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Course Description

This course is an overview of the operational and professional world of development. It teaches students about the policy and operational debates ongoing in the development world as a profession, an institution, a community of like-minded people. It is a cutting-edge, contemporary, and operationally relevant course on the issues now being discussed and implemented in the development community. Students who have taken this course will understand what the profession is about, what practitioners and managers talk and think and worry and write about. They will not learn all the technical knowledge in the various areas of development (education, infrastructure, livestock, food security, health, etc.)—for that, many other courses are required—but they will learn the cross-cutting managerial and strategic issues that manifest themselves in all these fields of development cooperation.

By the end of this class, students will be able to:
- understand the structural and ideological underpinnings of the current development aid system, as well as the effects of these underpinnings on development organizations and the individuals working for them
- understand the nature, strengths, and weaknesses of the key tools used in development aid: technical assistance, capacity building, participation, conditionality, and so on
- apply contemporary social science insights from a wide range of disciplines to critically analyze general aid management dynamics in a wide variety of areas
- propose actionable innovations in all areas of development management discussed in class
Course Grades

You are responsible for checking announcements on Blackboard every week for 1) updates on the reading and 2) specific questions or any updates on tasks.

Students will be graded on a series of tasks and associated small papers to be done before each class. Papers handed in after the beginning of class will not be accepted. Please send the papers as email attachments to me. Use the same naming system for all papers: “your name class number”, e.g., if I were a student, my first paper would be “Uvin class 1” etc. For the group papers, put the names of all names of the group in the title.

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Participation in class will account for the remaining 10% of the grade.

Expectations

- I expect you to do the readings before class. Frankly, class will not be half as good if you don’t—and yet the cost to you remains the same.
- I expect you to be mentally in the class during class—do not surf the internet, leave comments on your friends’ facebook status, reserve your ticket to tonight’s concert, check out the reviews of the new Bon Iver CD, and so on. There are at least 40 hours between classes to do this. It is disrespectful to others, and frankly a waste of your time, to allow yourself to indulge in the constant diversion of the web.
- It is explicitly forbidden to record any part of this class without my permission. Even if such permission is granted, you may not distribute such recordings without my permission.
- I expect you to let me know in advance if you have to miss a class. Class participation is a very important component of the learning. An absence from class can be necessary, but it is not a guaranteed gift. Unexcused absences will be penalized.
- I expect you to be on time.
Calendar

Section 1: The players: who are they and what do they think they are doing?

1. Introduction—definitions; motives
2. What is development? Measures and debates.
3. New donors; the war on terror
4. Evolution of thinking – five decades of aid

Section 2: How do they do it?

5. Technical Assistance
6. Conditionality and beyond
7. Participation, Power, and Institutional Change
8. From Capacity Building to Harmonization & Alignment
9. Gender; and a bit of Anthropology

Section 3. Questioning the System and Moving beyond the Status Quo

10. A Case Study; Can Aid Organizations Learn?
12. On the Horizon

Class 1. Introduction to development aid – concepts, definitions, some motives

Introduction to the course
Getting to know each other.
Definitions. What is foreign aid? How big is it? What types are there? How does it compare to other flows?
Where to find information in this field?

Before class exercises (individual)

1. Send me an email with a) a one phrase definition of development, and b) a one-paragraph explanation of what aid can do to promote development. Don’t over-think it—just jot down what you believe.
2. Do the readings.
3. Find data on development aid to a country (or a few countries) of your choice—a country you may well wish to continue focusing on as the course progresses
4. Wake up on time on Tuesday morning. Figure out where the School is, and the class. Go there.
5. Smile.
Readings


Class 2. What is development?

This class deals with the interrelated debates of what development is and how to measure it.

Before class exercise (individual)

First, pick a country of interest to you—and, ideally, one that you know something about and care about. You may pick more than one—it is always interesting to compare things. Look up at 10-15 indicators from the many sources below. Interpret what the data seem to be telling you. Do they tell a coherent story? Do they match what you expected? Send me the results—the data and some discussion of them (max. 3 pages).

Second, step back from all this and decide: of the various indicators you looked at, which ones did you like most? Which ones were to you the most important or useful in judging development? Why? Come to class ready to discuss this. No need to send me a paper. You can do this in a group as well, if you want. It could be more fun and more interesting.

Readings

Check the databases below and read one of the articles in the last section.

Data specific to development:

- *World Development Report archives*
- UNDP. *Human Development Reports* (check the statistics section)

Different ways of measuring progress:

- Richard Estes. *Weighted Index of Social Progress*
- Legatum Prosperity Index: [www.prosperity.com](http://www.prosperity.com)
- Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators [http://www.calvert-henderson.com/current.htm](http://www.calvert-henderson.com/current.htm)
- Centre for the Study of Living Standards- Index of Economic Well-being http://www.csls.ca/iwb.asp
- Better Life Index http://oecdbetterlifeindex.org/

Data about other relevant trends
- World Values Survey http://www.wvsevsdb.com/wvs/WVSAnalyze.jsp?Idioma=1
- Gobal Peace Index http://www.visionofhumanity.org/
- Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index
- World Bank index on Control of Corruption.
- gender indicators from UNDP: Gender Inequality Index (2010); see also Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) found in past Human Development Reports
- Human Security Index
- Mo Ibrahim Foundation: Ibrahim Index
- Friends of the Earth. Index of Sustainable Welfare. Bi-annual
- Freedom House: Freedom in the World
- The Heritage Foundation’s The Index of Economic Freedom.
- Sustainable Society Foundation Sustainable Society Index
- Yale University’s Environmental Performance Index and Environmental Sustainability Index
- The Happy Planet Index: http://www.happyplanetindex.org/

Readings about development
Read 2 of the following articles (you are always allowed to read more, if you wish). Just get the basic tenor of the arguments—we will not necessarily debate the technical issues in great detail. All I want to do is to get you thinking about what development may be beyond economic growth or eradicating poverty.


Class 3. **New donors; the war against terror**

In recent years, all kinds of new donors have entered into the field of international development. The biggest and most discussed one is surely China (although other countries like India, Korea, Turkey, Brazil have also become donors). Another phenomenon that has attracted major interest has been the rise of international Islamic philanthropic organizations. Finally, foundations (e.g., Gates, Clinton initiative, Kiva) have also become much discussed.

Much of what we read about these new players has been either very negative (China, Islamic charities) or very positive (corporations, foundations). Why? Is that really deserved? Also: how is the development enterprise changing as a result of the entry of these new players? And what is the likely impact on the poor of the entry of these new donors?

**Before class exercises (group)**

1. Discuss: should new donors—India, China, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey—continue to receive aid from the old donors? You will be interviewed tonight on Parker Spitzer’s CNN show (congratulations, by the way) and you need to provide an answer in 4 minutes. Prepare your answer. You can focus on a particular donor/recipient if you wish, or make a general statement. You can use the following links to inspire you, but I want you to think beyond them and seek other information

   http://www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/?p=4237
   http://www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/?p=3699

2. Read the following two documents and discuss the similarities and differences between them:

**Readings**
- Bräutigam, Deborah. *China, Africa and the International Aid Architecture*. Washington DC, March 2010, draft MS.
Class 4.  Evolution of thinking – Five Decades of Aid

We begin with an intellectual-operational overview of big development debates from the 1960s to now.

Much of the intellectual debate the last decade has been between those who want a dramatic increase in international aid and those who want anything but that. Both sides are smart, passionate, and use empirical and theoretical data to make their case. This debate has become associated with Sachs and Easterly, but in reality everyone has a position on it. Yes, you too. While settling the debate once and for all is not very important and maybe impossible in any case, it is useful to think through the arguments made by different sides, and how they apply to your career, your values, your practice. What are the arguments in favor of more spending on the poor—in terms of efficiency, equity, growth, or other criteria of development? What are the arguments against?

Before class exercise (group + individual)

Read the three readings below in the order indicated and discuss in a group. What scholarly arguments are Sachs, Easterly, and Duflo/Banerjee making? What types of arguments they (evidence based, moral, political, etc)? What counter-arguments do they use against each other?

- Jeffrey Sachs. Ending Africa’s Poverty Trap. Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 1:2004 (Read the first 31 pages – up to Table 9)

Present and assess the arguments and their strengths in no more than 3 pages—use bullet points if you wish.

Required Reading


Class 5. Technical Assistance
Many of us have been, or want to be, technical assistants. Indeed, the technical assistant is one of the oldest and most enduring features of development aid. Yet, it is also, and since decades, a deeply contested practice. What are the reasons to provide technical assistance? Are these aims achieved, and, if not, why not? What can be done better? Why is it not done? What does this mean for you?

Before class exercise (group)

Read the two articles below.


Then read the two short documents about a current project, the Consolidating Peaceful Development in Aceh (CPDA) Trust Fund funded by the World Bank. I gave you a draft progress report (read especially p. 3-6), as well as the terms of reference for the TA for this project.

Based on the critiques of technical assistance discussed in the literature as well as the specific readings about Indonesia/Aceh, recommend solutions to avoid the usual pitfalls. This should not be a list of activities (although you may mention specific activities if you want), but rather a set of approaches, fresh ideas, things to be thought of and tried. Imagine you have been involved for years with a project that preceded this one, and you are now moving to another assignment in another country. Before you leave, you want to share some of your wisdom, make people think out of the box, warn them of pitfalls. So you write this 2-3 page memo (max.) to the new TA that just got this position, as well as to her bosses in HQ.

So, I want a memo. Not long—length does not get you prizes, but careful thinking does. It could be in the form of bullet points. You could arrange your proposals from the least to the most departure from the status quo.

Readings

- John R. Owen. ‘Listening to the rice grow’: the local–expat interface in Lao-based international NGOs. Development in Practice, 20, 1, February 2010

Class 6. Conditionality and Beyond
Most people believe that the act of giving development assistance, especially to the poorest and weakest
countries, confers on the donor a lot of power to dictate recipient behavior. People from both the Left
and the Right think this power has been ill used, and make proposals how to do so better. But does this
power really exist? If not, why not? And what can be done better?

**Before-class exercise (individual)**

1. Find or recall an instance of the exercise of conditionality (economic or political) in a country,
ideally a few years ago. Look back at some newspaper or scholarly accounts at the time: did it
work? Was it perceived as successful? What do you think explains the (in)-effectiveness
observed? Second, look at the current situation of this country: was the goal of the political
conditionality achieved? What happened with the specific issue that the conditionality pertained
to? Is the result (if there was one) still there now—or vice versa?

2. Check the country you studied in class 2 and check its Millennium Challenge Corporation
coherent or divergent? Would you sign an MCA compact with it?

**Readings**

- Ravi Kanbur, "Aid, Conditionality and Debt in Africa". In: Finn Tarp (ed), *Foreign Aid and
- Morrissey, Oliver. *Conditionality and Aid Effectiveness Re-evaluated.* *World Economy*, 27, 2, February 2004
- Buiter, Willem (2007) "Country ownership": a term whose time has gone', *Development in
  Practice*, 17: 4, 647 — 652
- Brian Cooksey. 2003. Marketing Reform? The Rise and Fall of Agricultural Liberalization in

**Class 7. Participation, Power, and Institutional Change**

**Exercise (group)**

Read

- Open Self-Help Project, funded by the GTZ. See Oliver Karkoshka. *Experiences
  with Participatory development. Case Study in Ethiopia*. Ethiopia, August 2 – 15,
  2004, German Development Cooperation. The project is described on pp. 32-37,
  but it helps to skim the preceding parts of the report as well.

Discuss:

- How is participation and power at work in this project? Use the class readings, as
  well as [http://www.powercube.net](http://www.powercube.net) to do this analysis.
- how would you score this project in terms of achieving its stated goals? In terms of doing something useful for the population? and in terms of participation?
- how you would re-engineer the project so that it be more participatory. What challenges might you encounter and how would you deal with them?

Write this up as a group paper.

**Required Readings**

- Andrea Cornwall. Unpacking ‘Participation’: models, meanings and practices, Community Development Journal. 2008

**Class 8. Capacity Building, Institutional Destruction, Harmonization & Alignment**

The very way international aid is given—the multiplicity of donor agencies, each with their own aims projects, and procedures—undermines recipient capacity; some go so far as to talk about institutional destruction. In the last decade, donors have come to recognize this problem, and they have developed a set of answers to it as well.

*Before class exercise (group)*

Read pages XXXX to XXXX of my report about Belgian Aid to Burundi. Write down what you would propose based on my diagnostic. (Also feel free to critique my diagnostic—this was the last time I was hired by the Belgian Technical Cooperation, so I may have been wrong!)

**Required Readings**


**Class 9 -- Gender; also a bit of anthropology**

As in the development field as a whole, theories and policies about gender and development have evolved dramatically over time. Works drawing attention to the contributions of women and the special challenges they face have been joined by analysis of the complex inter-relationships between women and men and the role of culture. More recent authors point to “the forgotten half of gender” and offer important insights into concepts of masculinity and their effects on development issues.

From gender—the social construction of sexual roles—it is but a small step to some core anthropological insights that are very imp for this class. You will see, they all fit well together.

**Before class exercise (group)**

Read these three very different gender-related development projects and reflect on them in the context of today’s readings. How might the authors critique specific language, assumptions, inclusions or omissions in each of the documents? What elements might particularly annoy or delight a scholar from the WID, WAD, GAD and/or WED school of thought? Are the projects addressing strategic or practical gender needs? (You do not need to tie in every author or framework, but do make specific references to several of them and their key ideas as they would relate to these projects.) Feel free to use bullet points and subheadings to convey your ideas most clearly and concisely.

- CARE - DV Abatangamuco Project. *Read pages 3-11 and skim the life stories in Annex 2*
- CARE - Kazozo Keza: Empowering women through credit and savings
- UNDP - Fuel-Efficient Stoves in Pakistan

**Required Readings**

- Batliwala, Srilatha and Deepa Dhanraj. Gender myths that instrumentalize women: a view from the Indian front line. (pp.21-34) in Andrea Cornwall, Elizabeth Harrison & Ann Whitehead


**Class 10. A Case Study; Can Aid Organizations Learn?**

*Before class exercise (individual)*

What does a typical development project look like on the ground today? How does it measure up against the critiques of development aid that we have been discussing? Does it seem to be drawing on lessons learned over the past several decades? (How) does it incorporate technical assistance, participation, harmonization, gender, capacity building, and the other issues we discussed in class so far?

Read this project proposal and consider it in light of the course readings and discussions we have had so far. Pick two specific aspects of the proposal (e.g., gender, participation, technical assistance or something else that appeals to you) and analyze them with reference to specific authors or schools of thought that we have discussed in class. This analysis should constitute approximately the first 3 pages of the assignment.

In the remaining 2 pages, consider your own reactions in light of this class. (You may draw on personal experiences as well.) What are the strengths and weaknesses in regard to the specific aspects you are examining? Do you see thoughtful analysis, creative innovations and clear, achievable goals, or empty buzzwords, unjustified assumptions and unrealistic expectations… or some of each? Does this project represent an improvement in certain areas, is it more of the same old thing, or does it bring in a new set of potential problems? What recommendations would you make to improve the particular aspect you are examining?

**Case study – CRS’s Agriculture for Basic Needs Project**

*Additional short exercise before class exercise (individual)*
Take an organization you worked for (ideally one that was active in the field of development or social change), read the article below, and take the test indicated there.


**Required reading**

- Bertin Martens, with Uwe Mummert, Peter Murrell and Paul Seabright. *The Institutional Economics of Foreign Aid*. 2001 (chapter 1)

**Classes 11 & 12. On The Horizon**

As you may have noticed, there are a great many critiques against the current dominant development practice. We clearly need fresh ideas. This is what we set out to do in class 11 and 12. Each of you will identify and analyze one alternative to mainstream development practice. This can be something that still falls squarely within the realm of development as usually defined—an NGO with a fascinating approach or project; a new policy currently being discussed in a big donor; a foundation’s program in a particular area. It could be something that is at the border of what we currently think of as development—a corporate social responsibility project, a human rights campaign, a policy by the EU Environment Directorate. Or it could be totally outside of development—an emerging market venture fund, a religious initiative, a for-profit water scheme, whatever. I don’t care what you chose, but you will need to analyze and argue

- What does this consist of? What is the aim, and how are they trying to do it?
- Why do you argue this is relevant for development? In what way will it impact on development?
- How does it do better than mainstream development practice? Which criticisms of development is it improving on, avoiding, solving?

I prefer if you chose a particular organization, initiative, project, or policy. It can be something that is still very new and has just started, or it can be something that has already solid evidence behind it. But my preference is that it be specific. If that is not possible, and if you can find sufficient evidence of a general approach without being able to find an organization that implements it, then you can do that too—just talk to me.

Now, I want you to prepare a small presentation of what you have chosen to research. You should be able to present it in about 7 minutes. You can use Powerpoint if you wish. Just make sure you hit all the points described above. If you have other relevant documents, websites, analyses, just send them on to me, and I will make them available to all.

- I want you to present it in class, instead of just writing me a paper. Just to be clear: I do not need a paper anymore: your presentation is the final task of this class.
- For many of you, it is harder to develop a good presentation than a short paper, so I will increase the grade for this product to 15%. I will also significantly reduce the readings for class 11—and there will be none for class 12. You will be able to spend your last week on his project, then.
- We will devote the last two classes to this subject. I myself have a few alternatives or innovations in mind (some of the readings for class 11 related to those, but I will remove them), so I will present mine as well, both during class 11 and 12.

Please let me know by next week Wednesday what project you will chose to study. I must know by then, so I can assign you to either Tuesday or Thursday for a presentation. I want to make the presentations follow a logical sequence (if possible), and put together different things that belong together.

OPTIONAL READINGS BY CLASS

Class 1. Aid definition & quality
- DFID First White Paper on International Development, 1997, Section 1, p 8-21
- Center for Global Development. *The commitment to Development Index.* Washington DC, annual [www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/cdi/](http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/cdi/)

Motives

Class 2. What is Development?
- Redefining Progress. *The Genuine Progress Indicator*. Check out the whole website…

Class 3. Five decades of development thinking

**Optional**
- Eric Thorbecke. *The Evolution of the Development Doctrine 1950-2005*. s.d., s.l. (may be tough for those without decent economics knowledge, but it provides a nicely detailed overview from the perspective of an economist)
- Sachs, Jeffrey. How to help the poor: piecemeal progress or strategic plans? *The Lancet*, 367, April 22, 2006. (3 pages)

Class 4. New donors
http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p73214_index.html


Watson, Iain(2011) 'Global Korea: foreign aid and national interests in an age of globalization', Contemporary Politics, 17: 1, 53 — 69


Aid and terrorism


Paul Rodgers, Consultancy Report on the UK Global Conflict Prevention Pool Counter Terrorism Strategy, 2002


Class 5. Technical Assistance


McWha, Ishbel (2011). 'The roles of, and relationships between, expatriates, volunteers, and local development workers', Development in Practice, 21: 1, 29 — 40
Class 6. Conditionality

- IMF. *Conditionality in Fund-Supported Programs*—Overview Prepared by the Policy Development and Review Department. Washington DC. February 20, 2001. http://www.imf.org/external/np/pdr/cond/2001/eng/overview/ (see also the other links there, including the external consultations, if this interests you)
- MCC. *Building Public Integrity through Positive Incentives: MCC’s Role in the Fight against Corruption*. Washington DC., s.d.

Class 7. Participation, Power, and Institutional Change

- Alex Jacobs and Robyn Wilford. *Listen First: a pilot system for managing downward accountability in NGOs*. *Development in Practice*, 20, 7, September 2010
• Perkins, Douglas and Marc Zimmerman “Empowerment Theory, Research and Application.” In American Journal of Community Psychology (23:5) 1995
• http://www.policy-powertools.org/
• http://www.justassociates.org/makingchangehappen.htm

Institutional change

• Helmke & Levitsky, Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics, Perspective on Politics, 2004
• Brinkerhoff, et. al., Clientelism, Patrimonialism and Democratic Governance, Abt Associates Inc., for USAID, 2002
• Leftwich. The political approach to institutional change. 2007.
• Williams, Gareth ; Alex Duncan, Pierre Landell-Mills and Sue Unsworth.. Politics and Growth. Development Policy Review, 2011, 29 (s1): s29-s55

Class 8. Capacity Building, Institutional Destruction, Harmonization & Alignment


• TRACE Aid. *Changing the Way Overseas Development Aid is Delivered*. Ottawa, s.d.


• Something by Ashraf Ghani


Class 9. Gender


Optional readings on gender mainstreaming


Gita Sen, *Informal Institutions and Gender Equality*, OECD Development Centre and Development Assistance Committee Seminar on *Informal Institutions and Development - What do we know and what can we do?*, (December 2006).


Gerry Mackie, 'Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A convention account,' *American Sociological Review*, vol. 61, no. 6, (December 1996), pp. 999-1017


The OECD produces a 'Gender, Institutions and Development Database' to enable policy makers to 'determine and analyse obstacles to women's economic development', as well as a 'Social Institutions and Gender Index' which focuses on causes of inequalities [http://www.oecd.org/document/16/0,3746,en_2649_33935_39323280_1_1_1_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/16/0,3746,en_2649_33935_39323280_1_1_1_1,00.html)

Aparajita Chowdhury and Manoj Manjari Patnaik. Empowering Boys and Men to Achieve Gender Equality in India *Journal of Developing Societies*, 26, 2010: 455

**Class 10. Learning**

- Rondinelli, Dennis. *Development Projects as Policy Experiments*. London, Routledge, chapters 5 & 6 (skim—it is written in a painfully boring and verbose way)
• Peter Senge. *The Fifth Discipline.* Short presentation

• Sarah Parkinson. The learning organisation as a model for rural development. *Development in Practice,* Volume 20, Number 3, May 2010