

CALL FOR PAPERS

Sustainability of Development Assistance: Problems, Prospects, and Perspectives

14-15 September 2023, University of Fribourg

Development assistance emerged as an integrative part of the post-Second World War order as one of the instruments to promote development, provide relief from crises, and alleviate poverty. Since then, development assistance has metamorphosed in multiple ways, stretched to different parts of the world, and transformed its goals, organization structures, and means to promote development. The transformations came as a response to numerous critiques and studies that in the past three decades have pointed to ineffective delivery of aid because of aid dependency (Collier 1999), the ownership (Keijzer et al. 2018) and principle-agent problem (Aerni 2006), poor knowledge coordination (Williamson 2010), low level of transparency related to the aid efficiency of multilateral and bilateral aid agencies (Easterly and Williamson 2011), and neglecting the resourcefulness of local people, institutions, and businesses (Lewis and Mosse 2006, O'Sullivan 2023). Parallel to its inner structural problems, development assistance is facing continuing political, economic, and environmental crises that bring to the fore ever new challenges in the prioritizing and distribution of aid. In past years, several international conferences discussed the challenges of development assistance. The Effective Development Cooperation Summit held in December 2022 in Geneva was one of the most recent events that intended to catalyze the path for a necessary revision of the quality, impact, and effectiveness of aid. Yet, it remains to be seen how and whether the planned revisions will be implemented. What has been observable by now is, nevertheless, that donors continue to set the priorities in development assistance, not the recipients.

The workshop aims to discuss the sustainability of development assistance in light of current global complexities. We invite papers that explore the development assistance – sustainability nexus and address some of the following issues:

- What are the minimal requirements that would make development assistance more sustainable and effective?
- How can we define sustainability and effectiveness in the context of development research to better reflect the concerns of the aid's recipients?
- In what situations is shifting from aid to investment sustainable?
- Do improved transparency and accountability of development assistance contribute to aid effectiveness?
- How can development assistance be an enabler of private sector investment and inclusive markets driven by local entrepreneurs?

- How can development assistance mitigate risk-averse practices and include recipients who are prone to taking risks?
- How can development assistance influence the sustainable maintenance of local infrastructures (roads, railways, water supply, electrical networks etc.), resources, and human mobility?
- In what ways can development assistance effectively slow down the migration processes from aid-dependent countries?
- How can non-tangible sustainability goals (e.g., applying knowledge to development) become better integrated in development assistance?

We strongly encourage paper submissions from a variety of disciplines that are focused on research on the effectiveness of development assistance. We look forward to interactive discussions that will bring in different geographical, social, political, and economic perspectives and prospects on the sustainability of development assistance.

Prospective workshop participants should send their abstracts of 250-300 words including keywords, a short biography, and affiliation to Jovana Dikovic jovana.dikovic@ccrs.ch by **May 5, 2023**.

The workshop will be held in hybrid (i.e., on-site and online) mode. Limited financial support for boarding and travel costs for the workshop participants will be available, and such requests should be placed in an email when submitting the abstract. When possible, we encourage workshop participants to request financial support for travel and boarding costs from their home institutions.

We look forward to receiving your abstracts and hosting you at our workshop on the Sustainability of Development Assistance at the University of Fribourg.

References

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- Easterly, W. and C. R. Williamson. 2011. Rhetoric versus Reality: The Best and Worst of Aid Agency Practices. *World Development* 39 (11), 1930–1949.
- Keijzer, N., S. Klingebiel, C. Örnemark, and F. Scholtes. 2018. Seeking balanced ownership in changing development cooperation relationships. Report 2018: 08. Stockholm: Expert Group for Aid Studies.
- Lewis, D. and D. Mosse. 2006. *Development brokers and translators: The ethnography of aid and agencies*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
- O'Sullivan, S. 2023. Refusing aid Interdependency and development in northern Uganda *American Ethnologist*. 50 (1), 103-114.
- Williamson, C. R. 2010. "Exploring the Failure of Foreign Aid: The Role of Incentives and Information". *The Review of Austrian Economics* 23, 17–33.