Avondale College
ResearchOnline@Avondale

Arts Book Chapters

Faculty of Humanities and Creative Arts

2014

A Typology of Child Sponsorship Activity

Brad Watson
Avondale College of Higher Education, brad.watson@avondale.edu.au

Follow this and additional works at: https://research.avondale.edu.au/arts_chapters

Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons

Recommended Citation

Watson, B. (2014). A typology of child sponsorship activity. In B. Watson & M. Clarke (Eds.), *Child sponsorship: Exploring pathways to a brighter future* (pp. 41-65). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

This Book Chapter is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty of Humanities and Creative Arts at ResearchOnline@Avondale. It has been accepted for inclusion in Arts Book Chapters by an authorized administrator of ResearchOnline@Avondale. For more information, please contact alicia.starr@avondale.edu.au.

3

A Typology of Child Sponsorship Activity

Brad Watson

Introduction – Questions of legitimacy

Critique of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) is often framed by comparisons of efficacy, accountability and transparency, culminating in broad conclusions about their legitimacy as change agents. For Fowler (2000, p.220) 'The most important factor for NGDO [non-governmental development organization] credibility and legitimacy is demonstrating effective performance'. Mindful of this emphasis on performance and impact, the Bond Network (2006, p.6) emphasizes that the quality of an INGO's work '...is primarily determined by the quality of its relationships with its intended beneficiaries'. Although Riddell (2008, p.307) has wisely cautioned against 'drawing overall, general conclusions about the impact of different NGO development initiatives' it is important to clarify the nature of specific approaches to helping children through Child Sponsorship (CS) rather than to assume that CS is much the same everywhere and similar today when compared to CS practice in the past. Mindful about ongoing critique of CS, this chapter seeks to position CS INGO interventions in a landscape of contested ideas and argues that informed critique of CS is best achieved through a typology of CS funded interventions.

Generalizing about child sponsorship from 1940 to 1980

In the era 1940 to 1980 CS INGOs often, though not exclusively, emphasized the support of individual children in institutions (especially orphanages and schools) or they prioritized cash transfer and service delivery to disadvantaged children and families in the context of their communities or homes. Of 26 CS INGOs identified by Livezey (1981, p.2) in the early 1980s it was apparent that 'Some help children in institutional settings such as orphanages and schools. Others help children in their homes settings'. However, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, CS for beneficiaries in home settings typically involved direct handouts, service provision and cash transfers to children and their families for food, medicine and school needs. Notably, both broad models of sponsorship funded intervention were predicated on the idea that disadvantaged children required targeted help (child welfare interventions) from powerful, external agents (INGOs). Both prioritized ongoing support for child welfare and education. While some CS INGOs were experimenting more and more with '...self-help uplift projects – such as well digging, sewer building, and introducing new farming techniques...', the majority prioritized institutional care and direct assistance to children and families.

ChildFund (previously CCF was used as an acronym for Christian Children's Fund or China Children's Fund) is a case in point. In his *Book About Children* Tise (1993, p.7) describes an American organization dedicated in its formative years to 'hordes of homeless children' in China who needed a safe haven (p.38), preferably orphanages. Accordingly, Tise (1993, p.7) points out that by November 1944 Child Fund was providing funding to 45 Chinese orphanages. This is best seen as an institution-based child welfare programme formed in response to wartime conditions in which state welfare agency was dysfunctional, non-existent or overwhelmed. The primary objectives of ChildFund at this time were the rescue of vulnerable children, protection in a safe haven, provision of educational opportunities and delivery of religious instruction. As a matter of expedience, in its early years the pioneering staff at ChildFund readily though not exclusively partnered with Christian missions that had pre-existing orphan care programmes and schools.

Tise attributed the rapid growth of ChildFund to the '...very popular "adoption" plan developed sometime prior to 1941' (Tise, 1993, p.7). Promoted widely by founder John Calvitt Clarke, the 'adoption plan' encouraged individual donors in the USA to contribute monthly for the support of a Chinese orphan. 1941 board minutes reveal that Clarke thought the 'plan was working very well and that the current rate of $24 per child per year should be continued even though it "is now costing more than $24 per year to take care of these orphans"' (Tise, 1993, p.7). ChildFund's role was relatively simple. It raised funds in the USA and transferred them to foreign missionaries and mission

institutions. In some cases ChildFund planned and constructed its own institutions. For example, the purpose-built, innovative Hong Kong Children's Garden (constructed in the mid-1950s) eventually housed 1,000 children in 98 cottages, each with houseparents, providing both formal and vocational education in what was widely lauded as an example of best practice in orphan care. However, most ChildFund supported orphanages appear to have been run like Hong Kong's Faith Love Orphanage with dormitories, regimented programmes, strict discipline and traditional, institutional approaches to orphan care (Tise, 1993, pp.44–45).

As a fundraising device, CS for orphan care provision provided a potent mechanism for mobilization of support in geographically diverse areas. By 1946 'funds were being sent to orphanages in the Philippines and Burma. Only a year later operations were being expanded into Japan, Korea and other realms of the Asian Continent'. At the peak of its orphan care assistance programme in Korea in the late 1950s (by which time ChildFund was known as Christian Children's Fund rather than China Children's Fund), it was assisting more than 38,000 children in 72 orphanages (Tise, 1993, p.64). The level of need reported was often touching. Reflecting on his early work in China, Reverend Verent Mills reminisced that the youngest of the 700 Chinese children in his care was discovered by a cluster of bamboo.

> And right beside the road there was a little boy. He looked more like a monkey than a human being thin, drawn, the skin on his face parched and wrinkled. The child was starving to death. He couldn't stand up, he couldn't cry, he just made moaning sounds. He was probably two and a half or three, and there he was, sitting in his own mess, too weak to move... (Mills in Tise, 1993, p.10).

In his poignant account of rescue and rehabilitation of the child (named Lo Duk, or Begotten of the Road), Mills provided a touching account of the potential for individual CS in a well-run orphanage to radically change a child's life through an act of love. Although such narratives would later be deemed simplistic and misleading in a context of poverty reduction, in the context of war-time orphan care they were generally deemed legitimate.

The rescue and protection of children like Lo Duk resulted in widespread acclaim for ChildFund's founder insofar as 'Everywhere he went, Clarke was treated with honor and glory. He made endless addresses, was feted at luncheons and dinners, and entertained by children at each of CCF's orphanages...' (Tise, 1993, p.8). To a large extent Clarke's vision of an international child adoption agency for war-affected children was legitimated in the 1950s by orphan care practice in his own country, affirmed by evangelical missionary zeal and promoted as an antidote to communism via an act of civic responsibility. Under Clarke's leadership CCF advertising depicted an emaciated child on a benefactor's lap, declaring that 'The road to communism is paved with hunger, ignorance and lack of hope' (in Klein, 2003, pp.155–159). In the context of emergent cold-war hostility and American confidence in its mandate to spread democracy, CS for orphans was embraced by some sponsors as an act of civic duty, Christian responsibility and demonstration of patriotic zeal.

ChildFund severed all ties with Clarke in 1963. His demise was accompanied by an irony apart from the harsh reality that he had been orphaned by the organization he had founded. That is, ChildFund's support for orphanages had peaked as the rapid demise of traditional American orphanages accelerated. Shughart and Chappell (in McKenzie, 1999, pp.153–154) have observed that in 1933 144,000 children were cared for in American orphanages in the USA. However, by 1977, only 43,000 children remained in institutions with family care viewed as a more legitimate and cost-effective response. The tide had clearly turned against the institutionalization of children in the USA by the 1960s, as it had against Clarke and his plans for an expanded orphan care programme.

Despite its historical work being centred on orphan care, by the 1960s ChildFund had begun to transition its programmatic approach while retaining individual sponsorship as a fundraising mechanism. The shift required a move to what it called Family Helper projects. Informed by American advances in the realm of social work utilizing case workers, the 1960s experimental Family Helper programme employed centres of social services, complete with supervisor, case workers, library books, classrooms and recreation spaces. High school graduates interested in social work were initially enlisted to visit homes, develop case reports on families and invite participation in ChildFund's programme (Tise, 1993, p.74). Cash grants were paid directly to families of eligible children '...to help you buy your groceries, and help you with your home. But every child of school age, five years and older, must go to school' (Tise, 1993, p.75). Additionally, mothers were encouraged to attend classes in nutrition, literacy, budgeting and sewing, or avail themselves of volunteer doctors who '...came to the center to give the children inoculations' (Tise, 1993, p.75). For ChildFund staff, the move towards case work represented an effort to adopt best-practice child welfare programming in an international context.

ChildFund's experimentation with individual child welfare in the Family Helper programmes of the 1960s and 1970s is evidence of a programmatic shift that was, arguably, out of step with emergent and soon to be dominant emphases on community development and poverty reduction. In a candid assessment of the experimental Family Helper programmes, staff member James Hostetler (Hostetler in Tise, 1993, p.66) explained with the power of hindsight that 'The emphasis was on what we could do for them. There was little thought of encouraging people to do something for themselves'. Despite this, the dominant feature of the new approach was extension of support to families using conditional cash transfers and direct service provision, either free or subsidized. Arguably, such transfers were conceived as being more likely to maintain children in their families, reduce high costs associated with institutional care, allow families the dignity of choosing how to expend funds and position the family as a conduit through which children would ultimately benefit.

In 1981 a comparison of various CS INGOs recorded that ChildFund's 236,000 sponsors were assisting 251,000 children in 26 countries:

> ...through its strictly one-to-one sponsor-child program. No religious requirement is imposed or inducement offered. It still supports some orphanages, but most of its work is done through its family-helper and educational programs. Funded entirely through private donations, its sponsors pay $15 monthly (Livezey, 1981, p.9).

However, in the 1980s ChildFund transitioned further to community development initiatives funded through CS. Responding to a General Accounting Office study of five large children's charities (including Foster Parent's Plan and Save the Children) which cited evidence of poor fiscal management or misrepresentation of policies in a number of organizations, ChildFund phased out funding for numerous third party partners (many of whom were local missions and missionary organizations) to improve financial transparency with the result that 'Within a year or two, all funds were remitted directly to the bank account of each CCF project' (Tise, 1993, p.80).

A push towards projects and community initiatives delivered by ChildFund was justified by self-initiated audits between 1972 and 1981 that had inexorably led staff to conclude that '...you can't effectively help a child apart from the context of his or her family, community and nation...' (Tise, 1993, p.84). For readers well versed in ideals of community development, self-help and empowerment this may be self-evident however through the mid to late 1980s ChildFund increasingly prioritized primary healthcare, nutrition, safe drinking water, basic education, income generation, environment and broader rights in programmes. It is evident that while former activities continued, over time CS in ChildFund had transitioned away from the individual support of orphans in institutions, to the support of children and their families in Family Helper programmes, and then to pooled funding for broader community development projects with some continued benefits to individual children. This involved challenges for ChildFund and other INGOs in transition, one of which was the fact that 'When an agency moves into the arena of community development, yet continues to operate on a sponsorship basis, it is sometimes difficult for the potential donor to understand exactly how his funds will be spent' (Livezey, 1981, p.3).

In its early years Plan International (known formerly as Foster Parent's PLAN for War Children and referred to simply as Plan in the remainder of this chapter) was also devoted to the support of orphans and war-affected children. Sponsorship of individuals in children's colonies during the course of the Spanish Civil war provided places of refuge for children who had been orphaned, separated from parents or identified as at risk of harm. Plan also fundraised for children in Korea in the 1950s however its staff argued that there were already too many poorly run and poorly funded orphanages in Korea (about 595 in 1953) and that a more urgent need was assistance to children living with their families. Although PLAN enrolled a similar number of children from families as from institutions in Korea, it avoided establishment of new orphanages and '...after 1954, it consciously leaned towards family-based enrolments with a view to preserving the family' (Plan International, 1998, p.26). Like ChildFund, historic Plan support of children in 'safe havens' generally required that sponsorship funds be directed to third party care providers. However, its new emphasis on support to families required direct cash grants to family members and provision of social services or community-based health programmes (Plan International, 1998, p.28).

The shift away from orphan support to family support is referred to with some pride in Plan International publications with the claim that 'Alone among children's organizations in Korea, Plan began a programme of direct assistance to families with children, guided by social workers working intensively in the communities around Pusan'. Excitingly for the organization at that time, its staff developed the model programme adopted by the South Korean government to resettle numerous orphans in family care (Plan International, 1998, p.27). However, whilst working with poor Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong, Plan staff recognized that 'Simple cash grants and parcels were not enough to save these children. Nor was PLAN's usual staffing system of one social worker to every 360 families enough to provide consistent support...' (Plan International, 1998, p.35). Utilizing family payments as a key plank of sponsorship practice, Plan staff in Hong Kong enrolled disadvantaged families (many of whom had fled mainland China) in a simple health system, provided children with uniforms and books, funded summer camps for sponsored children, encouraged recreational activities to keep children out of trouble and eventually initiated vocational training programmes for some parents to help them escape poverty (Plan International, 1998, p.35).

Clearly, Plan's CS funded interventions were not uniform. CS funded activities in Vietnam between 1957 and the fall of Saigon in 1975 were characterized by 'direct subsidies for food, education, school supplies and uniforms to the very poorest families and helped to support and train staff at hospitals and clinics' (Plan International, 1998, p.34). In the case of one sponsored child named Thahn, a small monthly cash grant enabled his mother to '...buy a few bricks each month until she had enough to build a small store' (p.34). By way of contrast, the ill-fated Ethiopian programme that was terminated in 1977 faced strong government opposition in which 'The People's Revolutionary Government of Ethiopia agreed and said in no uncertain terms that cash grants to particular members of a community would perpetuate an economic class structure that they believed had no place in Ethiopian Society' (Molumphy, 1984 p.282). Plan adapted its CS programme accordingly, informing Canadian sponsors that 'Instead of giving a family a gift of ten dollars, for instance, Plan has found it to be more beneficial to the family if the gift is used for village improvements...the provision of such necessities as uncontaminated water and mass inoculations' (Molumphy, 1984, p.282). For Plan International it is difficult to pinpoint a date at which we can declare that sponsorship funds were predominantly focused on community development however in 1984 the Board of Plan International '...adopted a Program Policy Statement that focused on developing skills and institutions within each community that would persist long after PLAN's departure' (Plan International, 1998, p.51).

In answer to questions about what sponsorship looked like when criticism began to emerge in the 1970s and 1980s, it seems self-evident from these two brief case studies that as a fundraising technique CS involved the selection of individual beneficiaries, provision of their details to a donor, and ongoing communication about children, typically involving letters and cards from the child and sometimes with letters or gifts from the sponsors. In reviewing CS practice employed by ChildFund and Plan, it is equally evident that historic interventions tended to favour support of individual children in orphanages and institutions during the INGOs early years, subsidization of disadvantaged children's school fees and educational expenses (including books, uniforms and pencils), transition to direct assistance to family members in the form of cash transfers and, increasingly, small-scale community development projects or direct service provision in a community context.

Child welfare vs community development

Although they are still popular with some INGOs (especially smaller ones), the direct handouts and child welfare activities common in the period 1940 to 1980 are now viewed with high levels of cynicism in regards to their ability to address and impact complex causes of poverty. Although Figure 3.1 places development and welfare on an artificially flat plane and posits them in a binary relationship, it is useful for summarizing the prevailing contemporary 'wisdom' regarding legitimate poverty reduction interventions. Where development-oriented activities offer self-help, enhanced community capacity and sustainable, long-term change, welfare-oriented activities are said to be characterized by gifts and handouts leading to improvements in individual well-being and possibly, dependency evidenced in a loss of well-being when support is removed suddenly.

McIlwaine's (1998, p.651) observation that civil society is fractured and that civil society organizations may be in conflict with each other, applies here in the sense that many non-CS INGOs have criticized early CS interventions as being welfarist, unsustainable, prone to creation of dependency and oriented towards child welfare rather than the difficult task of grappling with underlying causes of child poverty. While the transfer of clothing, gifts and direct cash payments to beneficiaries was an important feature of CS programmes historically, leading CS INGOs have minimized or moved away from the practice. Plan Australia (2012) informs sponsors that 'Plan has a policy of no cash gifts as this has proven to cause disharmony and problems within the family and community and may place children or their families at risk'. Such a stance is in keeping with MacAuslan and Riemenschneider's (2011, p.4) call for greater awareness of the relational impacts of cash transfers by INGOs and governments, rather than the economic benefits alone. For Plan in the mid-1970s, inoculation and service provision programmes in Ethiopia were based on the idea that '...they did see the disruptive and dependency-producing potential of direct injections of cash into what were essentially non-cash village economies' (Molumphy, 1984, p.282).

Development Oriented----------------------------	----------------------------Welfare Oriented
Facilitates partnership and self-help	*Facilitates paternalism, gift giving & service*
Hand-up – teaches the beneficiary to fish	*Hand-out – gives the beneficiary a fish*
Promotes independence and self-sufficiency	*Encourages dependence and reliance*
Builds community capacity and cooperation	*Improves individual wellbeing*
Targets community – focuses on community	*Targets beneficiaries – focuses on individuals*
Seeks sustainable, long-term change	*Seeks to meet individual needs*
Addresses underlying causes of poverty	*Addresses symptoms of poverty*
Seeks collaboration, networking etc.	*Avoids collaboration, networking*
Advocates for systemic change	*Advocates for charitable help*
Improves local disaster management capacity	*Provides disaster relief*
Improves capacity for the poor as self-advocates	*Markets the poor*

Figure 3.1 The development vs welfare spectrum

Welfare seems to be a troublesome word for many aid and development organizations though discussion is generally diplomatic. The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID, 2012) asserts that 'Welfare is typically provided on an individual or family basis including home-based and institutional care programs, such as those provided by orphanages, homes for the elderly, hospices, support to the disabled, and the provision of food for those who are destitute...'. Australian INGOs providing such 'welfare' are typically not able to provide tax-deductibility for donations because they are not sufficiently developmental in their intervention approaches. This critical stance is informed by the precepts of sustainability, notably the idea that INGOs must work themselves out of a job and build the capacity of local government and NGOs as service providers while avoiding creation of long-term dependency. As such the emphasis is not so much on interventions with short-term functional accountability and individual impact, but on those with long-term strategic accountability for impact on other organizations and the wider environment (Avina, 1993).

For Sen and Muellbauer (1987) effective development emphasizes means rather than ends, and it values improved capabilities of people and groups, leading to greater 'individual' and 'collective' freedom for self-determination. Likewise, interventions that improve collective or organizational capacity have gained favour over those that rescue or empower individuals. The relatively new emphasis on community empowerment, capability and capacity-building, with an associated critical questioning of traditional, individual CS as a credible poverty alleviation tool, is evident in several Australian non-CS INGO websites. For example, the Caritas Australia website's (2012) frequently asked question 'Can I sponsor a child?' is answered with a caution that 'Caritas Australia does not believe focusing on individuals addresses the underlying causes of poverty. We are concerned that it may also isolate individuals from their own family and community. Sponsorship can also lead to families and communities becoming dependent on aid rather than developing enterprise and initiative....' Similarly, The DFID-funded *The Rough Guide to a Better World* (Wroe and Doney, n.d., p.86) generalizes that CS is expensive, creates dissatisfaction, reminds recipients of their dependence and ignores the root causes of poverty. In an unconscious appeal for a typology of CS activities, the authors remind readers that 'In most cases "child sponsorship" is a misnomer. It is community development by another name'.

The evolution of INGOs

A number of CS INGOs have adapted and changed over time, sometimes dramatically. Further, the change in some CS INGOs has been consistent with David Korten's (1987) observation that INGOs tend to evolve through stages. Korten broadly described the evolution of development oriented NGOs as following three stages or three distinct generations, with possibility of a fourth, as seen in Figure 3.2 Korten's Generations of INGO.

First generation NGO: emphasis on relief, welfare and rehabilitation activities.

Second generation NGO: emphasis on community development and localized poverty reduction.

Third generation NGO: emphasis on 'sustainable systems development' associated with broader programs, upscaling, and contribution to regional or national development programs.

Possible Fourth generation NGO: arguably characterized by strong People's or social Movements with emphasis on advocacy and rights.

Figure 3.2 Korten's generations of INGO
Adapted from de Senillosa (1998, pp.2–3)

Rather than identifying generational leaps as Korten did, Clark (2003, p.144) argues that 'NGOs tend to broaden from one activity to encompass new ones rather than abandon the old entirely and jump to the new'. Biggs and Neame (in Edwards and Hulme, 2002, pp.34–35) observe that some NGOs in the Philippines actually moved away from political mobilization and embraced relief and welfare activities as a rational response to militarization.

In keeping with Korten's observation, ActionAid's initial work in CS funded education, begun in 1972, collected short profiles and photos of poor children for school fees, uniforms and equipment. Archer (2010, p.612) comments that '...within a very short time, ActionAid's field workers expressed concerns that this approach was ineffective and unjust'. The conclusion made by ActionAid staff was that they were helping needy children, but ignoring brothers, sisters and neighbours. According to Archer (2010, p.612) 'It was random and inequitable – but also it was ineffective. ActionAid was helping lots of individual children to access schools, but doing nothing to help the schools themselves – which were often in an appalling state'. ActionAid responded by building better schools in the 1980s to benefit all children in the community, arguably beginning a transition from a first to second generation development oriented INGO.

Despite a shift towards better schools, internal evaluation of 16 years of ActionAid school-building in Kenya found much-improved school facilities yet little evidence of improved access for poor children or increased academic performance. Indeed it seemed that in some cases 'poor children were more systematically excluded, especially when schools with good infrastructure imposed fee hikes' (Archer, 2010, p.612). Ironically, those schools which had received the most help and improved their facilities greatly, sometimes became the more likely to exclude poor children. ActionAid's subsequent experiment with non-formal education in the 1990s, and provision of pro-poor community schools with flexible curriculum and hours, is best seen as part of an evolutionary approach that would culminate in rights-based interventions designed to 'enable communities to demand quality education as a basic right and to enable governments to effectively deliver quality services' (Archer, 2010, p.612). This may be seen loosely as progression towards Korten's third generation with a more recent emphasis on up-scaling and the establishment of people's movements (rights-holders) empowered to leverage change from institutions and government (duty-bearers).

Although he was not commenting on CS INGOs specifically, Clark (2003, pp.145–146) illustrates the shifting focus of INGO activities in Figure 3.3. He asserts, 'I am not suggesting that NGOs are all making the same linear thought progression and are simply at different stages, or that the earlier stages are less important…'. However, he is explicit in urging that they work with civil society at local and national levels to address social injustice, weak institutions, and poor governance. Although it is clear that INGOs do not always progress neatly through Korten's generations, the reality for many CS INGOs is the perception of critics that they have not 'matured' and are still targeting poor individuals through low-yield relief and welfare activities. The consequence is a sizeable question mark against their legitimacy within the aid agency and academia, if not within the broader public.

Towards a typology of child sponsorship INGOs

Many CS INGOs have already transitioned, or are in the process of transitioning away from the exclusive support of individual children and their families. It should be obvious that there are a variety of historic and current CS funded interventions and that the construction of a typology is necessary in order to move discussion beyond generic statements and criticisms. In constructing a simple typology it soon becomes evident that several CS INGOs have evolved beyond micro-projects and individual welfare to 'the battle of ideas' and what Sogge

Target → Strategy ↓	Poor Individuals	Poor communities	Poor societies
Objectives	Relief and Welfare	Self-help	Equity, building institutions for inclusion
Operation goals	Meeting basic needs	Participation, sustainable poverty reduction	Rights-based development, voice, and empowerment
Local partners	Charities, missionaries	Community-based organizations, local NGOs	Civil society, progressive people in power
Local bases	Orphanages, refugee camps, schools	Village- and slum-level institutions, co-ops	Civil society networks from local to global levels
Sources of problems	Nature, wars, ill-fortune	Local elites, resource poverty, etc.	Social justice, weak institutions, bad governance
Typical instruments	Needs assessment, cost-effective business plan	Participation - from project planning to implementation and evaluation	Advocacy to ensure civil society views are reflected in national development plans, 'scaling-up' innovations
Key allies	Local religious institutions	Community leaders, existing community organizations	National and international media, unions, progressive politicians
Key INGO strengths	Fund-raising, logistical skills	Local knowledge, listening skills	Persuasion, access to influence, linking skills (from bottom to top, North to South, academic to practitioner).

Figure 3.3 Shifting focus of INGO activities
From 'Worlds Apart' by J.D. Clark, Copyright © 2003 by Kumarian Press, a division of Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. Used with permission of the publisher.

(2002, p.160) refers to as 'the larger contexts of their work'. ActionAid is a prime example of this though to what extent the battle is going well, and how CS can contribute seems unclear at the time of writing. Having said this, it is equally evident that many CS INGOs retain interventions congruent with Korten's first generation. Perhaps the most interesting question is whether there is a place for diversity in the CS

INGO sector and how the legitimacy of these diverse civil society organizations is best evaluated? Should all CS INGOs conform to a community development model or other paradigms regardless of their size, economies of scale, networking ability and experience?

Individual or institutional child sponsorship (IICS)

Brehm and Gale (2000, p.2) classify CS INGOs into two classes, those that support programmes targeted at development which benefits all children in a given community and those that 'focus on the individual child as the recipient of the sponsor's donation'. This is consistent with Livezey's broad classification (1981). The latter, individual or institutional child sponsorship model (IICS), is rooted in the individual and often individual institutional care of children. It forms the basis of the traditional approach, in which disadvantaged individuals such as orphans, children with disability, or poor children, are identified and supported in an institutional setting (including support to attend school). In some cases this may be a church or a secular school, depending on the underlying philosophy and religious world view of the CS INGO. Often the individual child's situation is documented, pictures are taken, and details are sent to a donor nation where they are distributed and used to solicit commitment from an individual donor for ongoing individual support (sponsorship) in return for personalized feedback, usually in the form of letters, school reports, photos, cards and drawings. A child sponsored in such a programme would often receive varying degrees of assistance including school fee help, uniforms, books, gifts and perhaps medical checks. Orphans, disabled children and boarding students may receive accommodation, cultural experiences, food, substitute parental care and a variety of other benefits. Generally, in IICS programmes a significant amount of the sponsorship dollar benefits an individual child rather than family members. In many instances sponsorship funds have been paid directly to the school or institution rather than the individual or child's family.

Historically the IICS model is the most enduring. Although it predates the emergence of community development imperatives, it elicits a high level of concern from INGO practitioners who abide by principles of community development. Variants of IICS are usually placed by critics at the welfare end of the welfare and development spectrum because individuals are perceived to be receiving assistance without addressing root causes of poverty or building the capacity of communities to meet their collective needs. In the words of one online critic who had worked for OXFAM, 'the idea that individual children could be targeted and given sustainable development assistance was never sound and for a long time hasn't been part of any kind of reputable development programming' (Elliot, 2010). To be fair to some CS INGOs that maintain IICS interventions, they do not claim that sponsorship is a highly effective method of community development, rather that sponsorship can change the life of a child. For an organization like SOS Kinderdorf, which predominantly sponsors orphans, legitimacy would therefore be assessed in terms of compliance with best practice in orphan care and child welfare rather than best practice in poverty reduction or community development. Generally speaking, SOS Kinderdorf prides itself on provision of high standards of childcare utilizing family-home care for only the neediest children.

Example of IICS – Asian Aid organization

The emphasis of Asian Aid Australia's programme is the selection of highly disadvantaged children and direct service provision to individuals through institutions such as orphanages, day-schools, boarding-schools and special education centres. In 2012 this small Australian CS INGO assisted a modest 8,400 children in this manner, representing the bulk of funding dispersed to three countries in Southern Asia. Contrary to common criticisms of individual sponsorship, Asian Aid Organization could be described as a cost efficient faith-based organization (typically retaining less than 10 per cent of donated funds for administrative and marketing overheads), an achievement attained by locating itself in a regional area in the donor country, sourcing child updates directly from schools rather than a large contingent of field staff or social workers, and by utilizing a low-cost marketing model through church presentations and newsletters. Sponsorship funds are paid directly to schools and institutions rather than individuals. Asian Aid Australia (2012) states on its website that it

> 'gives hope by fostering permanent positive change in the lives of disadvantaged children and their communities'. Sponsors may give $25 per month for day school education, $30 per month for day school expenses plus a mid-day meal, $40 per month for costs associated with boarding school education and accommodation or $50 per month for tertiary students or for children who are orphans, deaf, blind and have special needs.

The question for organizations like Asian Aid Australia is not whether individual sponsorship can benefit some very poor children. Internal research has confirmed that it can. Rather, it is whether the support of individual children, often in isolation from their families or communities, can be justified as an impactful, legitimate poverty reduction intervention in the prevailing climate of ideas. For Asian Aid Australia staff consensus has emerged that sponsorship dollars are best spent when individual children benefit from improved capacity of schools and the broader education system to meet the needs of children in the community.

Individual/family child sponsorship (IFCS)

Family Helper programmes run by Plan International and ChildFund in the 1970s identified needy children using a case work approach. Rather than automatically placing needy children in orphanages or boarding schools, CS funds were used to provide welfare services of benefit to the families and children and cash transfers or direct gift giving. Usually, children remained in their families and communities with some benefits to family members. Arguably, this model of intervention was pioneered by Save the Children Fund in the 1920s although at that time support for children was generally short term and consisted of food provision rather than cash. Like IICS, the emphasis of such programmes is on individual child development outcomes. However, unlike IICS, CS INGOs may identify a 'needy' community, select apparently needy children for sponsorship, and provide services within the community specifically targeting those children and others. In such programmes, the interventions offered by CS INGOs are aimed squarely at sponsored individual children or groups of sponsored children, and benefits are skewed towards these two groups rather than to community collaboration and empowerment at large.

Example of IFCS – Compassion International

Compassion Australia describes Compassion International as a 'holistic child development' organization rather than a community development specialist. When it was founded in 1954, Compassion's sponsorship programme also facilitated monthly support of children in Korean orphanages, providing 'Biblical lessons, food, clothing, shelter and medical aid on a regular basis...'. By 1968 however, a new Family Helper Plan had begun in India, Indonesia, Haiti and Singapore and

Compassion International also experimented with Special Care Centres from 1970, established to 'treat children with physical handicaps and medical illness, offering relief through surgery, training, physical therapy, adequate nourishment and special equipment'. Additionally, from 1974 sponsorship extended to children unlikely to receive an education through projects that '...pay for teachers' salaries, books, supplies, school uniforms, medical care and, in many instances, a hot, nutritious meal each school day' (Compassion, 2013). According to their website:

> Compassion's Child Sponsorship Program is comprehensive, holistic and unique. It's dedicated to helping children find a path out of poverty through the love of Jesus Christ. By working with local churches, the Child Sponsorship Program offers educational opportunities, health care and health-related instruction, nutrition, life-skills training, and opportunities to hear about and respond to the gospel (Compassion, 2012).

In the example above, Compassion indicates that it partners directly with Christian church groups in poor countries to deliver services to sponsored children through a community group (local church), within the context of their communities. To an extent this is building the capacity of local church to respond to needs in its own community and this may complicate its categorization somewhat. However, a Compassion child typically receives benefits from one-to-one sponsorship in the form of medical or dental care, food, clothing, primary education assistance or tutoring, secondary education/vocational training assistance and youth programmes offered through local churches. Rather than provide institutional care, the emphasis is on individuals and their families as beneficiaries, within the setting of their community.

Community development child sponsorship (CDCS)

CDCS is less oriented to the selection of very poor individual children for special benefits than to the transformation of the community surrounding disadvantaged children and their families. Brehm and Gale (2000, p.2) have observed that such funding models 'use the funds to support development programmes based in the community in which the sponsored child lives, to benefit all children in the community'. Rather than seeking to identify the most needy children in the community, in the pretense that they will exclusively benefit, contemporary CDCS positions sponsored children as ambassadors. Duly photographed and processed, the children or youth who will be used to solicit sponsorship donations function as a medium or conduit through which funding flows to the benefit of the whole community when the funds are pooled for interventions such as economic development (microcredit and loans), education (primary and secondary) and health projects (including nutrition, primary healthcare and risk reduction).

Example of CDCS – World Vision

The World Vision Australia website (2011) poignantly described the impact of CDCS on Levy, a four-year-old Zambian child sponsored by Kate, an Australian. According to World Vision Australia's marketing department Levy was 'small, and malnourished. Going to bed hungry was normal...the water Levy drank was dirty and it often made him sick. He barely had the energy to move...'. Through pooled sponsorship funds utilized in an Area Development Program (ADP)

> He had grown considerably and was healthier, stronger and had lots of energy to play with friends...Levy's family had developed a garden...and Levy was now eating two nutritious meals a day...now there was a borehole only 200m from their house that the whole community was benefiting from... The support...also helped Levy's community build a school and health clinic... He attends school regularly...

In marketing the CDCS model above, WV Australia effectively communicates the impact of interventions on individuals (thus maintaining the marketing advantages of individual CS) within the context of community development initiatives (aimed at strengthening the community around the child). The reality however is that this simplifies World Vision's development programming. In its Handbook for Development Programs (World Vision International, 2011, p.8) we read that the preferred role of World Vision is to 'serve as a catalyst and builder of the capacity of local partners and partnerships for child well-being'. The shift took place in 1979 when World Vision pledged to move 50 per cent of its childcare projects to development by 1984 when there would be over one million children sponsored (Watkins, 1998, p.5). Although World Vision Area Development Programs have emphasized community development and capacity building, the current Development Programming Approach emphasizes local partners and actors as primary stakeholders, prioritizes rights-based approaches and fosters some local advocacy. The Citizen Voice and Action component World Vision Area Development Programs (began in 2005) was present in 209 ADPs in 29 countries by 2011 (World Vision International, n.d., p.2) and is central to the Child Health Now campaign which educates citizens about their rights and explains how rights are articulated under local law.

> ...communities work collaboratively with government and service providers to compare reality against government's own commitments... Finally, communities work with other stakeholders to influence decision-makers to improve services, using a simple set of advocacy tools. As government services improve, so does the well-being of children (World Vision International, n.d., p.1).

Rights-based child sponsorship – RBCS

A rights-based CS (RBCS) model utilizes CS fundraising to promote the human rights of children and other community members, advocating for change and mobilizing local resources and communities in its pursuit. Reflecting on ActionAid's evolution over time, Archer (2010, pp.615–617) has observed that by 1997 ActionAid had articulated a new approach to education which involved moving 'from providing to enabling', a strategy justified by the belief that 'The challenge for the 2010s is to connect programme, policy and campaigning work at all levels'. Although there is often a gap between action and rhetoric, it is evident that ActionAid has made significant progress in building capacities of local communities and network partners to maintain pressure on governments and international institutions. While many INGOs currently use the issue of rights to justify and legitimate their interventions, it is argued here that few have, and are capable of making the painful transition away from service provider and advocate to genuine partner and facilitator of direct action and grass-roots advocacy.

Example of RBCS – Plan International

In a recent report, Plan International (2008) reiterated support for what it calls Child Centred Community Development (CCCD), adopted as a planning tool for use in developing countries to benefit all children in a community rather than just the sponsored ones. Vijfeijken (et al, 2009, p.78) acknowledge Plan International's long history as a needs-based change agent working at community level through individual sponsorship and direct service delivery, an emphasis still evident in many country offices despite the emergence of a rights-based approach (RBA). However, in assessing the recent strategic shift of Plan Guatemala, they note:

> The adoption of CCCD represents a significant departure from Plan's previous approach to development work, which was characterized by individual support to sponsored children, direct provision of goods and services, and a welfare-based model of NGO interventions. Under CCCD, Plan redefined its role and responsibility in development processes and moved towards a facilitating role in an effort to enhance the ability of local stakeholders, including state actors, communities, and domestic civil society organizations, to create the changes necessary for sustained development progress (Vijfeijken et al, 2011 p.5).

It is interesting that Plan International has considered the potential for its programmes to morph into an 'activist' model of sponsorship that 'anticipates children/communities/sponsors being involved in lobbying decision makers', a view consistent with ActionAid's emphasis on grassroots advocacy and the empowerment of local agency in the quest to hold duty bearers accountable. In seeking to facilitate strong bottom-up advocacy, running in parallel with community-based initiatives, there is some justification for coining the term RBCS. Arguably, there is a distinction between rights-based interventions (in which interventions are justified by ones' understanding of the rights of the beneficiaries/partners) and rights-based community empowerment evidenced by collaborative processes in which donor INGOs genuinely foster the ability of grassroots organizations and social movements to agitate and strategize for the fulfilment of their own rights, using their own resources. A critical question for such organizations is the extent to which individual sponsorship as a fundraising tool is adaptable to community empowerment and rights-based activism given the reality of a large gap between donor expectations and programmatic realities.

Vijfeijken et al (2009, pp.76–77) argue that Plan International takes a bottom-up approach to rights-based development that differs from strategies of other rights-based development organizations. Unlike organizations such as ActionAid, Plan is not working to support local movements and grassroots organizations (GROs) to claim their rights but instead focuses on strengthening existing community structures as

IICS Individual/ Institutional	**IFCS Individual/ Community**	**CDCS Community Development**	**RBCS Rights Based**
Child Development oriented	Child Development oriented	Community development oriented	Social systems and advocacy oriented
Empowers/assists individuals	Empowers/assists individuals & family members	Empowers communities across a range of sectors	Empowers communities, disadvantaged groups and seeks 'justice'
Delivers via schools and institutions as partners	Delivers via institutions/local church and local community as partners	Delivers via dev orgs, southern NGOs government and community organizations as partners	Delivers via dev orgs, influential grassroots orgs and social movements, networks
Links donors to individuals assisted in an institution e.g. a school or orphanage	Links donors to individuals assisted in the context of their families	Links donors to individuals for service delivery to communities or integrated community development	Links donors to individuals and communities for community development, advocacy and rights-based mobilization
Targets individual beneficiaries for majority of assistance	Targets individuals, families and some groups of individuals for assistance	Targets whole communities for assistance, increasingly on a large scale	Targets whole communities and disadvantaged groups for advocacy and assistance
Promotes individual child improvement	Promotes child holistic development	Promotes sustainable community development	Promotes networking, systemic change and altered power relationships
Addresses impacts of poverty at an individual level for long-term impact	Addresses impacts of poverty at an individual level for long-term impact, often involved in local service delivery	Addresses underlying local/regional causes of poverty. Significant capacity	Addresses underlying local causes of poverty and systemic injustice
Seeks short-term and long-term individual impact	Seeks long-term individual impact and some community capacity improvement	Seeks long-term capacity building and community impact	Seeks long-term capacity building, mobilization of rights activists and empowerment of social movements
Evaluation top-down Reporting to donors Focus on outputs rather than impact Beneficiaries viewed as passive	Evaluation top-down Reporting to donors Focus on outputs rather than impact Emerging commitment to data and evaluation Heavy use of outside experts	Evalution participatory. Focus on outcomes Programmes increasingly data-driven. NGO becomes accountable to beneficiaries as well as donors. Beneficiaries viewed as partners and experts	Evaluation participatory. Focus on outcomes Genuine, bottom-up, collaborative evaluation. NGO accountable to beneficiaries and donors Declining Focus on reporting to donors.

Figure 3.4 CS Intervention Comparison Table

democratic expressions of community life. Thus the focus of Plan International lies (so far) less on grassroots activism but instead on the practical exercise of human (and child) rights by local communities and their ability to participate in the local democratic process.

Questions and comments

Having proposed a typology of CS funded interventions, inevitable questions must be raised whilst keeping in mind that many CS INGOs may not neatly fit, or may fund other interventions using non-CS income. Nevertheless, we might ask, is this typology inclusive enough to adequately categorize most CS funded work past and present? If so, in the current climate in which INGO legitimacy is questioned, is it desirable, or possible for CS INGOs to transition to RBCS as ActionAid and Plan are seeking to do? Is it possible to be a legitimate, effective partner in poverty reduction at each level of the proposed typology, given the small size of some organizations and their limited capacity? And, to what extent is diversity in the CS INGO sector an asset? How might we measure success and benchmark good practice?

Despite some recent progress, the INGO sector at large is notorious in that 'Internal evaluations are rarely released, and what is released comes closer to propaganda than rigorous assessment' (Edwards and Hulme, 2002, p.6). Undoubtedly some CS INGOs are still stuck in what Van Rooy (in Eade and Ligteringen, 2001, p.37) refers to as the 'do now, think later mentality'. In fairness, however, many are stuck in a 'do now, research later because the need is great and funds are short mentality'. A prominent recent exception is work conducted by Wydick et al (2013, pp.425–426) on Compassion International's holistic child development programmes in five countries. They found (among other important indicators) that Compassion Sponsorship increases years of completed schooling by '1.03–1.46 years over a baseline of 10.19 years and increases the probability of primary school completion by 4.0–7.7 percentage points (baseline 88.7%), secondary school completion by 11.6–16.5 percentage points (baseline 44.9 percent)'. Such findings support the credibility of Compassion's CS programme as an IFCS intervention predicated on child development, however they cannot be used to assess the value of this form of CS as a catalyst for broad-based poverty reduction at a community level.

It is unfortunate that debate over CS has also been constrained by a frustratingly simplistic use of CS as a blanket term and disregard for diversity in the sector. In the absence of simple answers for several of the difficult questions above, three key points may be made. First, when critiquing CS it is wise to consider the evolution of the organization's work and perhaps to benchmark CS INGOs against others with similar intervention strategies as a first step. As a rule, we should compare apples to apples as well as consider the merits of oranges as alternatives. Second, just as Clark (2003) suggested that INGOs tend to morph into new activities while retaining aspects of previous work, CS INGOs may be similarly likely to utilize the same fundraising tool for different interventions, especially where network partners have differing ideologies. This may explain growing preference for rights-based initiatives in Latin America with its history of dependency theory and structuralism (MacAuslan and Riemenschneider, 2011, p.5), and in the same network but different geographical context, a community-oriented sponsorship programme informed by a utilitarian needs-first view. Third, it would seem that while many CS INGOs have embraced various codes of conduct, they could be more active in evaluating their activities, disseminating the results and sharing the lessons learned. To some extent this is needed across the INGO sector!

Lingan et al (2009, p.1) observe that INGOs have made, and continue to make, ambitious claims about the impact and influence of their activities. However, the claim that a small donation each month can change the life of a child, or the capacity of the community surrounding the child, is best judged by placing CS INGO activity in a typology which facilitates informed discussion by INGO staff and the beneficiaries whose voices are strikingly absent in the debate over legitimacy. Lister (2003, p.16) reminds us that legitimacy goes beyond questions of accountability, representation and performance to ask legitimate for whom and 'does some legitimacy matter more than other legitimacy?'

Bibliography

Archer, D. (2010) 'The evolution of NGO-government relations in education: ActionAid 1972–2009', *Development in Practice*, 20, 4–5, 611–618.

Asian Aid Australia (2012) *The Joy of Sponsorship*, http://www.asianaid.org.au/Newsroom/joy-of-sponsorship.aspx, date accessed 21 May 2012.

AusAID (2012) *AusAID – NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) Guidelines*, http://www.ausaid.gov.au/ngos/Documents/ancp_guidelines.pdf, date accessed 6 May 2012.

Avina, J. (1993) 'The evolutionary life cycles of non-governmental development organisations', *Public Administration and Development*, 13, 5, 453–474.

BOND (2006) *A BOND Approach to Quality in Non-Governmental Organisations: Putting Beneficiaries First*, a report by Keystone and AccountAbility for the British Overseas NGOs for Development (London: BOND).

Brehm, V. and Gale, J. (2000) 'Child sponsorship: A funding tool for sustainable development?' *informed: NGO Funding and Policy Bulletin – NGO Sector Analysis Programme Bulletin* no.3, November 2000, pp.2–6.

Caritas Australia (2012) *Frequently Asked Questions*, http://www.caritas.org.au/about/faqs, date accessed 8 May 2012.

Clark, J. (2003) *Worlds Apart: Civil Society and the Battle for Ethical Globalization* (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press).

Compassion (2012) *Compassion's Holistic Child Development Model*, http://www.compassionmodel.org/child-sponsorship.php, date accessed 22 May 2012.

Compassion (2013) *Compassion's History – 1970s*, http://www.compassion.com/about/history/1970s/default.htm, date accessed 13 September 2013.

de Senillosa, I. (1998) 'A New Age of social movements: A fifth generation of non-governmental development organisations in the making?' *Development in Practice*, 8, 1, 40–53.

Eade, D. and Ligteringen, E. (eds) (2001) *Debating Development* (Oxford: Oxfam).

Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (2002) *Non-Governmental Organisations – Performance and Accountability Beyond the Magic Bullet* (London: Earthscan).

Elliot, M. (2010) *Child Sponsorships: Are they Effective Aid?* http://marianne-elliott.com/2010/05/child-sponsorships-are-they-effective-aid/, date accessed 8 May 2012.

Fowler, A. (2000) *The Virtuous Spiral: A Guide to Sustainability for NGOs in International Development* (London: Earthscan).

Klein, C. (2003) *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Korten, D. (1987) 'Third generation NGO strategies: A key to people-centered development', *World Development*, 15, supplement, 145–159.

Lingan, J., Cavender, R.L. and Gwynne, B. (2009) 'Responding to NGO development effectiveness initiatives', *One World Trust/World Vision Briefing Paper* No. 122, November.

Lister, S. (2003) 'NGO legitimacy: Technical issue or social construct?' *Critique of Anthropology*, 23, 2, 175–192.

Livezey, E.T. (1981) 'Child sponsorship dollars: How much goes to him? *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6 August 1981, http://www.csmonitor.com/layout/set/print/1981/0806/080657.html, date accessed 27 March 2013.

MacAuslan, I. and Riemenschneider, N. (2011) *'Richer but Resented: What Do Cash Transfers Do To Social Relations and Does It Matter?'*, Paper presented at international conference 'Social Protection for Social Justice', Institute of Development Studies, UK 13–15 April.

McIlwaine, C. (1998) 'Contesting civil society: Reflections from El Salvador', *Third World Quarterly*, 19, 4, 651–672.

McKenzie, R.B. (ed.) (1999) *Rethinking Orphanages for the 21st Century* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications).

Molumphy, H.D. (1984) *For Common Decency: The History of Foster Parents Plan, 1937–1983* (Warwick, RI: Plan International).

Plan Australia (2012) *Communicating with Your Sponsored Child*, http://www.plan.org.au/myplan/faq/childsponsorship/letters, date accessed 6 May 2012.

Plan International (1998) *A Journey of Hope – The History of Plan International 1937–1998* (London: Plan International).

Plan International (2008) *The Development Impact of Child Sponsorship: Exploring Plan International's Sponsorship-Related Processes and Materials, Their Effects, and Their Potential Evolution* (London: Plan International).

Riddell, R.C. (2008) *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Sen, A. and Muellbauer, J. (1987) *The Standard of Living* (New York: Cambridge University Press).

Sogge, D. (2002) *Give and Take: What's the Matter with Foreign Aid?* (New York: Zed Books).

Tise, L.E. (1993) *A Book about Children: The World of Christian Children's Fund 1938–1991* (Falls Church, VA: Hartland Publishing).

Vijfeijken, T.B., Gneiting, U. and Schmitz, H.P. (2011) *How Does CCCD Affect Program Effectiveness and Sustainability? A Meta Review of Plan's Evaluations* Transnational NGO Initiative, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/tngo/Publications/, date accessed 13 May 2012.

Vijfeijken, T.B., Gneiting, U., Schmitz, H.P. and Valle, O. (2009) *Rights-based Approach to Development: Learning from Plan Guatemala* Transnational NGO Initiative – Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs Syracuse University, http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/moynihan/tngo/PLAN_guatemala_strategy_evaluation.pdf, date accessed 13 September 2013.

Watkins, S. (ed.) (1998) *Understanding Child Sponsorship: A Historical Perspective*, 20 March 1998 (WVUSA Archives).

World Vision Australia (2011) *Transforming Lives and Child Sponsorship: Who is it Happening To?* http://www.worldvision.com.au/issues/Transforming_Lives__Child_Sponsorship/Who_is_it_happening_to_.aspx, date accessed 22 May 2012.

World Vision International (2011) *The Handbook for Development Programs: The Essentials* (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International).

World Vision International (n.d.) *Citizen Voice and Action – Helping Communities Discover the Power Within*, World Vision internal documentation.

Wroe, M. and Doney, M. (n.d.) The *Rough Guide To a Better World and How You Can Make a Difference*, http://www.roughguide-betterworld.com/betterworld.pdf, date accessed 8 May 2012.

Wydick, B., Glewwe, P. and Rutledge, L. (2013) 'Does international child sponsorship work? Six-country study of impacts on adult life outcomes', *Journal of Political Economy*, 121, 2, 393–436.