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Deutsches Institut für  
Entwicklungspolitik



German Development  
Institute

Conference:

## Legitimacy of Future Development Cooperation

November 29 and 30, 2010

German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Bonn

Conference overview:

The year 2010 has offered a number of milestones to reflect on future directions for development cooperation policy. As donors consider how to move forward with the MDG Agenda, improve the effectiveness of their development interventions, and engage in organisational restructuring processes to confront future challenges, they find themselves in a global context that is different in quality from the world of ten or twenty years ago, given the growing differentiation of developing countries and the rising prominence of issues such as climate change and state fragility on the development agenda. This conference will deliberate on fundamental questions of future development cooperation by discussing the legitimacy of development policy in a changing world. The focus on legitimacy draws attention to the interests that are represented within the development policy arena and how the institutional framework for the management and delivery of aid that is in place responds to the interests it is intended to represent. The conference raises pertinent questions on the future purposes of aid, if any, and how its ability to contribute to development goals can be strengthened. The event will bring together researchers, civil society representatives, and policymakers to engage in an open-ended and critical dialogue on the legitimacy of bilateral and multilateral development cooperation with a view toward stimulating strategic thinking among development professionals at an early stage in their careers. Through a series of panels and group discussions, participants will engage in a constructive debate aimed at contributing to a common understanding of what legitimate global development policy in the decades ahead could look like.

## Monday, 29 November

- 10:30 – 11:00 **Registration and refreshments**
- 11:00 – 11:15 **Welcome and introduction**  
Erik Lundsgaarde and Davina Makhan (DIE)
- 11:15 – 12:15 **Triple Interview: Legitimacy of Development Cooperation in a “Different” World? Continuities and Changes (Public Event)**  
Topic: Moderated interview including perspectives on where development cooperation stands and where it is going to identify foundations for legitimate development cooperation in the future.  
Speakers:  
Elisio Macamo (University of Basel)  
Jomo-Kwame Sundaram (UN-DESA)  
Flavia Pansieri (UN Volunteers)  
Moderation: Erik Lundsgaarde  
Key Questions:
  - What are the lessons that can be learned from the past regarding the legitimacy of development cooperation?
  - What challenges our perception of legitimacy in development cooperation?
  - What could be desirable futures for development cooperation in 2025 and what would legitimise them?
- 12:15 – 13:00 **Q & A**
- 13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch**
- 14:00 – 14:15 **Introduction to the working groups**  
Erik Lundsgaarde and Davina Makhan
- 14:15 – 16:00 **Four parallel working groups I: Critical perspectives on the Legitimacy of Development Cooperation**  
**(1) Ownership and Participation**  
Input: Christiane Noe (CBM International)  
Moderation: Aimée Hampel-Milagrosa (DIE)  
Ownership has not only become one of the catchphrases of the development policy discourse in previous years. It is also closely related to the legitimacy issue, as it refers to the attempt to put the beneficiaries of development aid in the driving seat by enabling them to coordinate donor engagement according to their specific needs. Ultimately, the ownership agenda aims at levelling structural as well as economic imbalances between donors and recipients, making them equal partners of a “shared public action” (Jean-Michel Severino). The working group will look into different options to reach this ambitious goal. Possible challenges relate to (weak) governance capacities of developing coun-

tries. An additional question arises as to which stakeholders in developing countries should be involved to ensure that a participatory process of development cooperation takes place. It will also be necessary to consider the implications for donors in establishing ownership of development policy.

## **(2) Goals and values**

Input: Felix Zimmermann (OECD)

Moderation: Jeanne Lätt (DIE)

The best way to ultimately legitimise development cooperation will be by reaching its aims. This is by no means a straightforward task, as perceptions as to what development cooperation should achieve and how to reach the identified aims can vary very substantially – ranging from the prevalence of economic growth, to social justice, poverty reduction or the common attendance (including countries of the South) to global problems. The working group will discuss different perceptions of goals and values across time and countries and how to close the gap between them. Differences between countries often refer to the South-North divide, as the goals of the latter are often intrinsically related with national interests or mirror their own – very specific – historical experiences. But they also stem from differences in goals and strategies within the donor community. This challenge is made more resounding with the growing visibility of "new" donors outside the OECD frame, which posit different values and understandings of development cooperation.

## **(3) Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Input: Andreas Obser (Potsdam Centre for Policy and Management)

Moderation: Melody Garcia (DIE)

Effective interventions and efficient administration are crucial to establish the legitimacy of development cooperation. Put differently, the outcome and processes that govern development cooperation are key aspects to consider. Legitimacy in these areas assumes that there is a shared vision and understanding on the desired outcome of development cooperation and on benchmarks to measure its effectiveness. However, in situations of unequal capacities between donor and recipients, too great a focus on efficient administration (e.g. for reporting and accountability purposes) may come at the expense of effective interventions. This working group will look into two dimensions of development policy, namely the processes determining its implementation and the intended outcomes. The group will discuss the respective and relative importance of *efficient* administration and *effective* interventions in establishing the legitimacy of development cooperation. Possible tradeoffs between efficiency/effectiveness and other fundamental dimensions to the legitimacy of development cooperation will be identified.

## (4) Transparency and Accountability

Input: Joseph Hanlon (Open University, Milton Keynes)

Moderation: Julia Leininger (DIE)

Transparency is typically assumed to be a key ingredient of legitimacy. It is often called for in politically sensitive debates across policy sectors. It implies an open exchange of information and thereby an empowering of the weak and excluded versus the inner circles of the powerful. In turn, holding the latter accountable for their decisions and actions is an essential demand of the proponents of "greater" transparency in global governance. Yet, the very desirability of transparency is also challenged by social scientists and practitioners who identify substantive tradeoffs, for instance regarding efficient decision making. This working group will discuss whether, when and how prevailing notions of transparency and accountability may actually contribute to legitimacy in the realm of development cooperation. Particular attention will be given to the question as to whether efforts on these guiding principles for development cooperation should focus equally on donor and partner country institutions and governments. The relative importance between the notions of transparency and accountability will furthermore be explored against the objective of establishing legitimacy, with a view to clarifying, for instance, whether accountability may help legitimise a lack of transparency.

**Outcome:** Please formulate the 2-4 most important challenges for development cooperation with respect to each of the four dimensions and visualise the result on one poster.

The subsequent questions may help the participants to structure the discussion in each of the four working groups:

- How does the issue relate to legitimacy?
- Does the current approach support legitimacy? (Why or why not?)
- What are the building blocks in improving legitimacy or the stumbling blocks that make it difficult to make progress in this area?

**Structure:** Input from an external expert and moderated discussion.

16:00 – 16:30

### **Market Place with coffee and tea**

Poster session: participants have the opportunity to have a look at the posters of the four working groups; at least one of the working group participants (e.g. the rapporteur) should stand next to the poster answering questions.

16:30– 17:30

### **Panel discussion**

Moderation: Steffen Bauer (DIE)

Representatives of the working groups (i.e. rapporteur) form a panel to reflect on the results of the working groups (not repeating the results of the working group discussion).

17:30 – 18:00

**Break**

18:00 – 21:00

**Dinner and Keynote Speech**

Keynote Speaker: Michael Hofmann (Former World Bank Executive Director, Germany; Former Director General, German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)

**Tuesday, 30 November**

08:30 – 09:00

**Morning Refreshments**

09:00 – 09:15

**Welcome back and transfer speech**

Erik Lundsgaarde and Davina Makhan (DIE)

09:15 – 11:00

**Four parallel working groups II: Legitimacy of future development cooperation: sectoral perspectives**

**(1) Future of bilateral and multilateral development aid**

Moderation: Silke Weinlich (DIE)

Resource Person: Anja Wagner (German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)

Development aid has been a controversial policy instrument since its inception. Against the backdrop of the vast development challenges still facing a large share of the world's population, this session will explore the role of bilateral and multilateral aid in addressing future development challenges. Aid is quite heterogeneous: a variety of actors are involved in designing and implementing aid programmes (state and non-state actors, multilateral organisations), whose priorities and procedures do not necessarily match. A key focus of this working group will be to discuss the elements of the current global development architecture that provide the most legitimate basis for confronting the challenges of the coming decades, and the elements that require the most urgent reform. Special attention will be placed on major development actors and how they interact within global development governance systems.

**(2) Coherence between development cooperation and other policy fields**

Moderation: Davina Makhan (DIE)

Resource Person: Colin Scicluna (European Council Secretariat)

Development cooperation does not operate in a vacuum and cannot be seen in isolation from other policy areas. Different policy areas such as foreign affairs, trade, agriculture and development policy are formulated by different sets of actors, driven by different motivations (values and/or interests), with a view to achieving different – and potentially conflicting – objectives. Ensuring the overall consistency of donor policies may be a necessary condition to achieve development objectives,

but it may not be sufficient to ensure the broader legitimacy of development cooperation. Indeed, donor policies – including those oriented towards development – may stand in contradiction to partner countries' own policies. This working group will examine how to overcome policy incoherencies *for development* and address the dimensions and challenges discussed in Day 1 in this context. Particular attention will be given to assessing the importance of policy coherence at the donor level in relation to coordinating on policies with partner countries, with a view to developing an agenda for the future of development cooperation.

### **(3) Global justice within planetary boundaries**

Moderation: Clara Brandi (DIE)

Resource Person: Miriam Ronzoni (University of Frankfurt)

The idea of constant economic growth through increased worldwide productivity is severely challenged by the awareness that we live on a planet with limited resources. A better distribution of global wealth between countries (and individuals), combined with a more equal access to resources such as energy, water, land, etc. would certainly contribute to legitimise development cooperation in the eyes of those who have been pleading for more global justice. This should not only include more solidarity between regions, but also between generations, with a view to a more sustainable management of resources. Building on the discussions on Day 1, this working group will tackle the question of how to achieve global justice within the development cooperation sphere. It will look into the (existing or new) mechanisms capable of distributing global wealth more evenly, and of regulating the management of resources in a more sustainable way. Finally, it will also address the issue of structural and mental obstacles to such projects.

### **(4) Sustainable development and climate change**

Moderation: Fariborz Zelli (DIE)

Resource Person: Joyeeta Gupta (Free University of Amsterdam, UNESCO-IHE)

International debates on both the foundations and the objectives of sustainable global development have increasingly acknowledged the need to consider global warming. What has long been viewed as one of several environmental problems is finally perceived as an overarching threat to human development and even human security. However, the diagnosis of global change researchers does not bode well in the context of protracted international climate negotiations. Against this background the imperatives of global warming are likely to alter our frameworks of sustainability and the practice of development cooperation for decades to come. Drawing from the results of Day 1 discussions, this working group considers the ensuing implications for legitimate development cooperation in a warmer world, in which global inequalities will likely be exacerbated as current successes are undermined by rising sea levels, prolonged droughts and unprecedented storm and flood disasters.

**Outcome:** On the basis of the challenges developed in the first round of working group discussions, develop a vision of how the respective policy field should evolve.

The following questions may help the participants to structure the discussion in each of the four working groups:

- How would you prioritise the four dimensions discussed in day 1 in this particular context?
- Which are the most important dimensions or challenges that need to be addressed? Are there any aspects missing?
- What would be the concrete steps that need to be taken to strengthen the legitimacy of future development cooperation in this particular issue-area?
- Who are the key drivers in this process?

**Structure:** Moderated discussion.

11:00 – 11:30

### **Coffee and Tea Break**

11:30 – 12:15

### **Moderated Presentation of Working Group Results**

Moderation: Carmen Richerzhagen (DIE)

12:15 – 14:00

### **Lunch**

14:00 – 15:45

### **Plenary discussion: Our Visions of a Legitimate Future Development Cooperation**

The concluding discussion will be structured around the following questions:

- How do the visions emerging from the individual working group sessions relate to one another? Do we have a common vision about what legitimate development cooperation should comprise?
- What are the main areas of disagreement or inconsistency across the visions? How can these areas of disagreement help us to inform legitimate action in the future?
- What general principles of legitimate action in future development cooperation can we articulate on the basis of the deliberations during the conference? How do these principles compare with current orienting principles for development cooperation?

Moderation: Aimée Hampel-Milagrosa and Jeanne Lätt (DIE)

15:45 – 16:00

### **Farewell note**