

GPEDC WEBINAR SERIES

Title: Does “Effective” development cooperation really deliver development? What can research tell us?

17 June, 2021 at 12:00 to 14:00 CEST (Brussels)

CONTEXT

In many developing countries there is broad agreement on what the key development priorities are. Governments, donors and national and international NGOs typically agree on the importance of key SDG areas like Food Security, Agriculture, access to Health, Education and Energy, Infrastructure or Social Protection for the most vulnerable. In any of these sectors, a variety of actors will be supporting and implementing a range of development actions, projects and programmes from small scale local initiatives to large scale system-wide national programmes. Broad agreement on what needs to be achieved is usually apparent across all those involved in the sector. However, in many cases different strategies and approaches are used. Individual actors have their own understanding of the immediate priorities and the key target groups. Where this happens, despite everybody essentially wanting the same thing, individual efforts, rather than being co-ordinated and mutually supportive, can result in duplication of effort, contradictory actions and weak or unsustainable impact. In other words, the sum of the parts is less than the whole.

The idea of effective development cooperation is to bring the different efforts together to achieve more development impact. By doing so we can achieve more with what we have – we can be more *effective* in delivering development. The basic concept is that when development cooperation supports and pursues partner countries’ own development priorities, when those priorities are agreed in an inclusive and equitable way and external support is combined with national efforts and delivered through national institutions and systems, then we will achieve greater, better and more development impact.

The consensus around this basic concept has formed the backbone of efforts to improve how development co-operation is delivered, from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness nearly 20 years ago, to the Busan Principles for Effective Development Co-operation (2011), and the subsequent establishment of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation..

In developing countries, the practical application of the effectiveness principles was seen in the increase in dialogue and co-ordination mechanisms, particularly in specific sectors, involving Government, donors and other stakeholders. It was also manifested in the establishment of programme aid modalities, such as basket funding mechanisms, sector wide approaches and budget support at sector and exchequer levels. These modalities all, to a great or lesser extent, sought to use and strengthen public sector systems and to bring external resources together to support national development programmes agreed with and also financed by Government.

Despite the apparent consensus on the value of effectiveness, the successive monitoring rounds of the Paris Declaration and latterly by the GPEDC show that performance on effectiveness peaked around the end of the first decade of the millennium and has weakened steadily since. This is borne out by the 2011 [evaluation of the Paris Declaration](#) and more recent studies¹, which seem to show that the reasonably strong and growing consensus on the value of effectiveness that had been built among OECD DAC donors, partner governments and other national stakeholders has weakened and been challenged by countervailing forces.

¹ [Effective Development Cooperation: Does the EU deliver?](#)

Issues such as the impacts of the 2008 global economic crisis on development co-operation, the growing influence of emerging economies and new political priorities such as migration and security have lessened the priority on effectiveness, while the relative inability of programme aid modalities and dialogue mechanisms, in many contexts, to reach the most vulnerable and to counter growing inequality and persistent poverty has led to a reduction in their use.

Following the [2018 Global Progress Report](#) and the [2019 Senior Level Meeting](#), the GPEDC has recognised the need to rebuild a convincing case for the *Why* of effectiveness in order to restore the incentives for effectiveness by producing, gathering and providing robust evidence showing that effectiveness can deliver better impact - and how and under what conditions it does so.

This will involve new areas of research. International efforts to promote effectiveness have largely been based on the assumption that a positive correlation between effectiveness and impact is generally taken for granted. Perhaps as a result of this assumption, little if any research effort has been dedicated to collect concrete evidence to establish whether effectiveness can really bring about positive results in development processes or to identify the determinants of such a positive causal effect. Research on effectiveness seems to have focussed more on the extent to which effectiveness approaches are being used, rather than on the conditions under which **applying the effectiveness principles in practice can improve impact**.

Against this backdrop, **there is a need for more research on effectiveness – focusing on its impact on development outcomes**.

This entails:

- i) **strengthening the interest and voice of the research community** in the conversation on effectiveness;
- ii) **increasing support to research on effectiveness and impact** in the face of shifting priorities and crises;
- iii) **better understanding both the constructive incentives and countervailing pressures** that promote or constrain the application of the effectiveness principles in development co-operation; and
- iv) **better understanding the factors that influence the relationships** between applying the effectiveness principles and achieving the desired development outcomes.

FOCUS AND OBJECTIVE

In support of the GPEDC [Action Area 1.1 on Demonstrating the Impact of Effectiveness](#) and as part of the [GPEDC Webinar Series](#), the [Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation \(GPEDC\)](#) is hosting an informal discussion to **(re-)engage the research community in the dialogue around effective development co-operation** to help build the evidence-base needed to encourage policy change towards increased effectiveness and impact as we respond to the impact COVID-19 crisis and deliver Agenda 2030.

This objective of the webinar is to initiate a conversation between researchers and policy makers that will:

- **increase mutual learning** and exchange on when and why effective development co-operation works, with a view to contributing to and accelerating behaviour change based on the best evidence available;
- **promote a shared understanding** of the new and enduring gaps and challenges to effective development co-operation; and
- **explore ways to overcome these challenges** and translate evidence into action and effectiveness into impact.

Discussion during the webinar will focus on the following questions:

- 1. What are the main gaps in the research on effectiveness and impact? What are the key research questions that need to be explored on the relationship between implementation of the effectiveness principles and improved development outcomes?**
- 2. Is there research interest in exploring these questions and how can interest be stimulated and translated into a robust evidence base on the impact of effectiveness?**
- 3. What research institutions are best placed to contribute? How can perspectives and research institutions from partner countries be effectively involved in this research agenda?**
- 4. How can research products become more influential and better inform decision-making on development co-operation policies and practice?**

The webinar will also be an opportunity to hear about the research component undertaken as part of the GPEDC Action Area 1.1 on Demonstrating the Impact of Effectiveness.

This informal, discussion-based webinar will take place on **17 June 2021 / Duration 2 hours**

Speakers List: Relevant Research for Discussion

SPEAKER	RELEVANT RESEARCH
<p>Mr. Stephan Klingebiel [Moderator] Director UNDP Seoul Policy Centre</p>	<p>Publications Profile (DIE)</p>
<p>Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya Distinguished Fellow Centre for Policy Dialogue</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Post-COVID world discourse: four fault lines</i> by Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Ms Sarah Sabin Khan. https://onthinktanks.org/articles/post-covid-world-discourse-four-fault-lines/ 2. <i>COVID-19: A game changer for the Global South and international co-operation?</i> by Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Ms Sarah Sabin Khan. https://oecd-development-matters.org/2020/09/02/covid-19-a-game-changer-for-the-global-south-and-international-co-operation/ 3. <i>Effectiveness of development cooperation: Need for a new conversation on how to assess it</i> by Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Ms Sarah Sabin Khan. https://www.global-solutions-initiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/gsj_4_e-mag_1198.pdf 4. <i>Rethinking Development Effectiveness: Perspectives from the Global South</i> by Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Ms Sarah Sabin Khan. http://southernvoice.org/rethinking-development-effectiveness-perspectives-from-the-global-south/

	<p>5. Keynote presentation at the conference on Expanding South-South Cooperation in an Interdependent World, titled "Post-Pandemic Global South: New Context, New Demands"</p> <p>6. Presentation delivered on 2019 Busan Global Partnership Forum, titled "Toward a new conversation on Development Effectiveness"</p> <p>7. Presentation delivered at the Expert Workshop on Development Cooperation for Achieving 2030 Agenda organised by <i>DIE and Nest</i>, titled "Exploring the Existential Case of the GPEDC Monitoring Framework"</p>
<p>Mr. Heiner Janus Researcher German Development Institute</p>	<p>Bridging the Gap: An integrated Approach to Assessing Aid Effectiveness The Palgrave Handbook of Development Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda: Development Cooperation in the Context of Contested Global Governance Conceptualising Ideational Convergence of China and OECD Donors: Coalition Magnets in Development Cooperation</p>
<p>Ms. Irmeli Mustalahti Professor University of Eastern Finland</p>	<p>Introduction of the research group: Responsive Natural Resources Governance – Research Group (uef.fi) And Researchgate portfolio: Irmeli Mustalahti (researchgate.net)</p>
<p>Mr. Sam Jones Research Fellow UNU-WIDER, Mozambique</p>	<p>Non-Monetary Poverty and Deprivation: A Capability Approach Beyond access to basic services: perspectives on social health determinants of Mozambique Robustness tests for multidimensional poverty comparisons Does foreign aid harm political institutions? What is the aggregate economic rate of return to foreign aid? Assessing foreign aid's long-run contribution to growth and development Other publications: https://esamjones.github.io/</p>
<p>Mr. Finn Tarp Professor of Development Economics University of Copenhagen</p>	<p>Publications Profile (University of Copenhagen)</p>
<p>Ms. Jane Mariara Executive Director Partnership for Economic Policy</p>	<p>Publications Profile</p>
<p>Mr. Johnny Flentø Senior Advisor University of Copenhagen</p>	
<p>Mr. José Jaime Macuane Associate Professor Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo, Mozambique</p>	
<p>Dr. Tausi Kida Executive Director Economic & Social Research Foundation, Tanzania</p>	