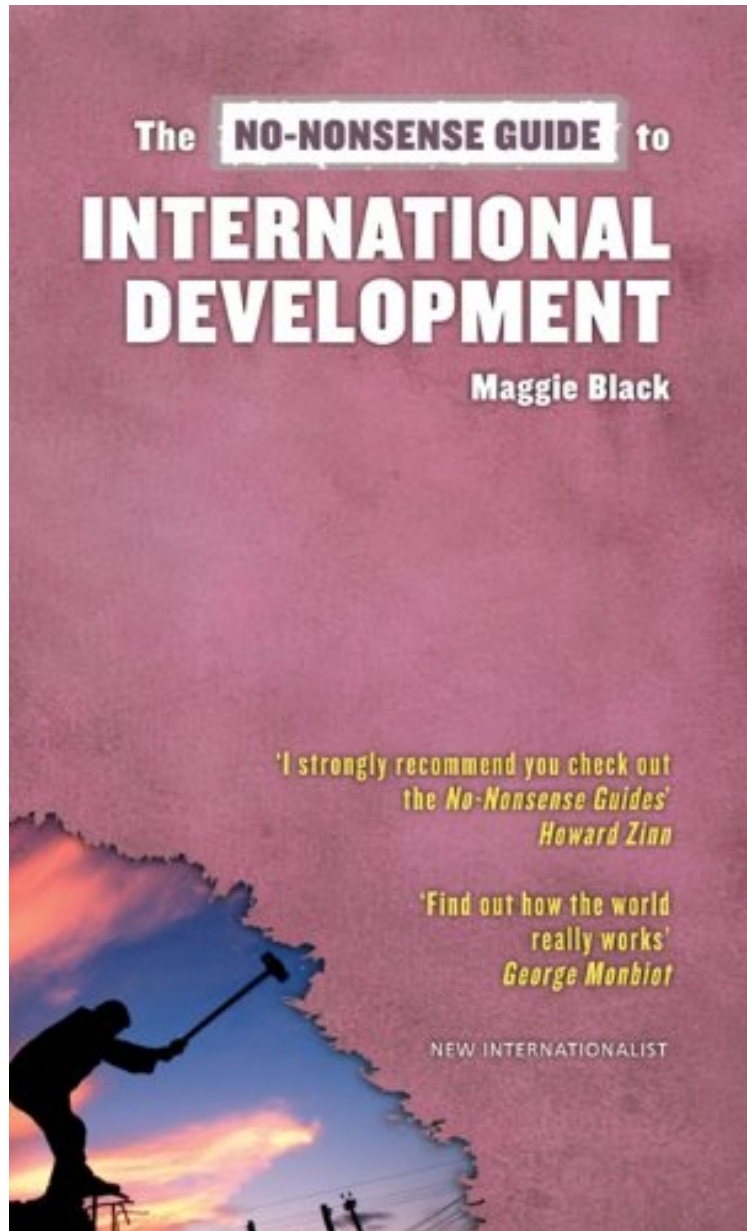


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## The No-Nonsense Guide to International Development (No-Nonsense Guides)

*Maggie Black*

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**Maggie Black : The No-Nonsense Guide to International Development (No-Nonsense Guides)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The No-Nonsense Guide to International Development (No-Nonsense Guides):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. review of Mrs. Black's No Nonsense GuideBy Trevor NealAlthough there are many good books out there on economic development, 'The No Nonsense Guide to International Development,' is a good place to start. Comprehensible for a lay person, "The No Nonsense Guide," documents the main ideas in the International development process as well as providing a critique of it. The author, Mrs. Black starts with an overview of the history of development; beginning with the end of World War II and the independence of new countries in a post-colonial world. President Truman dreamed of modeling International Development after the Marshall plan which was currently rebuilding Europe. However, the cold war quickly escalated and the emphasis of development became the containment of communism as well as the spread of a U.S. Sphere of influence among developing nations. With the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990's globalization was emphasized; a process dominated by Transnational corporations whose main motive was for profit. Transnational companies, government agencies of developed countries and the United Nations have spearheaded most development efforts. Non-governmental (N.G.O.) agencies have also become involved and have the best track record in development. However, the record for development has not been positive. Much of the International aid does not reach those who need it the most; illustrating that large infrastructure projects and trickle-down theories to development need to be re-thought. Furthermore, International loans have also exacerbated problems, indebting many developing nations. Meanwhile, the world is becoming increasingly aware of the limits to growth and the impact of human pollution; creating new tensions between developed and developing nations as well as highlighting development that is sustainable. Mrs. Black ends on a positive note. Although she advances powerful critiques of development, she doesn't call for its end. Instead, she encourages developers to reconsider their strategies and goals to prioritize development that is bottom up, local, and centered on the needs of those who need it the most. Furthermore, she urges that developer and developing countries become equal partners in the development process. Summarizing, this quote is pertinent: '... true development is about people, and social beings do not function mechanistically. There is no common prescription. To be of genuine use to people, development has to grow organically, building on existing knowledge and systems, and engaging empathetically with different ideas.....' Many of the ideas that Mrs. Black proposes are not new. Yet, what she does in 'The No Nonsense guide to development,' is provide a valuable overview of key themes in the development field. Furthermore, I liked the emphasis she places on local, bottom up development. It is for these reasons that I encourage others to pick up this book.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, Easy ReadBy MattThis "No-Nonsense Guide" is a must for anyone who is newly interested in the strengths and weaknesses of the "international development" industry. It covers a lot of ground, including history, case studies, and current status of many types of development programs. The text is very readable, interspersed with the occasional graph, chart, and sidebar to illustrate a point. And it's concise...at 140-some pages of paperback-size it gives a lot of interesting info quickly. The reason it gets 4/5 stars is it doesn't say anything new, or at least nothing that isn't said in more detail in many other places. Yes, development has exacerbated at least as much (probably more) poverty as it has alleviated. But that's been the central theme in a number of recent books. And this book's basic conclusion is pretty simplistic: bring the poor into the process. Very little beyond that. So to conclude, if you are just getting involved in the development world, or just want a quick summary of its highs and lows, I highly recommend this book as an easy, informative overview. And that's not a negative - I believe based on the format and style that's the central purpose of this book. However, if you've already read 3 or 4 current books in the field you can skip this one.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good points. Dull read.By AlexMaggie Black presents several good points, highlighting the discrepancies in our aid programs and the arrogance with which we impose our standards of economics and development upon cultures and environments without considering the claim. But, it's also immensely boring and repetitive. The same points are made multiple times, which is only persuasive to a point, and she manages to use a lot of words to say very little. Somewhere in this book is a crucial message about the role and conduct of development, but the presentation was poor.

ldquo;Overseas aidrdquo; and ldquo;international developmentrdquo; are catch-all terms that cover a multitude of activitiesdash;and abuses. This guide explains what ldquo;developmentrdquo; actually isdash;and explores its political and economic roots. It shows what can happen in the name of development and argues for a more organic, social approach with those it seeks to serve as equal partners in the process. Maggie Black has written books for the Oxford University Press, UNICEF, and Oxfam. She has worked as a consultant for UNICEF, Anti-Slavery International, and WaterAid, among others, and has written for the Guardian, The Economist, and BBC World Service.