

WORLDPIPE

The Chad-Cameroon Pipeline Project and the Making of World Society in Central Africa

Chad-Cameroon Pipeline is a mega-investment that transforms West and Central Africa as a new American oil heartland. There is an „oil world society“ in which Africa emerges as a pivotal point. Since the beginning of oil exploitation in Equatorial Guinea for example, Malabo, the capital city of the country is now connected to the capital city of the State of Texas by a daily flight. There are flows of every nature (individual, technical and financial) between oil producing countries of the region and the developed world which contribute to the making of world society. The pipeline rents are also subject to a kind of world governance if we take into consideration the fact that international institutions like WB and IMF, advocacing groups and NGOs and international power have a look on the use of oil revenu by chadian and cameroonian government.



The Chad-Cameroon Pipeline can be studied within the theoretical framework of the diffusion of international norms and values on the one hand, and on the other hand, on oil sector as a strong factor for the construction of world society. What is taking place on the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline field is the international reclassification of the region and its integration into the world geopolitical and economic games. Local actors and societies are working to reshape world values according to their own interests and views. The states of the region are the great oil suppliers to US; they are using this position to moderate the American administration critics against their government as far as the respect of democratic procedures and human rights are concerned. The African scholars in social science assess the project (summarised below) as one of the most significant laboratory for insights into the pathways to future developments of African nations in the global society as well as local civil societies.

> Partnership project with a multinational team of Central Africa (A. Chouala as team leader) and WORLD_DRIVES and the FHZ-HSA, Switzerland.

> State of the art: Preproposal submitted; preparatory workshops in Yaoundé; submission of proposal 1st March 2005; proposal work-in-progress. (see summary)

Summary

Pipelines as roads to modernisation and globalisation. The construction of an oil pipeline of about 1070km linking the Chad oil producing region of Doba to the seaport town of Kribi in Cameroon is one of the biggest development projects launched in Africa South of the Sahara. The project, which costs about 3.7 billion US\$ involves various partners: States, international financial institutions and multinational companies. From the pipeline project, Cameroon and Chad are expecting great revenues which, if well utilised, will enable substantial investments in the social domain and will also help provide job opportunities which is highly needed. The Chad-Cameroon pipeline investment has been considered as a very good example of the financing of interstate development project by international financial institutions and multinational corporations. The objectives of the study are set in order to explore the following questions: (1) How does the Chad-Cameroon pipeline project constitute a collective response from both states, international funding institutions and multinational companies to the challenge of globalisation at the regional level? (2) How does this project contribute to the exportation of world society values and culture from the rich world? What are the ways of appropriation of that culture both at local, national and regional levels? Which modes or cultures of participation progressively emerged and are being consolidated? (3) How do local appropriation of world culture and values influence the local politics and how do the local constraints intervene and/or contribute to a regional shaping of world society specific for Africa? (4) What has happened and what can we learn from the Chad-Cameroon pipeline compared to the other pipeline projects in Central Africa, mainly in Congo, Nigeria and Sudan?

The targets. The topic of pipeline impacts on local societies as one of the main challenges of globalisation in a Southern context was articulated and proposed to the Swiss partners by the African scholar Mr. Chouala (Submission of a paper abstract under the same title to the international call for papers "The regional shaping of World Society"). We decided to organise an African-Swiss partnership taking the topic as an initial project for a long termed cooperation with the following main targets

- to find theoretical and empirical insights into the ways of how "megaprojects" are shaping (negatively and positively) the civic culture and standards of local societies and how they react on these kinds of globalisation in the case of Central Africa;
- to find the adequate means and best practice to join social science research (case studies) with the science and practice of social work (animation approaches) in African contexts as well as in Switzerland; this kind of cooperation will stimulate the training of students and evoke specialised competences in Cameroon and Switzerland for the practical use of social science research;
- to give the African partners a public resonance in the international scientific community in a very crucial domain (globalisation from an African outlook);
- to include the agents and actors involved and touched (positively and negatively) by the impacts of the pipeline project in order to stimulate practical measures and applications (including investors, companies and the World Bank which published a series of reports).
- to continue and consolidate the partnership as an African branch (Central Africa) concentrating on local participation and civil local trends in Africa which is included into the international centre of competence (WORLD_DRIVES) promoting a continuous exchange and flow of scientific questions and results about the "Regional Shaping of World Society".

Concept, methods and fieldwork. Social sciences address the transformations leading African societies to modernisation and into international and global society. A first approach emphasizes the geopolitical constellations and change linked to pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial aftermaths, the building as new nations and the dramas inherent to it, until the recent initiatives launched to integrate African societies following the model of "International Partnerships" (Chouala). A second group of approaches underline the penetration and role of TNC's explaining the economic transformations of African societies from pre-industrial to modern capitalist zones of development; this group of inter- und multinational players represent the economic and bargaining interests as in the case of pipelines, the extraction and the exportation of oil. Evidently in Central Africa, the third approach is relevant concentrating the impacts of help and development programmes of national and international organisations, states and NGO's (financial, health, food, education) as triggers for social and political change; thereby military and security interventions are still applied in Africa while the (non-intervention) procedures of negotiation, the optimistic scenario of a "negotiating world", are predominantly used in other international regions. Fourth the cultural transfers caused by migrations, diffusion of mass communication, science and cultural institutions contribute to the process of modernisation and globalisation in Africa. In contrast to these four streams of debates and research a large deficit of knowledge and scientific work concerns the role and impact of mega-

projects like pipelines on the shaping of African societies. Here these big investments and infrastructures evoke strong impacts on the social life on micro levels caused through the macro levels by the modernisation, the inclusion into the global society as well as the imposing of the international players on local societies. The mega-project model in the case of the Cameroon/Chad pipeline contains an excellent potential for research: a pipeline has to do with the most wanted resource (oil) in the rivalry of economic players, simultaneously the pipeline creates a global transversal through villages and societies of the country side of Africa revealing the contradictory meanings of modern infrastructures, life styles and mentalities. The coping with these impacts of African people and players delivers a laboratory demonstrating deficiencies, reactions and creative potentials of African societies. Therefore the analyses and assessments of the impact zones around and along the pipelines we can be used for the strategies and measures for the planning and installation of mega-projects in African contexts. Since such projects will seem to be launched much more than on other continents they will shape African's future in fact on a very visible and existential level. In the case studies along the Chad-Cameroon pipeline the zones of impacts are analysed by empirical methods following a theory of positive, negative and contradictory impacts on basic and existential needs (health), on local labour markets, on migrations, on life styles, value orientations and identifications and the images of local and global society. The results originate firstly in data on an individual level (surveys, documents, re-analyses of reports and data). In African societies a special focus has to be led to the collective level of observation and should complement the individual data. Villages, local societies, groups of actors are concerned as collective actors and groups shaped by differences, conflicts and joint reactions (for instance norms of land use, cultural autonomy, expectations and aspirations for participation in local civil processes) which superimpose the individual benefits and disadvantages linked to the pipeline. The fieldwork is embedded into a preparatory phase finding and training the adequate methods for the case studies as well as into steps analysing, comparing and presenting the results to the scientific community on an African and world wide level. The involved teams of Congo, Nigeria and Sudan contribute to the re-assessment of the most important aftermaths of the pipeline impact zones in their own countries basing on data available there.

The network. The location of the African part of the network is Yaoundé (Cameroon). The network is enlarged to partnerships and institutions of Central Africa which have significant experiences with pipeline impacts on local societies: Chad, Congo, Nigeria, Sudan. Scholars and representatives of Central Africa, Angola, Republic of Central Africa, Gabon are participating in an All-Central-African network of exchange and information concerning the project, evaluation and valorisation of the results. The network participating in the project and meetings delivers conclusions and practical measures for one of the most urgent question for the future: how do mega-projects like pipelines open the roads and/or function as barriers to the new geopolitical model of an African partnership in the global plays dominated by the Western and Asian actors and powers? How do they influence the nation wide socio-political plays (enjeux) going on between the three cores, the civil forces, the opposition parties and the state government in the countries of Central Africa from a comparative perspective?