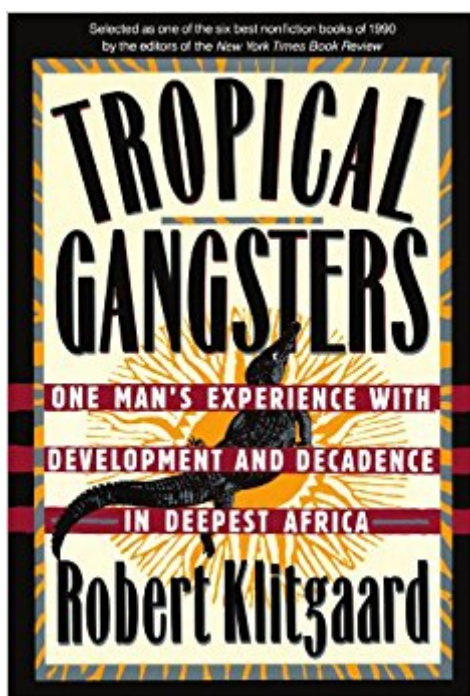


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# Tropical Gangsters: One Man's Experience With Development And Decadence In Deepest Africa



## Synopsis

Selected as one of the six best nonfiction books of 1990 by the editors of the New York Times Book Review, this is a compelling and entertaining account of the author's two-and-a-half year adventure in Equatorial Guinea, and his efforts to get this small bankrupt African nation on the path of structural development.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Robert Klitgaard is the author of *Tropical Gangsters and Choosing Elites*. A former associate professor of public policy at Harvard's Kennedy School, he is currently President and University Professor of Claremont Graduate University.

this book is as relevant and as timely today as in 1990 in laying out the harsh realities that international aid/assistance faces on a daily basis in many third world countries. in many of the world's developing countries, the plight of whose people attract so much sympathy, are ruled by elites who don't give a damn about most of their populations and are only interested in feeding their pockets. When I once highlighted how difficult cooperation with the Chinese could be as they come and take the resources, I was told simply that's ok because it's the will of the Africans. unfortunately it's not, it's the will of the deal wheeling elite. If you have an interest in international development/aid, read this book. it's not easy to aid! GRWAT BOOK should be basic reading for all those joining international organisations, NGOs, bilateral organisations, diplomats, etc

This book makes a great description of EqG, the politics, the distrust, the power of President Obiang. The reality described by the author is still valid today, almost 30 years later and an oil boom and bust in between.

In this book Robert Klitgaard recounts his experiences as a foreign aid expert in the African country of Equatorial Guinea. His life there during the 1980s illustrate the difficulties of providing help to African countries which are ruled by tribal or clan cliques... the problems of economic development in the third world were magnified in the small country of Equatorial Guinea, which had sunk into corruption and economic stagnation since the departure of the Spanish. The author's writing style makes this a really easy read while at the same time being illustrative of the problems involved in Africa. Even if you aren't particularly interested in African history or economics it's still a fun book to read.

Really liked the book. A detailed report of a World Bank consultant working in Equatorial Guinea. Surprisingly, dictator Obiang is still in power!!

I lived in Basile, EG for 2.5 years starting in 1982 isn't there some way we can support the School there? It seemed to be an example of something that works.

Insightful and easy to read book on development. Loved it!

The book is boring and although it gives the perspective of the author and the difficulties of managing an economic development stabilization project, it does not happen like this so much anymore.

Equatorial Guinea is one of the worst governed nations in the world--although terms like "govern" don't really apply to this tiny, newly oil-rich enclave on the coast of west Africa. The head of state, Teodoro Obiang, seized power from his uncle, Francisco MacÃ- as, who became head of state when the colonial power, Spain, left in 1968. Macias was credibly accused of genocide, cannibalism and total insanity--he spoke to God regularly and acted based on those discussions. Obiang is preferable only in comparison. While Klitgaard's book is dated--he finished while the discover and exploitation of oil fields wasn't even being considered--it remains a valuable, entertaining and occasionally frustrating account of the collision of the first world with--well with whatever world if

after the third. Klitgaard worked in the planning ministry of EQ for over two years, his salary paid by the World Bank, in order to help them get up to western standards in a few minimal (and ultimately completely inconsequential) areas. The institutions that took it upon themselves to intervene into the economic and social collapse there were the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the United Nations. In each case their efforts worsened the problems they had come to help solve. At the end of "Tropical Gangsters" Klitgaard wasn't optimistic about the future. Everything that has happened since then has shown his caution was well placed.

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