Case Studies on an Integral Approach to International Development

Overview and Synthesis
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“The Integral Approach helps us in our work in three ways. First, it confirms what we have been doing; second, it provides an inquiry into where we still have gaps [in our approach] and how we can fill them; and third, it is a foundational and theoretical base that helps us to dialogue with other fields of wisdom and with other development organizations.”

Walberto Virgilio Tejeda Guardado, Centro Bartolomé de las Casas, El Salvador
Introduction: A Call to Coherence

The field of international development aims to deal with some of the most pressing issues our planet faces. The field has an array of excellent, but partial, approaches to do so. Truly incredible scientific, technological, political, and medical interventions exist alongside other unprecedented advances in participatory, community-based, qualitative methodologies for social change. Added to this are the contributions from the world’s wisdom traditions who work with peoples’ interior needs and realities, and developmental researchers who have studied and mapped the process of human development. However, what is largely still missing is a framework that can bring together these different approaches into an integrated whole.

Integral theory, advanced by contemporary philosopher, Ken Wilber, explains that to reach long-lasting and effective solutions, humanity needs to integrate the various truths that each discipline brings to the overall process of international development. The general disciplines can be grouped into at least four areas that relate with experience (“I”), behaviours (“It”), culture (“We”), and systems (“Its”).

With the Integral framework as a guide, one can perceive the whole of a development issue, not just individual characteristics or causes. It enables a peeling back the apparent layers, to reveal and better understand its deeper, less-apparent contributing factors. Development issues do not arise in a vacuum — there are interwoven systemic (geopolitical and economic) factors, cultural factors, and psychological factors that contribute to this, to name a few.

The quality of integration needed in international development will include the exterior and interior realities, of individuals and groups. It will include exterior interventions such as good governance, gender equality, poverty alleviation, economic strengthening, and ecological sustainability (“It/Its”). And it will also engage intersubjective, hermeneutic arenas of social action, such as participation and co-creation (“We”). It will also include the individual interior processes of self-development, empowerment, and introspection (“I”). And it will include the intricate psychological unfolding of human development itself. The way forward for international development arises as a meshwork of these complex currents of reality.

This integration asks us to surrender our categorizing mind into the wholeness of reality as it arises. While, at the same time also retaining and refining the capacity to categorize — to distinguish and synergize the parts that, together, weave the whole.

This is quite unlike most development interventions to date, which tend to embed solely in one or two categories of action-inquiry. Yet, piecemeal approaches have run their course dry. The complex issues in
the world today yearn for more integrated responses.

To undertake such a profound integration requires a framework as a guide. The Integral theory provides one such framework, one that is found to be most comprehensive and uniquely able to synthesize these different areas. It provides a bigger picture of what is at play in international development, so to enable integrated responses.

Like any framework or map, it is not the actual territory, and will someday be replaced by an even more complete map. For now, it is one of the very best available. It brings together disciplines, methodologies, and truths, and explains how each one alone is partial, but, together, they become part of a larger whole. Within a whole framework, the distinct disciplines can synergize with all other disciplines. Separate from the others — or, that is, outside of an integrative framework — each piece is much like a jigsaw puzzle piece. Each piece offers so much to the picture, but without a sense of the big picture, the piece alone contributes a mere fragment.

Each of the following six case studies is situated within this multi-dimensional coherence. From Peru to India, New York to Addis Ababa, these case studies tell a story of integration in response to reality as it arises.

**PART ONE: Overview**

In Part One (Overview), I describe the Integral Approach in brief pointing out its relevance to international development, give a summary of the participating organizations in these case studies, as well as a description of the case studies methodology. In Part Two (Synthesis), I provide a synthesis of the research findings.

**Innovations in Integration**

My inspiration for this project comes from my own experience using the Integral approach in community and international development. The Integral approach applied to international development takes the emphasis away from merely transferring technology or boosting economic growth, to also include the nuance of self-development and socio-cultural transformation. Without these latter arenas of action, development process is reduced to something quantitative and technological, dis-connected from the creativity and cultural resonance that makes up a more full, complete and qualitative wellbeing.
Integral In-Brief:

In brief, the Integral framework not only brings together different disciplines, but also their respective epistemologies and methodologies. Each of these disciplines is true but partial. Therefore, to truly work toward cultural, economic and social gains, an Integral approach integrates subjective, inter-subjective and objective data. Together, this gives a more complete picture and understanding of a given situation. In Integral theory these are called quadrants, and they are depicted in figure 1 and 2. The Integral approach also provides a developmental context for development itself. In other words, international development is situated in larger unfolding process, involving individuals, groups and systems, which moves from the current stage towards an emerging stage towards the next emergent stage, and so forth (described in figure 3 and 4). As such, an Integral approach integrates the disciplines and studies that relate with human development, cultural development, systemic development, and so forth. This is done in coherence with the other elements of the framework, providing a bigger picture of the situation and enabling a more complete response to that situation. (Elements of Integral theory are elaborated on further below.)

Folk Integral, and Integrally-Informed

Even though Integral theory is not yet widely known, I have found that elements of it are often intuitively used in practice in international development. In finding ways to appropriately and compassionately respond to the complexity of a situation, practitioners find it makes sense to include a focus on both the interior realities (such as trauma, personal power, and psychological health) as well as exterior needs (such as income, medicine, and nutrition). This is especially the case with small organizations that work with communities and face issues such as trauma, disempowerment, and loss of cultural identity on a regular basis. The need to refine methodologies to work with human interiority, particularly interior development, in coherence with all other development interventions is pertinent to such groups.

Wherever this implicit form of “integral practice” emerges, it tends to be communicated in a culturally appropriate manner, with tools for change that come from the local context and resonate with local people. Many of the specific tools used have come directly from the experience of the field practitioners, in their search for more effective modes of action. I refer to these approaches as folk integral, as they have arisen in different cultures and communities, independent of Integral theory and in response to the reality on the ground. They draw more on practical reality and folklore, than from philosophy and academic studies.
Some development organizations are applying elements of an Integral approach in their work with national governments, consultants, communities, municipalities, and key leaders. From the grassroots to the global, these organizations are drawing directly upon an integral framework to identify tools to work with interior dynamics (psychology and culture) with exterior needs (economic prosperity, social institutions and ecological sustainability). Some of these interventions report incredible results thus far. I will refer to these projects as integrally-informed, because they are explicitly drawing on Integral Theory in their work.

Folk integral and integrally-informed are essentially two formats for responding in an integrated manner to the interior and exterior realities present in international development. They differ primarily on what has formed or informed their approach. Neither format is necessarily better than the other; rather, both formats offer different contributions and knowledge sets to improve on what works in the field of development.

The Integral Approach

Below, I briefly describe some elements of Integral theory, and how it applies to international development, to help frame my methodologies and the following case studies. If the reader is already familiar with the theory, this next section can be skipped. (A fully Integral Approach includes all quadrants, levels, lines, states and types, of which I describe the first three here. The Integral Approach is also referred to as AQAL; see Wilber (2006) for a more complete overview than presented in this paper).

Quadrants

The Integral approach provides describes four domains of reality that are important and inseparable aspects of human systems— namely, interior processes and exterior outcomes at the individual and collective levels (Wilber, 1996, 2000). These quadrants include the “exterior”, practical aspects of life (such as ecology, economics and social systems) with the “interior”, subtle aspects of humanity (like psychology, culture and spirituality). This is depicted in figure 1.

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**Figure 1: Quadrants of the Integral Approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UPPER LEFT: Self and Consciousness</th>
<th>UPPER RIGHT: Action and Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOWER LEFT: Culture and Worldview</td>
<td>LOWER RIGHT: Social System and Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Case Studies on an Integral Approach to International Development
Simply acknowledging these quadrants of a situation provides a more comprehensive framework for understanding development issues and more appropriate methods of working with such issues.

Each quadrant includes various methodologies to address these multiple dimensions of human systems (Figure 2).

These are modes of inquiry (or the tools of knowledge acquisition) that human beings use, and have used, for decades and even centuries. However, throughout human history, people have often valued and preferred one quadrant over the others, falling short of a truly inclusive approach to the given reality.

Using such an approach does not require that practitioners become experts in all disciplines and fields, but rather the Integral approach “touches bases with as many important areas of research as possible before returning very quickly to the specific issues and applications of a given practice.” (Wilber, 2004, pp 7-8)

### Developmental Lines

Drawing on solid psychological research, the Integral approach recognizes that individuals have different and unique aptitudes — much like Howard Gardener’s multiple intelligences. Some people excel in intellectual study, others are natural group facilitators, others are gifted with a high moral sense, others have high emotional intelligence, etc. These individual strengths

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**Figure 2: Methodologies included in the Integral approach to research and understand different aspects of a given situation or moment.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UPPER LEFT: Self and Consciousness</th>
<th>UPPER RIGHT: Action and Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective data-collection; Often embodied, qualitative, and self-reflective knowledge.</td>
<td>Objective data-collection; Often quantitative, empirical and scientific.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOWER LEFT: Culture and Worldview</th>
<th>LOWER RIGHT: Social System and Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inter-subjective data-collection; Often qualitative and co-created through dialogue, mutual understanding, and collaboration.</td>
<td>Objective data-collection; Often quantitative, empirical and scientific.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and weaknesses can be understood as the inherent multiple intelligences, capacities and functions of individuals, which psychologists refer to as developmental lines. Some of these lines include: cognitive (intellectual/technical), interpersonal (social), affective (emotional), moral, and spiritual.4

Lines are particularly relevant in international development in the area of capacity building (also called capacity development). From an integral perspective, capacity building is essentially the process of fostering growth along these lines as they relate to a development issue. For example, activities that intend to build know-how and intellectual capacity work with the cognitive line, such as capacity for improved financial accounting, report writing, advocacy techniques, public speaking skills, and effective policy influence. Other capacity building initiatives seek to build technical capacity relate to both the kinesthetic and cognitive lines, such as capacity for building appropriate technologies, using sustainable resource management techniques, and carrying out participatory evaluation and monitoring methodologies. Some capacity building activities also work with the affective line to develop emotional capacity (e.g. important for fostering self-esteem, confidence and leadership); or with the interpersonal and moral lines to build social and moral capacity (e.g. for working with and caring for others).

For international development interventions that seek to build or develop capacity, pertinent questions include: what type of capacity is being developed, for whom and is it appropriate? Often development interventions emphasize the intellectual and technical capacities (cognitive and kinesthetic lines). Yet, this intellectual and technical capacity may be supported by emotional and social capacity (that involve affective, interpersonal, moral and values lines). If so, and these latter capacities are missing, then the initiatives to seek to build cognitive and technical capacity may fall short or even fail.

Stages of Self and Social Change

Extensive research by cognitive and developmental psychologists explains how certain lines (such as values, self-concept and epistemologies) unfold in nested stages of increasing complexity.5 Wilber (2000, pp 42-44) describes and summarizes the various bodies of research on this process of unfolding, explaining how it occurs both in individuals (referred to as “self-stages”) and in the collective (reflected in morals and perspectives).6

Most research has found a similar pattern of development through these stages, be it in values development (Graves), morals (Kohlberg), ego-development (Loevinger, 1976; Cook-Greuter, 2004), cognitive development (Kegan, 1995), needs (Maslow, 1971), and so on. These stages (or levels) transcend and include the previous stages, to open up into new expanded modes of perception, consciousness and care.7 Full and healthy development at certain stages
enable new more complex stages to emerge, such that each stage encompasses and builds on the capacities of the previous stages. Worldviews tend to emerge through a process of first identifying (or embedding) at a certain level of development, and then transcending (or de-embedding) from that level as it moves on to the next (Wilber, 2000, p. 38-44).

Each of these worldviews offer important components to a society—they are concurrent waves of existence that mesh and blend together, each adding something particular and unique to the whole. Moreover, they are holarchically arranged, such that each stage is whole, in and of itself, and also part of the next stage (Koestler (1968) coined the term ‘holon’ to refer to these whole/parts). In this way, higher stages contain all the lower stages. None of these are better than another, each are necessary at particular moments.

Figure 3 provides examples of stages from three different disciplines and researchers, including Kohlberg’s studies on moral development (which appear to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wilber (worldview and wave of existence)</th>
<th>Kohlberg (stages of moral development)</th>
<th>Gilligan (stages of female moral development)</th>
<th>Relates to ethics, values, attitudes and motivations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egocentric (magic)</td>
<td>Preconventional</td>
<td>Self-care</td>
<td>Preconventional is practically amoral and egocentric, in which “what I want” is what is right. Primarily concerned for one’s own interests and desires. With an egocentric view, individual concern extends as far as “me and mine” — my self and my family needs and desires are most important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnocentric ( Mythic, mythic-rational)</td>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>Care</td>
<td>Conventional is ethnocentric, and thus “what the group, tribe, country wants” is what is right. Concerned for others in one’s social group (family, nation religion, ideology, etc.) With an ethnocentric perspective, care extends to the group, community and society; and cooperation, collaboration and teamwork within the social group are driving forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldcentric (rational)</td>
<td>Postconventional</td>
<td>Universal care</td>
<td>Postconventional has a more worldcentric embrace, in which “what is fair for all peoples, regardless of race, color, creed” is what is right. Concerned for all people, beings, ecosystems and cultures. Worldcentric awareness extends caring and a sense of justice not just you and your people, but also all peoples and beings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
be cross-cultural), Gilligan’s studies on female moral development, and Wilber’s worldviews/waves of existence. Some of the organizations that participated in this research project have developed their own frameworks to understand and work with stages in their empowerment and psycho-emotional work with communities, which I will describe in detail below.

Wilber’s most recent work introduces “altitude markers” of development that helps to clarify the relationship between lines and stages. (He uses colours for the altitudes, see figure 4). He explains (Wilber, 2006, in press):

The nice point about this “altitude marker” of development is that it agrees with developmentalists that, indeed, the levels in a particular line cannot be used to refer to the levels in other lines. **But you can use “altitude” to refer to the same general level in all the various lines.** We gave the analogy of paths up the mountain: if there are a dozen paths up a mountain, the view from each of the paths is somewhat different, and you cannot use the views or “structures” of any of the

Figure 4: Wilber’s altitudes of human development and their accompanying worldviews (egocentric, ethnocentric, worldcentric and kosmoscentric), with examples of developmental lines (cognitive or awareness, self-identity, and values).
particular paths to refer to the views or structures in the other paths. In this aspect, it truly is apples and oranges.... However, using “altitude” as a general marker of development allows us to refer to general similarities across the various lines, yet altitude...itself has no content; it is empty.

The important point about these altitudes and worldviews with respect to international development is that at each stage, at each altitude of the mountain, the world is seen differently—with different needs, tasks, capacities, guiding principles, problems and pathologies. A person’s worldview includes a psychological structure, value system and a mode of adaptation, which is expressed in numerous different ways, from laws to fashion to institutions to monetary flows. Knowledge of how worldviews emerge through stages, and how they relate to morals, perspectives, behaviors and institutions, can be useful in international development in two practical and extremely important ways: healthy translation and transformation.

(Note that I use the terms “levels,” “stages,” and “altitudes” interchangably.)

Translation

Having a developmental understanding, practitioners are better able to clearly perceive and communicate to a variety of worldviews, and more appropriately align their responses to a given issue. Many approaches to development predominantly address systems and structures (economic, ecological, political, educational). Yet often these initiatives fail to meet their potential not because of the systemic changes introduced, but because their implementation is misaligned with the developmental stages of the people involved. The Integral framework helps practitioners to align initiatives to the appropriate developmental stages.

Across the planet human development is still moving through the stages of egocentric (infrared, magenta, red) and ethnocentric (amber). There is now the small beginnings of worldcentric awareness (begins at orange into green), and a much smaller proportions of the global population resonate at a mature world-centric and kosmos-centric stage (teal and turquoise). But, the vast majority of individuals are coming from an amber altitude and lower. Often, development practitioners with world-centric awareness craft interventions and projects, assuming that those involved in the project (be it beneficiaries, participants, institutions, or whole systems) are also at world-centric. This mis-alignment with the existing altitudes creates confusion, miscommunication, at times cultural inappropriateness, and even ineffectiveness.

An understanding developmental stages or altitudes assists practitioners to design programs that communicate to, resonate with, and can foster health at the existing
Most of the work that needs to be done is work to make the lower (and foundational) waves [or stages] more healthy in their own terms. The major reforms do not involve how to get a handful of boomers into second-tier, but how to feed the starving millions at the most basic waves; how to house the homeless millions at the simplest of levels; how to bring healthcare to the millions who do not possess it…. The health of the entire spiral [of human development], and particularly its earlier waves, screams out to us as the major ethical demand.

This is healthy translation, or horizontal development, which involves becoming whole and healthy at whatever stage the person may be. It is doubtful that the whole planet will transform soon to a world-centric stage (let alone beyond), and for this reason, usually healthy translation is more relevant and important. In international development, most of the work with human development will involve helping people to achieve health and wellbeing at their existing altitudes. To meet the development goals set forth by the international community (such as the Millenium Development Goals), the world will need the most healthy expressions of all the stages of the spiral of human development — healthy forms of leadership and social action at every altitude, forms of gender equality and sustainability that are resonant with all stages, and so forth.

That said, there is a time and place for transformation. In fact, these two — translation and transformation — are intimately related.

**Transformation**

According to the empirical studies on human development, it is very rare if not impossible for a third party to hurry along the process of another’s development — put simply, one person cannot grow another person more quickly. Rather, human development tends to occur naturally through the course of life, perhaps increasing with certain life conditions (in all quadrants). It can also be consciously engaged by the individual himself or herself. This is an intimate and personal process. However, another person can create emergent ground to support this developmental unfolding.

Research has found that becoming healthy at a particular stage, lays the emergent ground for transformation to the next stage. Wilber explains:

The self has the capacity to intimately identify with a level of consciousness, **become**...
competent at that level, and then dis-identify with it (and integrate it) in order to step up to the next higher and wider sphere and identify with it (and so on until its capacity for growth is exhausted). Each time the self’s center of gravity orbits around a new level so consciousness, it has, of course, a new and different outlook on life.... The self at each level sees a different world: it faces new fears, has different goals, suffers new problems. It has a new set of needs, a new class of morals, a new sense of self.

It is in “becoming competent at that level”, or becoming healthy at that stage, that transformation is more likely to occur towards the next stage.

Today, problems that are the most dire are those that are global — they are trans-community, trans-bioregion, trans-boundary, and involve some many contributing factors that it can make ones head spin. It is to some degree because of the complexity and interconnectivity of these problems that an integral or AQAL framework has arisen. The breadth and complexity of such development problems will likely require at least worldcentric awareness to respond to them. It is at worldcentric that an individual organically and spontaneously cares about, and acts on, global problems. This does not mean that individuals have to be “better traveled” or even know the world necessarily. Rather, worldcentric awareness is arrived at through interior development to include and embrace more than merely oneself or one’s particular social group or social ideology. Wilber says:

...The real problem is how to get people to internally transform from egocentric, to sociocentric to worldcentric consciousness, which is the only stance that can grasp the global dimensions of the problem in the first place, and thus the only stance that can freely, even eagerly, embrace global solutions...(Wilber, 2000, 1995, p. 541, author’s italics.)

The worldcentric stage is a post-conventional, in which the global self and mature ego emerge. It is this mature ego that can perceive and care for not only just “me and mine” (ego-centric), not just “us” (my tribe, clan, group, nation of socio- and ethno-centric), but “all of us” (all human beings without exception, regardless of race, religion, sex or creed). Wilber explains world-centric awareness as, “consciousness cut lose from its parochial surfaces and dives into that which is shared by a global humanity, insisting on forms of compassion that are universal, impartial, just and fair for all.”
Therefore, as development practitioners facilitate health all along the spiral of human development, it is of particular emphasis to work with leaders and decision-makers to access the worldcentric stage. The advantage of worldcentric awareness (and beyond) is that it can help with finding creative solutions to those pressing (global) problems. As such, it is our leaders (where ever they may be in a society) that stand in dire need of a worldcentric perspective, and a more integral approach. Wilber (Introduction to Volume 7 of the Collected Works):

It is our educational institutions, overcome with deconstructive postmodernism, that are desperate for a more integral vision. It is our healthcare facilities that could greatly benefit from the tender mercies of an integral touch. It is the leadership of the developing nations that might appreciate a more comprehensive vision of their own possibilities. In all these ways and more, we could indeed use an integral vision for a world gone slightly mad...

In summary, working with human development involves responding to what altitudes are present (with their consequent needs, mindsets, morals, etc.), as well as creating conditions that support transformation to the next stage.

**And, How?**

As practitioners begin to recognize this integration is critical, a question that many of us have is: *how do we work with interiority, and more specifically interior development?* Just as we are becoming more and more aware of the need to engage interiority, we are also becoming aware that we may not have the tools or the training to do so. Many have been trained in scientific and/or quantitative actions, and process-oriented, participatory methodologies, but fewer have the tools for engaging the interior and psychological aspects of human reality.

Paul van Schaik, in an Archive paper on the Process of Integral Development (1997) offers suggestions for the way forward:

1. To understand the process of transformation, and the difference of transformation between levels and that of translation at each level, and then
2. To map (as much as is possible) the situation at each appropriate level in all four quadrants, and then
3. To work at the level of complexity and diversity required. We can have an input to the design of the future but it is as much an unfolding horizontally as it is an evolution vertically.
In summary, Wilber (Volume 8 of Ken Wilber’s Collected Works Jan. 2000) explains:

The prime directive [of human development] asks us to honor and appreciate the necessary, vital, and unique contribution provided by each and every wave of consciousness unfolding, and thus act so as to protect and promote the health of the entire spiral, and not any one privileged domain.

At the same time, it invites us to offer, as a gentle suggestion, a conception of a more complete spectrum of consciousness, a full spiral of development, so that individuals or cultures (including ours) that are not aware of some of the deeper or higher dimensions of human possibilities may choose to act on those extraordinary resources, which in turn might help to defuse some of the recalcitrant problems that have not yielded to less integral approaches.

Integrating all the many dimensions of an international development issue is very challenging. While we may intuit or know the importance of integration, many questions still revolve around how to do so. These case studies explored this further, to see how organizations and practitioners are currently integrating interior and exterior dimensions of development, with what approaches and methodologies.

The Case Studies

While all by participating organizations were using elements of an Integral approach in their methodologies and approaches, none are working with a fully Integral approach.

Each case study brings vital parts to the whole. And yet, it is necessary to see the whole so that the discrete parts can inform, synergize and illuminate the others. The ability to perceive and feel the whole, the big picture, enables a single intervention to have the most meaning and effectiveness.

Each case study includes a description of the organization’s approach, some practical methodologies for working with interiority, and an Integral analysis of the approach used. For most, there is a discussion about whether and how the particular tools are culturally specific and/or cross-cultural.

Each case study can be read independent of this Overview and Synthesis and separate from the other case studies, or they can be read as a series.

This project is designed purposely with a broad, diverse scope. The five participating groups include two grassroots organizations in Peru, El Salvador, and Ethiopia, two
larger US-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in India and several countries in Africa, and also a UNDP leadership program that has field experience in over 40 countries. Some of the organizations are folk integral; other are integrally-informed. This diversity — from the grassroots to the international, from folk integral to integrally-informed — helped me to gather a greater depth of information about the culturally specific ways that practitioners engage and work with interiority.

Profiles of Participating NGOs

UNDP Bureau for Development Policy’s Leadership For Results Programme—a leadership program carried out in 40 countries, with curriculum that includes elements of an Integral approach, that aims to catalyze leadership from within individuals, to create breakthrough initiatives for addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Educate Girls Globally—a US-based NGO that works in India to increase girls education using a methodology, influenced by Integral theory and built around stimulating human potential, that mobilizes parents and other community members to consciously engage in the process of girls education, and thus also community wellbeing.

Integral Africa—a pan-African leadership development Master’s program, informed by an Integral approach, being pioneered by Ethiopian-born Yene Assegid, to develop the incredible potentials and insights of leaders for development across the African continent (planned to begin this year.)

Institute for Action and Progress (INAPRO)—A grassroots rural organization that works in the Andes of Peru to facilitate healthy psychological and emotional development of Quechua children and youth, in service of improved community resilience in a post-war context.

Centro Bartolomé de las Casas (CBC)—A popular education organization in San Salvador that works to foster community wellbeing using an Integral approach (both folk integral and integrally informed). The work seeks to address concrete needs, such as local economy, yet also enables people to draw upon their own subjectivity to heal from post-conflict trauma and to make new meanings of society, regarding faith, gender dynamics, social roles, violence, and more.
EveryONE-Ethiopia—A non-governmental organization that works with the interior dimension of personal development with the exterior dimension of economic development as an integrated approach to addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic with several different target groups in 5 sub-cities in Addis Ababa.

Integrated Service for AIDS Prevention and Support Organization (ISAPSO)—A non-governmental organization in Addis Ababa that works with various target groups to address HIV/AIDS, particularly low income women, with a methodology that creates peer education support groups as platforms for learning about HIV/AIDS, for professional development and income generation, as well as empowerment and personal change.

Research Methodology

For these case studies, I sought to identify existing methodologies being used by grassroots organizations, larger NGOs, and international programs that deal with the interior dimensions of international development. I used appreciative inquiry, participant-observer techniques, and open-ended questionnaires with key informants with two grassroots organizations (INAPRO in Huancalvelica, Peru and Centro Bartolomé de las Casas, in El Salvador). In some cases, I also used collective reflection and visioning. I researched the current uses of an integrally-informed approach in UNDP Leadership For Results Programme, Integral Africa program, and Educate Girls Globally using open-ended questionnaires with key informants and desk research (and, in some cases, drawing on an integral assessment tool designed by Thomson and Hochachka, 2004).

My own research methodology used the Integral approach by drawing upon objective, inter-subjective, and subjective data (detailed overview in figure 5). I analyzed, documented, translated and disseminated the research results in this series of case studies. Research results will also be developed as teaching tools and will provide material for capacity building exercises and dialogues with other NGOs, consultants, and students.
### Figure 5: Research design intended to gather knowledge using a variety of methodologies, using an Integral framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRACTICAL</th>
<th>INTERPERSONAL</th>
<th>PERSONAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(objective, UR/LR)</td>
<td>(inter-subjective, LL)</td>
<td>(subjective, UL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-observer techniques in activities/sessions</td>
<td>Open-ended interviews (based on co-created lines of inquiry)</td>
<td>Presencing (before and during meetings) (Senge, 2005; Scharmer, 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review documentation (desk research)</td>
<td>Collective reflection and visioning exercises (to co-create lines of inquiry and identify uses of the research)</td>
<td>Compassionate Listening (Hoffman, Monroe and Green, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis, writing and dissemination of case studies</td>
<td>Appreciative inquiry (to reflect on successes and challenges, to help prioritize goals of project for partner organizations and for me to integrate these into research process) (tools from: McNamara, Carter)</td>
<td>Exercising self-awareness through various techniques including meditation, intention-setting, and yoga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certain tools from Social Analysis System tools (www.sas_pm.com)</td>
<td>Non-violent Communication (Rosenberg, M. B., 2003)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certain tools from Community Action Research (Reason and Scharmer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participatory evaluation (tools from: Estrella, M. 2000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the Centro Bartolome de las Casas team during a site visit to El Salvador.
PART TWO: Synthesis

In this section, first I discuss how each participating organization uses the particular elements of an Integral approach. I describe ways that these organizations engage in human development process, integrated with the larger development projects.

General Findings

The research found that all participating organizations recognized that human interiors have enormous influence on the process and outcomes of development. All participating organizations in this study worked (to some degree) with the unseen interior factors that contribute to and influence the more exterior aspects of development. UNDP’s Leadership For Results (L4R) Programme, for example, facilitated processes by which participants could inquire into the exterior and interior factors that contribute to the HIV/AIDS epidemics, so to craft more effective leadership responses for curbing the epidemics. Similarly, CBC in El Salvador explores the subjective and socially-conditioned aspects of gender violence with men, so as to reveal and unravel the underlying causes of the issue.

The project also found that the integration of interior and exterior methodologies was an important, if not necessary, component to the success of development projects for these participating organizations. With all participating organization, these interior methodologies are not separated from the more common exterior interventions. In Ethiopia, for example, ISAPSO’s approach with low-income women at risk of HIV/AIDS first and foremost addresses economic poverty. Yet, the project officer explained that income-generating activities alone are not sufficient to produce the changes in behaviours required for the women to secure healthy livelihoods and remain out of risk of contracting HIV. The group support and trust provided by the unique methodologies of the organization are an essential aspect of lowering prevalence rates. These methodologies also create conditions for self-development toward a more empowered sense of self. Most participating organizations reported that the whole integrated methodology—including both the exterior and interior methodologies together—is more successful, as it responds more completely to the reality at hand.

Elements of Integral

Each organization engages different elements of Integral approach in different ways — either Folk Integral or Integrally Informed. Each group uses a diverse array of methodologies to work with interior and exterior dimensions of development. In this section, I will offer a brief overview of the ways that each organization engaged the elements of Integral approach in general.
UNDP Bureau for Development Policy’s Leadership For Results Programme.

The L4R programme uses quadrants of Integral theory primarily to map the many contributing factors to the HIV/AIDS epidemics, as well as to craft more appropriate responses to both the exterior and interior factors perpetuating the spread of the virus. In the Community Capacity Enhancement Programme of the L4R Several developmental lines are engaged via the array of methodologies use; including the self-line (ego-development), cognitive line (awareness), affective line (emotional intelligence), and inter-personal line (inter-personal skills). Overall, the L4R process creates a “container” for self-development of leaders.

Educate Girls Globally

The EGG methodology implicitly includes all quadrants. The program intends to stimulate human potential by catalyzing shifts from dependence and passivity to independence and action. The main aim of the project is to evoke conscious engagement in the process of girls’ education, not only by girls themselves, but also the parents, community members and leaders, through an array of methodologies that cultivate ownership and personal involvement in girls’ education.

Integral Africa

This project includes all quadrants, both in its pedagogy as well as the leadership development curriculum. It works with levels to create conditions for self-development, accessing human potential and bringing forth insights of leaders, as well as stimulating networks of leaders across the continent.

Institute for Action and Progress (INAPRO)

INAPRO works with unique methodologies from all quadrants to promote community resilience. In particular, it uses a five-tier framework for levels of healthy psychological and emotional development of Quechua children and youth. It also uses self-reflection and perspective-taking exercises to foster changes in adult behaviours regarding child and gender abuse, and various inter-personal methodologies to foster healthy sense of cultural identity.

Centro Bartolomé de las Casas (CBC)

This organization uses all-quadrant methodologies — using objective tools, inter-subjective dialogue, and subjective meaning-making — in their work with community people. The thematic areas also include all quadrants, from mental health and bible-theology (UL), to local economy (LR), to cooperative games (UR/LL). This involves
several developmental lines, such as: affective line (emotional), interpersonal line, spiritual (faith) line (see Fowler), cognitive line (awareness), and self-line. The team of practitioners also explores types as they relate to community development (particularly masculine and feminine, in the Masculinity Program). The organization engages in self-development processes (both in themselves as well as with community people) via an array of methodologies and tools.

**EveryONE-Ethiopia and Integrated Service for AIDS Prevention and Support Organization (ISAPSO)**

These two NGOs, although unique in their styles and forms, both engage the four quadrants in their work with groups at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS or impacted by the epidemic (namely, low income women, commercial sex workers, elderly, children and youth, and people living with HIV/AIDS). This is primarily folk integral. It involves dialogue circles (LL) built around the traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony, which become profound support groups for participants. This also gives rise to changed sense of self (UL) and also new behaviours and community systems (UR/LR).

**Human Development**

This project found that each participating organization engaged with human development as a response to what was needed and what was arising. Each group did so uniquely, yet the different methodologies can be grouped into distinct sets of methodologies (figure 6). Here I will describe these sets of methodologies used by participating organizations that work with the spiral of human development.

Some methodologies work with the developmental stages leading up to egocentric stage — working with issues residing in the lower layers of the psyche such as trauma, shadow issues, and disassociated elements of the persona. This work is important for most human communities (in developed or developing countries), and this is particularly the case in situations of extreme poverty, stigma and oppression, and post-war trauma. This work with the lower levels of the psyche, particularly shadow work, helps people to reclaim and integrate aspects of their psyche that have been hurt or disassociated. An example of this is EveryONE’s Space Program in which people living with HIV/AIDS can access free counseling at any of the sites set up by the NGO in 5 sub-cities of Addis Ababa. Another example is CBC’s work in mental health and self-healing in a post-war context, and INAPRO’s work with the lower levels of healthy psycho-emotional development of Quechua children.
Other methodologies work with participants to develop healthy self-esteem, self-identity, and self-confidence (egocentric). In one example, ISAPSO works with low-income women and commercial sex workers to build their sense of self and self-esteem through income-generating activities and peer-learning programs. Another example is how CBC works with women in the communities to learn how to take their own cut of earnings from a local economic initiative; prior to this, they would want to give the money earned to the shared community income. CBC facilitates learning around how taking care of oneself is actually in service of the larger community as a whole.

Other methodologies assist participants to work with groups of others, in wider communal and social circles (sociocentric and ethnocentric). These usually involve exploring cooperative as modes of engagement, collaboration and dialogue as well as evoking a sense of solidarity with others. An example of this can be seen with EGG methodologies in which girls explain why they want to go to school to other members and leaders in the community, invoking a profound sense of union and solidarity with the girls. Another example is ISAPSO’s use of peer education to create community and group solidarity with commercial sex trade workers in Addis Ababa; formerly the women competed against each other to meet their own needs.

Another set of methodologies relates with the emergence of worldcentric awareness, the first stage of consciousness that begins to be truly global. At this stage, the personal self becomes a more truly integrated, autonomous self. Morals have moved from self-care (egocentric) to care (ethnocentric) to universal care (worldcentric). Examples of this are seen with CBC bible-theology

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**Figure 6:** Sets of methodologies that correspond with four developmental stages, but can also be useful for healthy translation at any developmental stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage or altitude</th>
<th>Sets of methodologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kosmoscentric (teal, turquoise)</td>
<td>Activities to experience the transpersonal state, and helps to stabilize unitive awareness with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldcentric stage (orange, green)</td>
<td>Analysis of issues, accessing human potential and self-actualization (and realizing others have such capacities and potential as well); developing leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnocentric stage (amber)</td>
<td>Building capacity to work with a wider embrace of care for others (i.e. fostering participation, collaboration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egocentric stage (magenta, red altitude)</td>
<td>Developing a healthy ego and self-sense (i.e. dealing with psycho-social trauma, building self-esteem, self-confidence, self-healing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
methodologies that help community people to re-frame and expand their faith in relation to community development, such that it no longer is confined to a particular social group or faith community, and rather extends out to all groups and communities of faith. This is carried out alongside other methodologies that involve alternative local economies and trans-community sharing. Another example is seen with the UNDP’s Leadership for Results Programme, in which leaders engage in a personal development process that leads them to understand issues differently and craft responses for whole-systems.

The fifth set of methodologies (only found with one of the participating organizations) involves activities and process in which participants may experience the transpersonal states; and which could help to stabilize a unitive awareness with others. Although the kosmocentric stage is rarely stabilized and expressed, it is a latent potential within us all as described by all of the world’s wisdom traditions (see Wilber, 2000, 2006) and is important to include in a whole and complete developmental framework.

Some of the organizations work to foster healthy translation at several stages in the spiral of human development. For example, in Peru, INAPRO works with five different stages in healthy psycho-emotional development with Quechua youth; the beginning stages involve stabilizing a healthy sense of self and the later stages involve more community action and leadership. Similarly, in El Salvador, the initial stage of CBC’s mental health program includes self-healing and group bonding activities where local people can begin to identify and release trauma; the second stage is more oriented towards empowerment and capacity building in which participants learn tools for self-healing to share with others; and the third stage is directed towards actions for community development, such as social support or income generating projects. The grassroots organizations in Ethiopia (EveryONE, and ISAPSO) similarly found that the needs articulated by participants began at one stage, and then progressed to further stages.

Translation and Transformation

It seems that each set of methodologies responds to a unique set of needs, self-stage, and awareness expressed at that stage. To a certain degree, this makes sense, since at each stage an individual has a unique sense of self and a unique set of needs, and thus each stage may requires a unique set of methodologies. This suggests that different organizations are using an array of interior methodologies to respond to particular stages in the spiral of human development. Work being carried out at all these stages foster health at that stage, and in doing so, in some cases, provided emergent conditions for the next stage.

However, these sets of methodologies can be helpful for healthy development at any stage. In other words, each set of methodologies can be important for the healthy development of any stage. This is also called horizontal development, and it is definitely as important
as transformational change through the stages (or vertical development).

Figure 7 suggests how these sets of methodologies relate to both vertical and horizontal human development.

Keep in mind that these stages and their associated sets of methodologies are holarchical, meaning that each stage gives rise to the next, the latter transcending but including the former. (This is not the same as exterior social hierarchies of domination, which postmodernity has critiqued thoroughly. Please see Hochachka, 2005, pp. 52-54 for more on natural holarchy.) Further, this work with human development is not disconnected from work in other quadrants.

Integrating Human Development into Development

If development practitioners want to meaningfully integrate human development in international development practices, it is useful to better understand how complex and deep human development is.

To date in international development, most interior work either engages at the lower levels of the psyche (i.e. psycho-social healing), or it is helping people develop healthy egos (i.e. self-esteem, personal empowerment, etc). This is crucially important. But we also need to engage the higher stages of self-development, transcending the sense of small self, into a deeper identity and wider

Figure 7: Sets of methodologies used by participating organizations in response to reality. Each set of methodologies (listed in table 3) often, but not always, corresponds with the needs, self-stage and awareness at particular stages (such as ego, ethno, world and kosmoscentric). However, at every stage, these methodologies can be necessary and/or helpful for the healthy development at that stage. The spiral of human development (depicted by the grey arrow) is a dance between both horizontal development (translation) and vertical development (transformation), leading to greater and greater altitude.
embrace of others, be it ones’ own social group or to universal sense of welfare for all. This self-unfolding has the potential to flow into an even wider, deeper kosmoscentric embrace of others.

However, in terms of how to work with human development, what is often most useful (and most effective) is for practitioners to facilitate wellbeing at the existing stages of development. At the end of the day, a person cannot “grow” another. But we can help each other access fuller, more complete wellbeing wherever we are in this great developmental unfolding.

In this sense, human development work is better described as a process that enables wellbeing at whatever stage and in whatever ways that wellbeing is needed. If beneficiaries are suffering from unreleased trauma, then the response is to find ways to release and process the trauma. If participants are dealing with low self-esteem, then responses are to foster a healthy sense of self, with healthy self-esteem and self-confidence. And so forth in service of individual and community wellbeing. This process of responding to what is arising, inside and out, is also a way of catalyzing transformation of individuals and groups.

Conclusion: The Essence of Integration

While each participating organization offers important insights for an Integral approach to international development, what is essential is the integration of these parts into a coherent whole — all quadrants, all levels, all lines, AQAL.14 This integration is what is new, and what is needed.

We stand at the threshold of this integration. The faint footprints of integral pioneers are so very few in our shared history that it is hard to move forward with so little lived wisdom of the terrain before us. Yet the age of integration is here to which thousands of researchers have offered their specific insights, and which are now synthesized together into one single and daring framework that claims to include as much as reality has to offer. Each of the participating organizations uses elements of an Integral framework, intuiting that integration and whole-picture thinking is needed, and yet full integration still hovers slightly out of grasp. While we have come a long way and have further yet to go, the time is ripe for this courageous and brilliant unifying coherence.

It is now definitely clear that the answers to global challenges do not lie in piecemeal solutions. Solutions lie somewhere in the integration of these single contributions, parts and pieces, boldly bringing together what has formerly remained separate. Not only bringing together methodologies
from disciplines as distinct as biology to transpersonal psychology, but also developing wellbeing at every stage of the spiral of human development, including and especially ones’ own self.

The practitioners and organizations involved in this research have begun to work with facilitating health and wellbeing at various stages of human development as part of international development work. Many individuals who have been involved in those processes have come through unimaginable hardships dealing with poverty, illness, trauma, stigma, and oppression, and many are now active and compassionate leaders in their communities. This poetry of personal change intoned throughout these case studies.

Those leaders in tiny communities in the High Andes, in the depths of San Salvador, in the sub-cities of Addis Ababa, in the NGO and UNDP offices scattered from USA to northern India, hold the message that it will take far more than keen scientific or technological skill to solve today’s global issues. It will require us to make sense out of the senseless, to reach further into the unreasonable to find solutions, and to gaze boldly into division to find unity. It will require hearts to break open wide, to find within the Heart that was always already broken and yet could never be broken. It is this message that glimmers brilliant through these case studies, giving hope to a troubled planet.

References


Endnotes


2 With even finer detail, these derive into eight methodological families, see Wilber, 2006. Integral Spirituality, Shambhala.

Ecological Governance, University of Victoria 2005. My work suggests that the integral approach has a lot to offer development methodologies. Some development organizations are interested to learn more about this approach, as they see it can address some of the barriers to effective participation in their sustainable development projects.

4 Previous empirical research on developmental lines is discussed by Wilber (2000, pp. 28-32), and compiled and depicted in Charts 4a-c, pp. 203-205; Charts 5a-c, pp. 206-208; Chart 7, p. 212.


7 Some critics of integral theory suggest that these stage conceptions are inherently Eurocentric, marginalizing and sexist. However, much of the research that integral theory draws upon has been conducted cross-culturally and between genders. As far as is known to date, it appears that many of these stage conceptions are cross-cultural. Wilber (2000, pp 40-41) writes:

It should be remembered that virtually all of these stage conceptions — from Abraham Maslow to Jane Loevinger to Robert Kegan to Clare Graves — are based on extensive amounts of research and data. They are not simply conceptual ideas and pet theories, but are grounded at every point in a considerable amount of carefully checked evidence. Many of the stage theorists...(Piaget, Loevinger, Maslow, and Graves) have had their models checked in First, Second and Third World countries.

These stage conceptions point to deep structures not surface features; while the former have thus far been proven to be present in humans between and within cultures and genders, the latter change with culture, context and gender.

8 This movement is not necessarily linear and should not be reified. As Wilber (1999, p 111) explains, “These are not rigid levels, but fluid and flowing waves, with much overlap and interweaving, resulting in a meshwork or dynamic spiral of consciousness unfolding…. There is nothing linear about overall development!”

9 Post-postconventional is an even wider embrace, what Kohlberg called “universe-spiritual”, Wilber calls late vision logic to early

“Each level of development has a different worldview, with different perceptions, modes of space and time, and moral motivations.” (Wilber, 2000. pp. 22-23)

Theorists have called these waves or stages of cultural evolution (Habermas, 1979; Gebser, 1985; Wilber, 1995, 2000). Wilber (2000) describes these levels as archaic, magical, magic-mythic, mythological, mythic-rational, rational formalism, pluralistic relativism, holistic integralism, and psychic, subtle, causal, non-dual.


The sets of methodologies may relate with certain developmental lines, which would require further study.

As well as states and types of the Integral model, which this paper has not covered in detail.
About the Author

Gail Hochachka, BSc, MA has worked in the area of sustainability and community development in several countries in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa since 1998. Her first book was released in 2005 entitled *Developing Sustainability, Developing the Self: An Integral Approach to International and Community Development*. She is currently researching, writing, and building capacity on integral praxis for global wellbeing as Program Director of the Canadian non-profit organization Drishti - Centre for Integral Action. She is also Co-Director of Integral International Development Center of Integral University, and recently joined the core faculty of John F. Kennedy University’s *School for Holistic Studies*.

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