



Development & Aid Effectiveness Interrogating Pedagogies in (International) Development Studies

Conference To be followed by Post-graduate Workshop

International Studies, Faculty of Arts & Design
University of Canberra, Canberra.

Background

Academic community as well as development practitioners are engaged in debating the effectiveness of development aid amid mounting concern that international aid assistance and development projects have failed to eradicate or even limit the inequalities among developed and developing world or even within the developing and under-developed countries. One of the factors increasingly mentioned in these debates is the role of donors, fly-in fly-out development consultants and host governments. However there is little if any recognition of the role development education plays in the aid effectiveness and engagement with host communities being the prime stakeholders.

The Paris Declaration (endorsed on 2 March 2005) by the international community specifically focuses on the issues of ownership by developing countries; alignment of international aid with local systems; measurable results and mutual accountability of partners. A closer examination of Paris declaration and MDGs suggests that each review process has ignored a vital link between the development sector and aid effectiveness – that missing link is the role and contribution of academic community

The major argument for this symposium is: *if International Development Studies is the training ground for aspiring development and aid-agency personnel within and outside government, the need for a closer examination of the current pedagogical practices is therefore long overdue.* “International Development” OR “Development Studies” has come under heavy scrutiny on a number of fronts. First, the critics have dismissed its claim of a unique and distinct discipline; secondly they have questioned its relevance since the poverty and inequality persists. Thirdly, it has been blamed for being a neo-colonial discourse that shape, frame and control the under-developed and developing communities and countries and finally, the discipline claims to be apolitical though development is anything but politics.

In addition, while there have been efforts to highlight the important role development studies scholarship plays in poverty reduction; post-conflict development; disaster relief and humanitarian assistance; Gender Equality; and peace building & human security. There are questions of how the academy deals with issues of “Third World” heterogeneity, relevance of course content, motives, processes and methodologies that shape Development Studies programs. All these critiques emerge over the more contentious issue of whether such a discipline as ‘Development Studies’ even exists.

Themes of the Conference

The aim of the conference is to provide a forum for academics, development practitioners, policy makers and researchers to exchange ideas on how to teach development studies in a manner that contributes to development and aid effectiveness. The conference further aims to explore new methodologies that are ‘transformative’ and ‘relevant’ within the development and aid industry and, which contribute our understanding of the role of academic institutions as agents of development especially for poverty reduction.

The Conference aims to respond to the following critical questions:

- What role do academic institutions play in contributing to development and aid effectiveness?
- What pedagogical practices are most relevant to teaching international development studies?



- How do our teaching philosophies shape the way we develop and implement international development studies programs?
- How can academic institutions work collaboratively with donor agencies to engender positive development and aid outcomes?
- What research activities can be undertaken to advance knowledge of transformative pedagogies in international development studies?
- How can development studies teaching incorporate socio-cultural diversity?
- How useful are concepts such as Human Security for linking development studies with other disciplines?
- What are the appropriate ways in which development studies programs can best be designed to contribute to development and aid effectiveness for AUSAID and other donor agencies?
- How can academic institutions, donor agencies collaborate in exploring new research opportunities and strategic partnerships

Expected output

- Conference proceedings with peer-reviewed papers will be accessible to all to all registered participants electronically
- Select papers to be published as edited Volume

Call for Papers:

Interested academics, development practitioners & researchers are invited to submit an abstract of 300-500 words.

Important Dates:

Abstracts Submission: 16th July 2010
Notification of Abstract Acceptance: 9th August 2010
Complete Paper Due: 1st November, 2010

Conference Registration:

Post Graduate Students: \$50
Employed: \$200

Conference Organisers:

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