the indigenes (Bakweris) for all this. All hope is not lost as four graduates who originated from Tole decide to meet the chief and his Council and propose

strategies which they think will help alleviate the suffering. The entire community is summoned to the palace and the graduates tell them that rather than sitting and waiting for the Government to come and take them out of their predicament, they themselves should rise up as one person and take their destiny in their hands. They then propose the creation of NGOs and other self-help groups to embark on activities that will empower the people and bring lasting health, financial, sanitary, and other solutions. Lastly, they proposed that the Traditional Council that had hitherto not been very active and involved in the happenings in the village should sit up and oversee the various developmental projects that have been proposed. Their suggestions are greeted with a lot of applause and enthusiasm and these push the traditional councilors to wilfully donate money for the opening of farm-to-market roads, the provision pipe-borne water, and the buying of books for the education of the children, etc. The play ends with the villagers intoning a song in pidgin which is more or less a rallying song for the people to “join hands” and dig roads, bring water, plant trees, etc., in Tole.

This play was produced twice before the people of Tole. The first performance was the village community hall and the second at the premises of the Baptist Primary School. In each case, post-production discussions were held to find out whether the people had understood the play and to what extent they had been ‘conscientized’ or provoked to take action towards their own development. The responses of the people showed that the story of the play was well understood. They were convinced that it told the story of how they had been torn apart and deprived of their means of survival by CTE. They also said they had come to understand that they could not continue to wait for Government to help them but that they must rise up and help themselves. Asked what they would like do to help themselves, the people appealed to this researcher to advise or help them put in place the following:

1. Associations and Common Initiative Groups through which they will carry out self-help economic activities.
2. Home classes for their children who have not been going to school due to the ongoing Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon.
3. Sex education lessons for the young ones to help them avoid early pregnancies and abortions.

Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
Diagnosis of the Tole Tea Project

Among the three points raised, the first and third were earmarked as action plans for the community in the next phase of the project which was to begin in August or September 2017. Nothing could be promised about home classes because of the cost involved in hiring teachers but the people were advised to forget their differences, as portrayed in the play, and start living together in love and unity as was the case before. By so doing, they would be able to solicit the services of the teachers and graduates in their community to help teach these children for a token fee. Unfortunately, by the envisaged start period of the community action plan, the socio-political unrest that has plagued the Northwest and Southwest Regions for four years and more, had gained a foothold in the area. Tole became a base for the separatist fighters with many of the young people joining the struggle. This has led to the loss of lives and property and many of the people have fled the area and are now internally displaced. Not even the palace was spared from the people's wrath. It was not only razed down by fire but also had at least one of its occupants killed. It has taken the establishment of a government military base in Tole for pseudo calm to return to the area.

### **Conclusion**

The Tole Estate is in crisis probably because from inception it was the exogenous approach to development that was used. Also, because these inhabitants were never made partners in the project, their severance dues were neither paid nor their wellbeing taken into account. In fact, Musa (2006) talked of 110 deaths after four years of struggle to get these dues paid. For asking, the camp that housed them and their families was demolished, leaving them in the open for months, without shelter. They even camped at the premises of the Delegation of Labour and Social Insurance in Buea for four months but nothing was done. Misery then forced them to relocate and settle in Bwiyuku, the section of the village occupied by the natives. The result is congestion, pollution, poor sanitation and diseases. M'sene (2006, para. 11) confirms this thus: "It is an issue that involves 650 workers of the former [CDC] Tea Estate whose royalties were transferred to another employer [. . .] the workers and their dependents are about several thousands of lives to which the government did not give a damn".

From every indication, any development initiative that does not create room for partnership and collaboration or participation will never be sustainable as accountability will be completely absent. Also, when development focuses on things only and not people also, problems are bound to arise in the future. The case study shows how from the days of the Germans to the present the people of Tole were left in the dark. Lack of information and no personal development caused them to be socially marginalized. Their desire for personal development and social inclusion unfortunately found a harbour in the socio-political crisis that has plagued the southwest and Northwest Regions for four years running. The PAR and Tfd have proven that partnership and accountability will unfailingly bring about sustainable development to Tole. In addition to CTE reviewing their development plan, there is need today for the people to acquire basic survival skills which they will need to run the self-help organizations and projects that the next phase of the Tfd intervention of 2017 still has in store for them.

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Partnership and Accountability in Development Initiatives: A Theatre For Development  
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