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DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN 2030

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In ancient Athens, the Oracle of Delphi sought to see the future; in the Middle Ages, fortune telling boomed. Today we take our advice from institutions that track, analyse and predict developments and trends with scientific methodology. A variety of policy advisory institutes and think tanks engage in this. The analysis and evaluation of achieved objectives and the impacts of developmental programs and projects has become a business. Again, answers to the question of the best methods, of effectiveness and efficiency are sought. Sophisticated instruments are available to us today to do this, globally recognised standards are in place and hardly any projects escape evaluation. The proposals developed for additional project work therefore usually only have a short to medium-term perspective.

In evaluating programs, projects and the achievements of development policy as a whole, a retrospective element prevails, which is little wonder after more than 60 years of development policy efforts. Although looking back does not necessarily provide a flattering view, it is nevertheless difficult to imagine a world without development cooperation. Now development politicians are beginning to direct their gaze somewhat further in the future.

Today, there are a whole series of articles that deal with future challenges for development policy;¹ some espouse a medium-term perspective, update straightforward developments and, in doing so, come to verifiable conclusions. Others describe a world "beyond aid" and provide plenty

1 | E.g. Michael Bohnet, "Überlegungen zur Zukunft der Entwicklungspolitik", in: Reinhold E. Thiel (ed.), *Neue Ansätze zur Entwicklungstheorie*, Bonn, 2001; in various articles Dirk Messner, German Development Institute (GDI); Heiner Janus, ▶

of material for discussion. Some articles question just how useful development policies are in isolation; when one takes into consideration the level of global entanglement, this no longer makes any sense. In any case, discussion on the future of this policy area has since been initiated .

The previous traditional understanding of development assistance, development cooperation and development policy predominantly shaped by the North and West has already changed in the last few decades of development. "Networked thinking" has long been an issue in development policy, and we know that the old relationships, patterns of interpretation (North and South, donors and recipients, etc.) and simple cause-and-effect assumptions have decreased in significance. For several years, there has also been the sense that we must now deal with changes that exceed the amount of predictable, somewhat regular change. We see the increasing mutual interdependence in the era of globalisation and the increasing dynamics of many processes, and we realise all this cannot remain the same without consequences for us. The recent developments in the financial markets should have conveyed this knowledge sufficiently.

For a long time now, we, the established donors, have no longer been the only players on the developmental stage; new "stakeholders" have come along, and today's development policy is no longer conceivable without the inclusion of environment, climate, energy and foreign and security policy elements. New challenges and new risks have emerged, and "simply continuing business as usual" is no longer a development policy that appears realistic.

Projections and forecasts abound, as a simple Google search for "megatrends" will show. The Overseas Development Institute's prognosis² on development cooperation

Stephan Klingebiel and Sebastian Paulo, *Beyond Aid. Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zum Wandel der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, Discussion Paper, DIE, Bonn, No. 18, 2013, http://die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_18.2013.pdf (accessed 19 Feb 2014).

- 2 | Homi Kharas and Andrew Rogerson, *Horizon 2025: creative destruction in the aid industry*, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2012, <http://odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7723.pdf> (accessed 19 Feb 2013).

in 2025 makes for interesting reading on this topic. And finally, the National Intelligence Council's report, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, is worth mentioning (and cited here).³ How could the trends touched upon in these articles affect the field of development policy in 2030?

This article presents a collection of assumptions that are neither complete nor verifiable. In any case, these are not statements about the future, but then again, 2,500 years ago, Confucius said: "He who does not think of the future is certain to have immediate worries." However, he also said: "He who believes everything he reads would be better off not reading."

IN THE YEAR 2030: "... SO VERY FAR AWAY: MAYBE IT'S ONLY YESTERDAY..."⁴

In 2030, the population make-up of all European societies will be different: The youth of the world will agglomerate to a much greater degree than is already the case today in other regions, but then mainly in urban centers; the total world population will increase (from 7.2 billion today to 8.4 billion) and strong middle class growth is expected: the relative and absolute number of poor people will decline. Against this backdrop, we Europeans will have become slightly less significant. In the NIC's report, among other things, the trends and scenarios are listed in the following table.

From a strategic standpoint, all this has been under discussion for some time, and for some policy and research areas such as foreign and security policy or demography research, extensive literature has been available for a long time. However, less focus is given to longer-term strategic thinking in development policy. Will development policy even exist in 2030? Who will actually be developing what, what will development mean (for whom), what role will development policy even still play, and what can we draw from these prognoses on the future for our actions today?

Will development policy even exist in 2030? Who will actually be developing what, and what will development mean?

3 | *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, National Intelligence Council (NIC), http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Global_Trends_2030.pdf (accessed 19 Feb 2014).

4 | From the lyrics of "In the year 2525" by Zager & Evans, a folk-rock duo from Nebraska, 1969.

Fig. 1

Prognosis, "2030 Global Trends"

Megatrends	
Individual empowerment	Individual empowerment will accelerate owing to poverty reduction, growth of the global middle class, greater educational attainment, widespread use of new communications and manufacturing technologies, and health-care advances.
Diffusion of power	There will not be any hegemonic power. Power will shift to networks and coalitions in a multipolar world.
Demographic patterns	The demographic arc of instability will narrow. Economic growth might decline in "aging" countries. Sixty per cent of the world's population will live in urbanised areas; migration will increase.
Food, water, energy nexus	Demand for these resources will grow substantially owing to an increase in the global population. Tackling problems pertaining to one commodity will be linked to supply and demand for the others.
Game changers	
Crisis-prone global economy	Will global volatility and imbalances among players with different economic interests result in collapse? Or will greater multipolarity lead to increased resiliency in the global economic order?
Governance gap	Will governments and institutions be able to adapt fast enough to harness change instead of being overwhelmed by it?
Potential for increased conflict	Will rapid changes and shifts in power lead to more intrastate and interstate conflicts?
Wider scope of regional instability	Will regional instability, especially in the Middle east and south Asia, spill over and create global insecurity?
Impact of new technologies	Will technological breakthroughs be developed in time to boost economic productivity and solve the problems caused by a growing world population, rapid urbanisation, and climate change?
Potential worlds	
Stalled engines	In the most plausible worst-case scenario, the risks of interstate conflict increase. The U.S. draws inward and globalisation stalls.
Fusion	In the most plausible best-case outcome, China and the U.S. collaborate on a range of issues, leading to broader global cooperation.
Gini-out-of-the-bottle	Inequalities explode as some countries become big winners and others fail. Inequalities within countries increase social tensions. Without completely disengaging, the U.S. is no longer the "global policeman".
Nonstate world	Driven by new technologies, nonstate actors take the lead in confronting global challenges.

Source: NIC, n. 3.

To begin with, the fact that many of the statements and the answers to these questions in this text are vague is a function of the subject and the time frame selected here. The year 2030 was chosen as a reference point because it seems far enough in the future and is therefore out of reach for short and medium-term approaches. However, we all still remember the fall of the Berlin Wall (20 years have passed already): *Maybe it's only yesterday...?*

DEVELOPMENT 2030 IS... POLITICS

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Development policy in 2030 will have a different capacity than it does today. For the time being, we understand "development" to be the sum of all the processes through which different views regarding desirable social, political and economic change are organised within a society. The formulation of goals and the establishment of priorities for this change will happen in a state of permanent dissent and it depends on the type of organisation itself: ultimately, democracy is "technically" nothing more than the successful management of social dissent processes with the aim of temporarily agreeing upon solutions, naturally taking into account the appropriate values and rights to which the respective society is committed. A second pillar of development will be international dialogue: The internal social processes described will be highly intertwined in supranational processes. Thirdly, non-state actors will play an even greater role locally, regionally, nationally and internationally than they do today.

Development in 2030 will no longer be a nationally or bilaterally administered project. "Ownership" of development will change: development in 2030 will have become a key modernisation project for all societies, regardless of whether that society is located in the South or in the North. These decision-making processes and discussions will be conducted differently in 2030 than they are today: they will be more decentralised, participatory and digital (e-democracy, e-governance, etc.). Governance will become "more difficult". The decades-long search for coherence will not lead to a "development policy from one cast", either: development in and of itself is diversity, competition, trial and error. For (development) policy in 2030, this means

it will play a role in moderating the permanent processes of social dissent. Other new players will have appeared on the scene: civil society will have changed and continued to increase in significance, while the developmental importance of national governments will tend to become weaker in formulating development goals. However, there will continue to be differences between individual countries and regions; this will work better for some governments, worse for others.

In 2030, the decades of development *aid* and development *cooperation* will be forgotten and the old poles will no longer exist: the North and the South, the industrial, emerging and developing countries, donors and recipients. This “aid motive” and the mainly “technical” tools of the past decades will at best play a role in emergency situations: ultimately, by 2030, developing countries themselves will be able to export engineers. Also, hunger will no longer be a problem with agricultural production but rather a structural problem of distribution and therefore primarily a political one. Development will consequently finally become a political project that extends beyond the old conceptual and spatial boundaries.

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(DEVELOPMENT) POLICY ALSO AFFECTS US

In addition to new actors, new topics will make an appearance, and our view of development will become even more comprehensive. The problems in the former North and South will largely be the same, and the interdependencies of these subject areas will be recognised: energy-environment-climate-economic-migration, for example. All this relates to the extent to which the lines between us all are blurred. This requires a systematic way of thinking, i.e. a thought process that takes interdependencies into account and is ready to accept change and effects on itself at any time.

This new (development) policy will be seen as a link between the interests of different policy areas: economic policy, the environment, climate and energy policy, foreign and domestic and international security policy. Even the lines of domestic and social policy will be blurred: for

example, an increasing number of migrants will also challenge the social systems of the EU Member States. In the process, development policy will become a new category requiring a different way of thinking. What happens in Bulgaria or West Africa will also be of concern. Today, this is still relatively recent knowledge, but in 2030 it will be common knowledge. Development policy issues are likely to play a very different and particularly a larger role in both European and Bundestag elections than they do today.



Landing in Lampedusa: An increasing number of migrants challenges the social systems of the EU Member States. | Source: Sara Prestianni, noborder network, flickr ©.

DEVELOPMENT BEGINS IN THE MIND

Just as development policy will be practically coupled with the implementation of other policies in 2030, it will then follow other theoretical approaches. The naive belief in the explicability of the world using Newtonian physics, to which generations of development politicians have clung, will only generate smiles in 2030. Societies are not simply machines where a drop of oil will prevent the pistons from jamming: the causes and effects of this will continue, but the complex relationships between political, economic, social and environmental factors are not as easy to map as some people – amazingly – still believe today. A change in thinking has already begun with regard to this, but it will not be mainstream thinking until 2030.⁵

5 | See also: Ben Ramalingam, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, 360 et seq.

This change in thinking will also take place in partner countries (previously also referred to as “recipient countries”). They will no longer permit themselves to define the goals of their social, economic and foreign policy – the influence of international bodies and institutions described above will be relatively case-dependent and country-dependent: the self-confidence of the partner countries and their governments will have increased. This is already suggested today. At the least, civil society is already experiencing the effects of their increasing self-confidence in the form of a wave of NGO legislation, with whose help the influence of civil society will be controlled or coordinated – or both.

INTERESTS AND VALUES CONTINUE TO DIVERGE

By 2030, the age of “hidden agendas” will be past. The assumption that donors could pursue hidden interests through their charitable projects has accompanied development policy from the start. The fact that actors pursue their own agenda will no longer be objectionable in 2030 and, in any case, this would no longer be kept secret. Just as with interests, values will have a competitive relationship with other values. This can and will be discussed more openly. The degree of transparency will increase, if only because there will be other legal – and technical – opportunities. This may mean, of course, that in some situations, no common values can be found and there will be no cooperation. In 2030, multi-polarity will be a feature of the world order and it will not just be a case of more poles of political power, but also economic or cultural policy. This means that not only states or organisations, but also other (cultural, religious, etc.) institutions will participate in the search for ideas and notions on how the world should look. This search process will be conducted entirely ideologically, and (development) policy will play a mediating role whether it wants it or not.

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The Western understanding of democracy will only face stronger competition with other conceptions of democracy. However, competitions may be ignited with any other conflicts of interest: on regional hegemony, in religious disputes, access to resources, etc. A peaceful world is not something (development) policy can produce. It would be

a great achievement, however, if it could help to moderate the resulting conflicts and largely organise things so that they run their course non-violently.

THE CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FOR 2030: INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Information is the basic prerequisite for decisions of all kinds – in politics, in business, in everything. There are no longer areas that are free from information: information of all kinds is available worldwide anywhere, any time and in “real time” to everyone. It is available selectively and non-selectively; anyone can retrieve information anywhere and information reaches people everywhere, even when it is not requested. This focuses attention on the processes of information production, information analysis, processing and recording; this has become a central issue politically (including with development).



A classroom in Yangshuo, China: Education will remain a crucial aspect of development. | Source: The Society for Environmental Exploration (Frontier), flickr ©©.

Information and communication are the foundation of knowledge. With changing information and communication attitudes changes are bound to happen in the acquisition and procurement of knowledge: education will play a crucial role and e-learning will be a key issue for a development policy that is increasingly focused on education.

Questions of the increasing digitalisation associated with this will not yet be definitively answered in 2030, but equally important (development) policy issues will remain:

- To whom does digital space belong, how should it be organised, who has jurisdiction?
- What will privacy look like in the future and will human rights extend to privacy of informational participation? How credible is information and how free is communication; will there be internet censorship? What are the consequences for political participation and competition of political ideas? Will there be an “informational divide” (“information elites” and “information lower classes”)?
- Will better access to information/communication lead to educational equity? And finally, what threats will the internet present us with?

It is evident that there will be a great need for discussion and regulation at the global level: these issues can no longer be resolved at the national level. Interest in transparency will increase and the question of dealing with this will come to a head. What is new is that this is of global interest and thus is also relevant to (development) policy. However, it should be clear to us that we will no longer be alone in setting standards. The number of young “users” in other countries and regions, which will be much larger in 2030, will play a crucial role in setting standards. The creative power of our Western standards, however, will lose influence as well, especially in the digital sphere.

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INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, DECREASING IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

In 2030, national, bilateral development policy will only play a role on the margins of international development dialogues that will predominantly take place between supranational institutions and in which a large number of civil society initiatives will participate. This process will include participatory elements that will be advanced by developments in digital technologies.

If development policy objectives are no longer being formulated by the major donor countries and it is not northern organisations implementing them, their influence will decline. Although the latter may remain for a while as acting suppliers, they will later remain active in very specific areas, though they will not “donate” their services, but rather sell them. In the long run they will become less important, though it will still be a while before this happens.

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To the extent that the level of education, enhanced by improved access to information and knowledge, improves worldwide, local capacities will also improve, including self-confidence. In the process, the “experts” will also change: development experts from the North will become dispensable and will only be in demand for certain individual areas. Local agencies will take over the business sector, and where the required expertise is not available locally, it can easily be obtained elsewhere.

INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE, CAPITAL, PEOPLE: EVERYTHING FLOWS

Just as information and knowledge flow, so do finance and capital. The management of these flows is far removed from the opportunities for intervention national institutions have, giving rise to a need for international regulations that will be in force in 2030. Participating in the processes of decision-making and control will present an exciting challenge for (development) policy. It is already well-known today that the technical possibilities presented by digitalisation are nearly unlimited. The movement patterns of people have also changed. In no way do people wander aimlessly; they follow rational patterns and do so with confidence. Development policy will have to address this: it will have to give up its local ties and work on “flow management”. It will be a matter of steering these flows to avoid environmentally and economically infeasible clusters.

Even these migration movements will no longer be constrained by “firewalls”. It has become necessary to find solutions in the form of new and innovative ideas, particularly between Europe and Africa; this will also be the

case in 2030. This includes novel use of instruments at European level, for example in the area of financing a controlled migration of labour in combination with remittances to start businesses in the countries of origin.

THE ECONOMY REMAINS A CENTRAL FOCAL POINT FOR DEVELOPMENT

In 2030, economic development will be a key factor for any development effort. Participating political systems will even – and especially – need to “deliver”: food riots, for example, can be organised with very little effort today. However, the approach in 2030 will no longer be one of more passive poverty reduction, but rather of motivating and supportive incentive. In doing so, the debate on the best way forward will stay current: Does economic development succeed best in a market economy, social market economy or a planned economic policy framework? This will remain up for debate in 2030 and on no account can it be assumed that one model that fits everywhere exists.

Our regulatory localisation in Germany is well-known, but, depending on the situation, it too will always require fine adjustment. Therefore, in 2030, the social market economy will not be a good fit in all countries and cultures and will have to be adapted. However, things will not be the same for us, either.

The potential that lies in the rapidly growing digital networking of many people in developing and emerging countries has already been mentioned: information, communication and above all knowledge are central resources for all economic development – perhaps especially in developing countries. Even today, we are already seeing what the creative applications of new technologies are in Africa, where many banking transactions are carried out using basic mobile phones (e.g. “M-Pesa” in Kenya). Cooperation projects (e.g. between the middle class from “the North” and entrepreneurs in “the South”) will become more common, but will require a certain set of rules, for example on the legal protection of investments.

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Folk Festival in Darfur: Even today, mobile phones in Africa are used for communication, information and banking. | Source: Albany Associates, flickr ©①②.

CLEAR SOCIAL GROUPS WILL BE REDISCOVERED

Even if several cross-border similarities come to light in the course of globalisation efforts, there will always be limits. Local and regional supply will not lose its significance. In spite of increasing networking and long-range communication, people will still live in families, clans and clear cultural units. And in 2030, this will not have changed; it is more likely that this picture will become even more colourful given the rising global population. For development, these smallest units will continue to hold interest: a culture of education is not only developed in schools – the foundations are laid in the family. In addition, the formation of values in 2030 will not take place online, but in manageable, local groups. Even in 15 years' time, trust and responsibility should grow in spatial and social proximity rather than in the anonymity of the online world.

The fact that this is certainly also a matter of (development) policy services that will be provided locally will be commonplace by 2030. These are expected to include the need to propagate networked thinking at the local level: our villages will still be plagued with fear in 2030, and the desire to seal themselves off from others will still prevail. All in all, cultural elements will play a more significant role in (development) policy in 2030 than they do today: they

will by no means be unified or relativised on a global level through the non-binding nature of digital networking.

“IN THE YEAR 2030...”

Of course, a lot will happen in the next 15 years, including things that are unpredictable: At this point, we have not committed to anything exhaustive in terms of the wide range of technological innovations on which we are still unable to base our prior knowledge. The fact that technological innovations (e.g. the mobile phone and the smart phone) are increasingly shaping information behaviour and communication style (e.g. social networks) around the world has only been observed over the past few years and has quickly become a worldwide phenomenon. The idea that it is thereby possible to directly influence policy (e.g. via “flash mobs”) is still relatively new, but by no means is it the end of this story.

If there are no longer “donors” in 2030, there will no longer be “recipients”, either. In the process, the social and psychological sensibilities of the actors will change. Communication will proceed less vertically, but more horizontally and symmetrically: people will communicate better with each other and more frequently. This in no way means people will be better understood and that there will therefore be fewer conflicts; in fact, just the opposite could be the case.

One thing is certain: development policy will change more over the next decade than it did in previous decades. It will be less “development” and more “policy”; it will have a broader base and will become more complex; it will be more culturally sensitive and will include clearer strategic elements; and ultimately, it will no longer be “made by us”.