

EXCHANGE TO CHANGE

ECHANGER POUR CHANGER

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PROFESSOR RENATO FLÔRES AT IOB



University
of Antwerp



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT
POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

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Dear members of the IOB family,

We would like to thank all alumni who have contributed to this newsletter. Exchanging ideas is not only enriching for our alumni themselves, but also for IOB. Acknowledging this, IOB will be investing even more in its alumni network.

A major step in this process was the launch of the interactive website www.ua.ac.be/dev. This site provides a link to Blackboard, an electronic forum which stimulates the exchange of ideas between students, alumni and IOB staff. We are also working on an online database with contact information on alumni and some details on their professional experience. If you wish to register for Blackboard or share your information via the database, please apply for a password to greet.annaert@ua.ac.be.

IOB has opted for more web-based exchange. Starting from September our newsletter 'Exchange to Change' will have its own web page with easily downloadable articles. It will also increasingly become a medium for the publication of articles by alumni on their professional experiences. We thus hope to stimulate the exchange of information regarding the development field. We will continue to print 'Exchange to Change' in limited numbers for promotional purposes and we will send copies to alumni who con-

tribute an article, but for reasons of efficiency we will no longer use the printed version as the standard channel of distribution. If you would nevertheless like to receive a printed version of 'Exchange to Change' by post, please send an e-mail to greet.annaert@ua.ac.be or fax the slip below to 0032 (0)3 275 57 71.

May we kindly ask you to pass on this message to other alumni in your country. IOB is eager to strengthen its family ties.

Robrecht Renard
Eva Vergaelen

Please send me Exchange to Change by post in the future because (mark what is applicable)

- I do not have regular/reliable access to the internet.
- I have access to the internet but I prefer the printed version.

Name:

Postal address:

e-mail:

If you have read the previous Letter from the Chair you will know that Filip Reyntjens has bowed out after two terms in office and that the undersigned has had the honour of taking over from him for the next three years. Filip is now taking a well-deserved sabbatical leave but he will be back as a full-time professor as from the next academic year. Although I am familiar with IOB since I have been a Council member and professor from its very inception I am now dealing with responsibilities that are new to me and I am therefore in the process of, as they say, learning by doing. If I were asked to summarise how I see the challenge ahead of me, I would opt for the word ‘consolidation’ as it clearly defines what I have in mind. IOB has become a leading institute in our field in Belgium and a medium-sized player in Europe. When I argue that we should now consolidate I do not mean that there is no

room for further growth. There is, and I am confident that some of our activities will continue to expand. But we also have to pause and look self-critically at what we are doing and how we can do the job better. We function in a competitive international market for postgraduate studies. Fortunately, an ever increasing number of programmes are being offered in countries of the South. In view of this, what do we have to offer to justify the extra costs of a programme in Europe and how can we make the most of our strong points? There is also increasing competition in the North. What is the specific niche that IOB can fill? What are we so good at, and in some ways so unique at, that students from other parts of the world are willing to travel to Antwerp rather than to other universities in Europe, the US, Canada, Japan, and many other countries. In his farewell letter Filip Reyntjens mentioned the external assessment panel

that visited IOB in the summer of 2007 and how he felt confident that we would get a positive assessment that would allow our new MA programmes to obtain accreditation under the Dutch-Flemish university system. I can now confirm that this is exactly what has happened: the panel has given us the green light. But we want to remain pro-active and pinpoint where and how we can continue to improve our MA programmes. It is my intention to pay particular attention to what our alumni may have to say and to ask all of you what, in retrospect, you regard as the strong and perhaps weak points of your studies here and what it is about the programme and about IOB that would make you recommend us to your colleagues and friends. Watch this space for further news about this issue!

Robrecht Renard 

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Local photographer in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Photography: Paul Van Wouwe, 1995, © Wereldmediatheek

PHOTONOMICS

In 2003 Eric Wiideman was awarded his Master's Degree in Globalisation and Development at IOB. Before his enrolment at IOB he was an advertising executive in New York for almost 15 years. Equipped with ample experience in media management, art collecting and creative development, he set up his own business, combining his professional passion with an economic development mission. His media company sells licences for images (stock photography) to advertising agencies, marketing firms, editors (newspapers, magazines and websites) and book publishers. The photographers that he uses come predominantly from developing countries. He explains the idea:

There exists an extraordinary industry of design that quietly and unobtrusively goes about its work although it plays a key role in the production of everyday products. The average person usually remains unaware of its genius.

Consider for a moment that the chair you are sitting on, the humming florescent light above you, the curtains on the windows, the car you drive, the bicycle you ride and the glass you drink from are all the result of an artistic mix of form and function.

While many or most of the products that you use on a daily basis have been or will soon be produced in the region that can offer the cheapest labour and the technical means, i.e. developing countries, what has happened to design labour?

The answer has a great deal to do with educational priorities. Understandably, economies closely tied to primary commodities and foreign aid distribution are more likely to offer agronomy and business administration courses than studies in the history of art and graphic design. That need not necessarily be the case, however, nor should the sigma of "art equals poverty" linger long into the future.

The annual value of the stock photography industry, which supplies photographic images to the advertising market, is estimated at between 1.5 and 2 billion US dollars. Most suppliers provide their photography via websites and sell licences for the use of

specific photographs, or groups thereof, with as many as 2 million photographs to choose from in some instances.

The market leader, an organisation that controls approximately 75% of the global market, purchases copyrights to images from photographers outright and then sells licences to buyers over and over again. In many cases their initial investment in the inventory of photographs is covered by the first one or two licence sales for any given photo. Not taking variable administrative and fixed costs into account every sale thereafter is pure profit.

Taking full advantage of global resources this market leader (along with most other large stock photography websites) pays artists in developing regions amounts that are "in line with" the local economies and consequently generate huge margins in its target markets (U.S., Europe). Essentially, most of them buy at very low and sell at very high prices.

Although this makes sense from a business perspective this model for the photography market ought to disappear in the near future. In essence, it is yet another relic of the inequality that big business often gives rise to.

Eric has initiated a new model for approaching this line of business whereby photographers' work is "represented" on his website and photographers retain

their copyrights indefinitely. Earning a percentage of the value of each licence for photographs that is sold, photographers are able to earn more for an indefinite period of time and irrespective of the economic characteristics of their home country or region.

In other words, artists in developing countries can submit their work at no cost and can earn fees which are much higher. The 'old' model for stock photography sales is thus turned on its head.

Fortunately, this model also makes good business sense. First of all, there is no inventory cost associated with the addition of new photographs. Moreover, given the eclectic nature of the artists who contribute their work, the aesthetic of the stock photography is both distinct and increasingly attractive to a market that has so far had to rely on the services of one or two major suppliers and has only been offered the aesthetic that these have deemed appropriate.

A new age for photonomics is born. 

A CLOSER LOOK AT IOB'S FOUR THEMATIC GROUPS

To foster specialisation and collaboration, IOB staff members are organised in four thematic groups: Aid Policy, Impact of Globalisation, Political Economy of the Great Lakes, and Poverty and Well-being as a Local Institutional Process. In addition to academic research, the thematic groups also take responsibility for teaching modules within the Master training programmes. The thematic groups also constitute the channel through which IOB policy advisory work is performed, for example for the Belgian Directorate General for Development Co-operation, Belgian Technical Co-operation, the regional government of Flanders, other European bilateral donors, the European Union, the World Bank, United Nations organisations and programmes, and many non-governmental organisations.

The thematic groups are the result of a process that goes back many years. IOB was established following the merger of different clusters of expertise that existed in the faculties and institutes prior to the creation of the University of Antwerp (the College for Developing countries at RUCA, a research unit in the Faculty of Applied Economics at UFISA and a unit in the Faculty of Law at UIA). As a result the staff at IOB had diverse research and training backgrounds as well as different thematic and geographical interests. An external assessment board advised IOB to concentrate on fewer fields stating that it was better to be “a large small institute than a small large institute”. Specialisation was the key word. First, all IOB staff were asked to list their recent publications under a number of thematic and geographical headings. This resulted in an inventory of the staff's main research interests. It was subsequently decided to organise IOB on the basis of four research groups so as to create a better focused and coherent whole. Each thematic group was presented and staff were asked to opt for the group which would provide the most suitable framework for their research. The thematic groups have a certain degree of autonomy. Of course the IOB board and several commissions that report to the board remain the central platforms for deliberation and decision-making.

The external assessment board also advised IOB to streamline research, teaching and policy advisory work better so as to achieve greater complementarity. To this effect, each of the four thematic

groups constitutes a cluster of people who collaborate in these three areas. In another reform drive the three Master's programmes were updated and it was decided that the thematic groups would provide educational input into each of the three teaching modules. In other words, their research focus would also be the focus of the courses they taught.

Every thematic group is headed by a convener. It was decided that these conveners would not become members of the Bureau (which consists of chair, vice-chair and secretary) because this would increase their bureaucratic workload of IOB staff even more. Instead, they are consulted by the Bureau on matters that involve their thematic groups:

1. Thematic group 'Aid Policy'

Its members have varied but complementary research backgrounds and geographical expertise. They share an interest in the “new aid architecture” that arose around the turn of the millennium, in particular the PRSP approach. The major focus is on macro aspects of aid such as the use of selectivity and ex-post conditionality, the increased attention to institutional and governance issues, the involvement of civil society as a process conditionality, the use and modalities of budget support, and the macroeconomic challenges of scaling-up aid to Africa. Several members also have a keen interest in the methodological and institutional aspects of monitoring and evaluating aid, which provides another useful angle for the study of the new aid architecture.

The thematic group Aid Policy covers three major topics:

- 1.1. The political economy of aid
- 1.2. Monitoring and evaluating aid
- 1.3. The macroeconomics of aid

2. Thematic group 'Political Economy of the Great Lakes Region'

The work of this group builds on the rich intellectual tradition going back to 18th and 19th century philosophers/economists such as A. Smith and D. Ricardo. Ricardo defined political economy as “the distribution of income, wealth and power over the different groups in society”. In Ricardo's time, researchers endeavoured to analyse and explain the political and social struggles that caused differences in the economic status of social groups. Since then, the growth of capitalism into a globe-encompassing system and the critical debate in the human sciences have largely altered both the object and the understanding of political economy.

A very useful synthesis of this evolution is to be found in the “institutional school” which tries to incorporate both historical insights and the premise that it is essential to transcend disciplinary borders in the human sciences. The interplay of state, society and market, the conflicts between and within these fields and their possible resolutions are given particular attention. Although this field of study was from the onset located at the intersection of political economy and sociology, it has incorporated insights from other disciplines. Development studies have witnessed a similar evolution.

This thematic group tries to apply these intellectual traditions to the developments in Sub-Saharan Africa and more specifically the Great Lakes Region. Its defining characteristics are interdisciplinarity and geographical scope. These make it possible to study transformation processes at different levels, stretching from local development experiences over regional conflicts to global linkages. As the countries of the Great Lakes Region are going through varying stages of conflict and reconstruction the research agenda can be summarised under the title “From conflict to inclusive development”.

Most of these projects are also embedded in a larger institutional framework. Not only do these institutional ties help to meet our information needs, they also provide direct leverage in the local policy debate. For these reasons, our research centre has gradually extended the number of partnerships, for example with Kinshasa, Bukavu, Cape Town and Mbarara. Current projects are:

- 2.1. Observatory on political economy and human development
- 2.2. Political Economy and Post-Conflict Development
- 2.3. Policy management, governance and poverty alleviation in the Western Cape
- 2.4. Strengthening the capacity of the Faculty of Development Studies at Mbarara University of Science and Technology
- 2.5. Rural poverty in post-conflict Rwanda: linking livelihood profiles and institutional processes
- 2.6. The nature of political transitions and transitional justice
- 2.7. Media and politics in crisis situations
- 2.8. Poverty and inequality in the DRC on the basis of the ENQUETE 1-2-3

3. Thematic group ‘Impact of Globalisation’

This group has varied but complementary research experience and geographical expertise. Its members also share a common interest in the impact of the recent wave of globalisation on development and poverty, from the point of view of both research and teaching. The thematic group focuses on the various functional dimensions of the globalisation phenomenon, namely trade, (multinational) production and finance. Current research is focusing on the impact of policy decisions or external shocks in the globalisation field on economic development and on poverty. Some members of this thematic group analyse this impact at the macro level, using cross-comparative analysis across countries, while others examine the full transmission cycle down to household-level impact.

4. Thematic group ‘Poverty and Well-being as a (Local) Institutional Process’

The group focuses on human beings as both the ‘prime movers’ and the final ‘beneficiaries’ of development. It is the institutional environment in its concrete local manifestations that fundamentally shapes the opportunities and constraints faced by specific groups of people in the development process. The thematic group analyses this environment as a set of social networks and organisations that enable people to seek the cooperation of fellow human beings, as a set of rules and norms that determine which resources can be accessed by whom and which actions are socially (un)acceptable as a function of each person’s identity, and as a set of cultural heuristics used by people to form their identities and the world in which they live. A key theoretical claim is that poverty is not an attribute of a specific type of people (the “poor”), but the result of a particular social situation produced, re-produced (and potentially

changed) by local institutional processes.

The group’s research can be summarised as actor-oriented institutional analysis which aims to capture the complex interaction between human agency and the local institutional environment. The focus is policy-oriented, i.e. the thematic group aims to grasp the above-mentioned forms of interaction in order to design better policies and intervention mechanisms so as to promote aggregate development and reduce social exclusion and poverty. The policy process and the interventions by the ‘development industry’ are an integral part of the prevailing institutional dynamics and are thus inevitably marked by social exclusion. The challenge is therefore to promote change processes from within the existing exclusionary and inefficient institutional realities of poverty-stricken areas. In more operational terms, this thematic group covers the study of livelihood strategies in local institutional contexts, (the lack of) responsiveness and accountability of public services, the institutional conditions for (better) functioning and more accessible markets (value chains, micro finance), and problems of local organisation and collective action. Current projects are:

- 4.1. Poverty as an institutional process
- 4.2. Poverty, vulnerability and dominance
- 4.3. Village politics and exclusion from aid resources
- 4.4. Responsiveness of Public Services
- 4.5. Financial rural markets
- 4.6. The role of “Payments for Environmental Services” for a sustainable water management

PROTÉGER LES CONSOMMATEURS: AUSSI UN PROBLÈME EN RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO

Parler de « consommation », c'est faire allusion à une fonction que nous exerçons tous : se nourrir, se vêtir, se loger, équiper sa maison, acheter sa voiture, l'assurer, voyager, tous ces actes et bien d'autres encore constituent des actes de consommation. Partant de cette évidence que nous sommes tous des consommateurs et de l'impérieuse nécessité de les protéger contre les abus et certains dangers de la société de consommation, nous en avons déduit que « protéger les consommateurs n'est ni un luxe pour les pays en développement ni l'apanage des pays industrialisés, mais plutôt un vrai problème de société » qui appelle de la part de tous pouvoirs publics une attention toute particulière.

Si, dans nombre des pays d'outre atlantique (États-Unis, Canada, etc.) et dans l'Union Européenne (Belgique, France, etc.), la protection des consommateurs a même été élevée au rang des droits fondamentaux pour lesquels les pouvoirs publics ont l'obligation positive de prendre des « mesures concrètes et effectives » pour leur garantie, en République Démocratique du Congo, cependant - nonobstant la pénétration rapide des caractéristiques de la société de consommation et avec elles les abus y consécutifs- les législateurs traînent le pas dans l'adoption de règles spécifiques pour la protection des consommateurs. Outre la lenteur du législateur, l'inculture (par manque de formation et d'information) et la passivité des consommateurs (non ligués) facilitent également cette léthargie alors que sous d'autres cieux, ce sont les revendications des mouvements consuméristes, et donc le « syndicalisme » des consommateurs afin de faire valoir leurs intérêts individuels et collectifs, qui ont poussé à cet interventionnisme étatique. Par cette incurie étatique dans la vie des affaires, on aura compris que - pilier du libéralisme économique (économie du marché) dont le régulateur est justement le marché - la liberté de commerce et d'industrie, consacrée dans divers instruments juridiques nationaux et internationaux, n'est ni générale ni absolue. En clair, pour des raisons notamment de santé pub-

lique, de protection de l'environnement et de protection des consommateurs (leur santé, leur sécurité et leurs intérêts économiques), les autorités compétentes peuvent prendre des mesures appropriées (que dictent les circonstances) en faisant prévaloir les exigences liées à la protection des intérêts ci - haut cités sur les intérêts économiques.

Pourquoi « protéger les consommateurs » ? Au-delà du fait que les consommateurs sont d'abord des êtres humains et en cette qualité, ils doivent être protégés, on leur a aussi reconnu un certain nombre de droits qualifiés de « fondamentaux » autour desquels toutes les politiques et stratégies nationales, communautaires et internationales s'articulent. Ces droits sont : le droit à la santé et à la sécurité (1), le droit à la protection de leurs intérêts économiques (2), le droit à la réparation des dommages subis (3), le droit à l'information et à l'éducation (4), le droit d'être entendu (et donc d'être représenté) (5), le droit d'opérer librement leur choix (6).

1 Le droit du consommateur à la santé et à la sécurité est son droit à la consommé de « produits sûrs » ou des « produits et services qui, dans des conditions normales d'utilisation ou dans d'autres conditions raisonnablement prévisibles par le professionnel, doivent présenter la sécurité à la quelle on peut légitimement

s'attendre et ne pas porter atteinte à la santé des personnes ». Bref, c'est le droit - pour le consommateur - d'être protégé contre les produits et services qui menacent ou qui portent atteinte à sa santé, sa sécurité ou sa vie.

2 Le consommateur, lorsqu'il acquiert ou utilise un bien ou un service, doit être protégé contre tout abus de pouvoir de la part du professionnel. Cet abus peut consister, par exemple, en l'imposition de clauses abusives, d'un contrat type unilatéral ou de conditions écrasantes ou abusives de crédits, en la facturation de frais supplémentaires, en la non indication des prix des produits, etc.

3 Les produits mis en circulation ou les prestations de services fournis par les professionnels peuvent causer préjudice aux consommateurs. Grâce au droit à la réparation, ceux-ci peuvent introduire des plaintes auprès des instances habilitées afin d'obtenir une compensation pour le préjudice subi à la suite de la défectuosité de ces produits ou de l'insatisfaction (inexécution ou exécution fautive) des services prestés.

4 Le droit à l'information implique, dans le chef de tous ceux qui interviennent dans la chaîne de production et de distribution ainsi que dans le chef des pouvoirs publics et de toutes autres organisations, l'obligation de donner aux

consommateurs des informations nécessaires (sur la composition du produit, sur son utilisation, sur les conditions générales, sur le prix, etc.) pour pouvoir opérer un choix judicieux et de se protéger contre les abus (malhonnêteté, tromperie) des publicités et labels.

Le droit du consommateur à l'éducation est celui de sa formation. Il implique pour lui l'acquisition du savoir et des aptitudes nécessaires pour être informé de ses droits fondamentaux et pour les exercer.

C'est dans le but de rétablir l'équilibre dans le commerce juridique, de rendre libre, rationnel et éclairé le choix du consommateur ; bref de rendre « transparent le marché », qu'on a reconnu au consommateur le droit à l'information et à l'éducation pour une « maîtrise de l'échange ».

5 Dans le processus de l'activité économique, les consommateurs se situent à l'extrémité de la chaîne économique ; à un niveau où les richesses cessent de produire d'autres richesses et satisfont in fine à des besoins personnels. Les consommateurs sont donc des sujets actifs de la vie économique. Mais, face à la difficulté d'exprimer individuellement leur point de vue auprès des pouvoirs publics et de collaborer à la définition de la politique économique, ils se syndiquent au sein des organisations qui assurent leur représentation et qui font entendre leur voix au sein ou auprès des instances politiques et administratives. Le droit à la représentation est donc un moyen individuel et collectif d'expression du consommateur dans une démocratie représentative et participative. Par ce droit, les pouvoirs publics, les professionnels et les associations de consommateurs interagissent désormais dans un système de relations consuméristes.

6 Le droit de choisir est la capacité reconnue au consommateur à opérer, à partir d'une série de produits et services offerts sur le marché à des prix compétitifs,

un libre choix avec l'assurance d'une qualité satisfaisante.

En dépit de quelques faiblesses, les droits ci-dessus énumérés sont effectivement mis en oeuvre dans plusieurs pays européens (l'Union Européenne en étant le moteur ou le pouvoir d'impulsion) et autres à tradition démocratique.

En RDC, les priorités (politiques et sécuritaires) et les réalités économiques (existence des monopoles de fait et de droit, développement à grande échelle de l'économie informelle, etc.) font reléguer cette obligation étatique à un niveau très secondaire.

- Comment oser demander aux pouvoirs publics congolais de garantir le droit du consommateur de choisir librement en matière de fourniture d'eau, d'électricité, d'assurances, etc. pendant que ces secteurs sont exploités en monopoles par l'Etat ?

- Comment protéger les intérêts économiques des consommateurs lorsque les fonctionnaires de l'Etat habilités à appliquer les textes de lois, là où ils existent, ne sont pas correctement payés ou même impayés ?

- Comment protéger les consommateurs là où il y a soit inexistence des textes de lois en la matière, soit inadaptation des textes juridiques, etc. ? Il est vrai que le droit commun, faisant office d'une police générale, peut être appliqué. Mais le mieux serait de légiférer en adoptant des règles spécifiques protégeant les consommateurs. « Légiférer », mais alors « mieux légiférer », car la règle de droit est à la société ce que le souffle de vie est à l'humain. Les citoyens ne peuvent, en effet, se prévaloir que des droits qui leur sont reconnus ; le juge - garant de la société - ne peut appliquer que le droit qu'il a à portée de mains (sinon il tombe dans l'arbitraire)...

Quant à ce qui est des organes chargés de la mise en oeuvre des mesures protectrices des consommateurs adoptées, si

leur institution pose un problème juridique (acte de création), leur fonctionnement (organes à créer) ou leur redynamisation (organes existants) pose plutôt un problème politique, économique et social.

- Politique, dans la mesure où, au regard de l'environnement politique malsain et instable actuellement en RDC, la protection des consommateurs n'est pas inscrite à l'ordre du jour des priorités à atteindre ;

- Economique, car le fonctionnement ou le renforcement de la capacité d'action de ces organes exige que ceux-ci soient dotés d'un budget conséquent. Malheureusement, l'écart criant entre la modicité des budgets nationaux adoptés par le gouvernement et les objectifs qu'il se fixe donne peu d'espoir à l'effectivité et à l'efficacité de tels organes ;

- Social, car l'efficacité de ces organes nécessite un personnel suffisamment motivé. Or, les conditions socio-économiques (faible rémunération, manque d'avantages sociaux, faible pouvoir d'achat, etc.) des agents chargés d'exécuter ces mesures les exposent notamment à la corruption ; ce qui n'est pas sans incidence sur l'opérationnalité déficiente et non effective de ces organes.

En dépit de ces problèmes de fond que nous considérons comme conjoncturels, les pouvoirs publics congolais doivent songer à redynamiser les structures existantes (Ministère de l'Economie, Office congolais de Contrôle...), mais également à créer celles spécialisées du type « Guichet central » et « Commission de la Sécurité des Consommateurs » en droit belge, pour la mise en oeuvre et le suivi d'une politique de protection des consommateurs. Ils doivent en outre encourager et promouvoir la création d'organisations de consommateurs visant la formation et l'information des consommateurs.

McArthur Mfundani

Governance and Development, 2002-2003

DONOR DILEMMA FOR ENGAGEMENT IN FRAGILE STATES: DO THE OECD PRINCIPLES SERVE A PURPOSE?

Development studies encompass a wide range of disciplines; economics, politics, anthropology, sociology, law and history. Development work itself also attracts a wide range of practitioners – consultants, analysts at donor agencies, and researchers at institutes as well as “hands-on” implementers in the field. Developing a strategy for finding a feasible solution for a particular problem is cumbersome. Great ideas proliferate when a room is filled with people who have diverse interests, points of view and fields of expertise. The challenge is to incorporate them all into a workable policy. In practice, the result is often either a number of different solutions or perhaps complete deadlock.

The daunting challenges of effective engagement in fragile states add more complexity to the puzzle. Fragile states are characterised by unstable circumstances such as post-conflict, extreme poverty, weak border control, economic stagnation, political transition, and governments with little political will or simply low government capacity. Donors find themselves mired in indecision: which sector should they focus on first; what takes precedence, fostering development or guaranteeing a safe and secure environment?

Donors are searching for solutions to these questions. They are continually introducing new aid approaches (NAA) such as prioritising projects that support good governance practices and providing funding for them, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), strengthening civil society and increasing the role of women in development.

Donors also continually sign declarations and publicly commit themselves to improving the effectiveness and coordination of their development efforts.

When the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness conference was held in 2005 over 130 countries and organisations formed a united front and agreed upon an array of points intended to harmonise aid delivery amongst donors. It even includes a section which specifically addresses fragile states.

At about the time of the conference (and also mentioned in the Paris Declaration) the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) made its “OECD Principles” public. The Principles are the result of a concerted effort to coordinate donors’ approaches rather than have them pursuing independent agendas. These guidelines for donor engagement are strategic in the sense that they attempt to touch on various levels of donor interactions starting from integrating the Principles into donor strategies, moving to the policy level with coordination and the institutional level - identifying and addressing the root causes of state fragility.

The OECD Principles

- 1 **Take context as a starting point**
- 2 **Do no harm**
- 3 **Focus on state-building as the central objective**
- 4 **Prioritise prevention**
- 5 **Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives**
- 6 **Promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies**
- 7 **Align with local priorities in different ways in different contexts**
- 8 **Agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors**
- 9 **Act fast... but remain engaged long enough to give success a chance**
- 10 **A void pockets of exclusion.**

The key question is of course whether the Principles work in practice. Can various political entities and a-political organisations work in the same fragile state and aim to achieve the same result? Does the spirit of cooperation exhibited by the donors at the Paris conference actually carry over in practice? A study of the OECD's Principles in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) provides a perfect testing ground.

By interviewing a number of donor representatives and well-informed players in the DRC, some clear trends began to emerge. Donors do strive to abide by the Principles, but have their own interpretation of what this entails. Implementing internal strategy and policy changes in donor countries can be a very slow and difficult process; full cooperation between donors can be patchy; and donors are political actors that will ensure that they are not harming themselves so there is often a clash between the technical and political ideologies.

So yes, progress is slow, but things are moving. What is important is that the Principles are a starting point. OECD members are expected to adhere to them and if necessary political pressure can be exerted in the wings. Donors are buying into the rhetoric of the Principles, even integrating them into policy documents and pamphlets. This makes donor governments accountable to one another to some extent. Most likely, the fact that the Principles can be interpreted in a very broad sense is exactly what attracts donors as it offers them the option to pick and choose a Principle or a particular section of a Principle on which to focus their attention, and still demonstrate a spirit of cooperation.

The Principles are useful as goal setters, ideals that donors "should" work towards but, as yet, they do not always translate into action on the ground. One donor acknowledges that there was great interest in the Principles in 2005 during a case study in the DRC developed jointly by Belgium and the United States, "But shortly thereafter, the study dropped off everybody's radar screen and [donors] did nothing with it after all." The reason? Quite simply, the "priority of the donor". What the donor wishes to accomplish and sees as important will be tackled. What the donor is not certain of and unwilling to take part in, will not. This is a dangerous reality because if the donor finds that securing the borders is the main concern and chooses to ignore the ethnic divisions between particular communities, it is possible that security will never be achieved. The Principles are still relatively new but at this moment in time it would appear that they do not change the behaviour of donors. Needless to say, this will have to change.

Devin M. Cahill
Governance and Development 2006-2007

Want to Know More?

For a more in-depth account and assessment of each of the OECD Principles in practice please read the background paper "Donor Engagement in Fragile States: A Case Study of Donors in the DRC and the OECD Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States" (Antwerp: International Peace Information Service (IPIS) and Fatal Transactions (FT), 2007).

In "The Prince of the Marshes and Other Occupational Hazards of a Year in Iraq" (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2007), Rory Stewart discusses his experience of working as a British Foreign Officer in the Coalition Provisional Authority in two provinces in Iraq before the transfer of power. The book shows the difficult balance between achieving development without security and enforcing governance rules against the background of local power struggles and ethnic and religious tensions.

William Easterly's "The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and so Little Good" (New York: Penguin Press, 2006) details the achievements and pitfalls of development policies. Easterly introduces the notion of 'Planners' and 'Seekers' and why homegrown solutions will more often produce success than ideas generated in offices thousands of miles away.

The Failed State Index created by the Fund for Peace assesses 177 countries and their risk of state failure, not whether or not the country is a failed state. For a detailed account on the indicators and to see where your country ranks, visit:

<http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/>

LA VIE APRÈS L'IOB: ZAHIRA AULADIN



Après avoir terminé ses études à l'IOB, Zahira Auladin a réintégré le cadre administratif au sein de la fonction publique de son pays, l'Ile Maurice. Elle assure l'exécution des décisions/projets approuvés par le gouvernement. Dans une interview avec *Echanger pour Changer*, elle explique son engagement pour l'Ile Maurice.

On dit souvent : "Dieu créa d'abord l'Ile Maurice puis s'en inspira pour faire son Paradis terrestre". Es-tu d'accord ?

Par la grâce de Dieu, j'ai eu l'occasion de voyager souvent. Il y a tellement de belles choses à voir... Mais c'est toujours avec un sentiment de gratitude d'avoir cette belle île pour patrie que je rentre au pays! L'Ile Maurice est dotée de vues fascinantes de la montagne et de la mer, qu'on ne se lasse pas de découvrir.

L'Ile Maurice a obtenu son indépendance en 1968. Quelles sont les influences coloniales sur la culture, la politique et l'économie?

Nous avons hérité un système parlementaire unicaméral basé sur le modèle de Westminster. De même le fonctionnement des différents ministères est encore largement basé sur le système anglais, comme beaucoup de pays du Commonwealth. On ne peut pas vraiment parler

de culture anglaise. Mais il y a la liberté de vivre et de pratiquer son propre mode de vie, un respect d'autrui en ce qui concerne les diverses croyances et religions, ce qui se traduit dans la vie de tous les jours par le choix de la nourriture aussi bien que dans la façon de s'habiller, les jours de fêtes etc...

L'Ile Maurice dispose d'un des revenus par tête les plus importants d'Afrique. Quelle est l'explication de cela?

Une stabilité politique à long terme, de bonnes mesures économiques prises aux bons moments pour attirer l'investissement étranger et attiser l'investissement local, l'investissement continu dans le développement des infrastructures et de l'éducation sont des aspects cruciaux. Mais aussi importants sont les personnes visionnaires et fondeurs qui n'ont pas hésité à travailler et à pousser les autres à travailler vraiment dur pour faire bouger le pays.

C'est quoi le projet 'la Cyber Cité'? Quels sont ses objectifs ?

C'est un espace doté des dernières technologies de télécommunication en vue d'encourager le développement du secteur TIC de l'Ile Maurice. Le but est de

faire du secteur informatique un des secteurs piliers de l'économie du pays.

La population est très diverse. Comment cette diversité est-elle reflétée au niveau politique ?

Les partis politiques s'arrangent pour avoir des représentants de différents milieux, ce qui assure une présence assez représentative au parlement. Basé sur les résultats des élections la représentation est assurée par le « Best Loser System ».

Est-ce que tes études à l'IOB ont été utiles pour ta carrière? Pourquoi?

Certainement. Elles m'ont permis de voir les choses sous d'autres angles, de me rendre compte de ce qui se fait ailleurs, de développer un esprit critique et analytique et de mieux aller à la rencontre d'autres univers et cultures.

IOB'S RESEARCH AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN THE SPOTLIGHTS

New thematic groups and revised Master's programmes. Who works behind the scene? Time to introduce IOB's current research and teaching assistants and look at their contribution to the reputation of the Institute. We have asked all of them five questions:

What is your PhD topic and what are your teaching responsibilities?

Is it difficult to combine research and teaching?

Do your teaching duties have a positive effect on your research?

Is IOB an inspiring environment for research?

Do you intend to build a career in the academic world or elsewhere?

Ben D'Exelle

"I am a thinker, I think."

Ben D'Exelle is a member of the thematic group 'Poverty and Well-being as a Local Institutional Process'. He will shortly defend his PhD dissertation entitled: "Inequity and Exclusion: Distributive Decision-making in Small-Scale Societies and Networks" at Maastricht University. One of his main research themes has been the reproduction of poverty through social exclusion. In this respect he has studied the behavioural aspects behind the distribution of economic resources. He has demonstrated how social networks influence social exclusion processes and how people with less favourable social network positions are therefore more likely to be recurrently excluded from economic opportunities. At the same time he has looked at the effect of economic inequality on the formation of social networks. Other research themes which he has examined are the micropolitics behind the brokerage of aid flows and the functioning of rural markets (financial markets, land markets, etc.).

Ben finds teaching essential to his PhD research because it forces him to discuss

his research in a language that will convey the essence of his work to a broader audience. Within the IOB student body there is a wealth of experience and Ben finds it very challenging to present his research in this environment. Ben particularly appreciates the fact that senior staff continually give their junior colleagues the opportunity to present case studies to students. Such classes force young researchers to consider carefully what they are doing and enable them to acquire relevant teaching experience.

Ben has been doing research for more than ten years. In the beginning he worked as a consultant and he had very regular contact with policy makers and fieldworkers. As he felt the need to reflect more thoroughly on the complex processes behind poverty and development he welcomed the opportunity to start doing PhD research at IOB. However, he does miss the intense contact with the field which he previously enjoyed and hopes he will be able to take up where he left off when he rounds off his PhD research in a few months' time. He hopes to continue working as a researcher in the field of development, preferably in an academic context.

More information can be found on his personal website:

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Sara Dewachter

"I definitely want to continue working in the development field, but within that field all options are open."

Sara is a member of the thematic group 'Aid Policy'. Her PhD research focuses on the participation of civil society organisations in PRSP formulation and evaluation. Her research starts from the observation that PRSP logic uses an input output logic, meaning that it supposes that the input of 'civil society participation' into the policy cycle will inevitably lead to the output of poverty reduction. It is argued that 'civil society participation' is a very vague concept that can

cover a wide range of very different things depending on who is actually participating, who they represent, what influence they can exert, and so on. Consequently the type of input will also determine the extent to which the expected output will in fact be delivered and thus how civil society participation will ultimately contribute to poverty reduction. In her PhD research Sara wishes to test empirically what type of organisations participate in PRSP participatory processes based on data gathered from Honduran civil society organisations (CSOs).

As for her teaching responsibilities, Sara is the academic coordinator of two International Training Programmes: 1. Governing for Development: Challenges and Opportunities for Development Actors under the New Aid Paradigm 2. Engendering Development Policy, Projects and Organisations. Sara finds teaching beneficial to her research, particularly because of the interaction with the PRS students, who are professionals in the field she has chosen. In addition, the training programme also allows her to attend sessions on the subject of PRS by interesting guest speakers. Practical teaching assistance is less useful, but it can be a welcome change once in a while not to be able to concentrate on one's research..

In Sara's view the advantage of the new thematic groups is that they draw clearer boundaries, which is helpful for new researchers who are trying to define their own topic. She also finds the interaction with other groups stimulating, for example BOS (Beleidsondersteunend Onderzoek – Policy-supporting Research), since they work on the same topic but from a policy advisory angle.

Since this is Sara's last year as a PhD student she recently attended a job information session for PhD students organised by the university. She felt it was very disappointing. In the job market a PhD is not necessarily an asset. Sara definitely wants to continue working in the devel-

opment field but within this field all options are open. More information can be found on her personal website:

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Bjorn Vancampenhout

“Teaching experienced and motivated professionals from developing countries on a topic that really interests them is quite different from going through dull exercises on economics with law or philosophy students who just want to pass the exam.”

Bjorn is a member of the thematic group ‘Impact of Globalisation’. As a teaching assistant Bjorn lectures on ‘Research Methods and Techniques’ and specifically deals with the more quantitative topics. He also provides assistance on ‘Theories of Development’, more precisely the hands-on sessions on poverty and inequality. As a research assistant he is engaged in PhD research focusing on how markets are interconnected. More specifically, he is studying regional food market integration in developing countries and how this affects famines. He is also interested in the determinants of market interconnectedness, such as roads and communication channels between spatially separated markets. Other topics of his research are, for example, measuring poverty using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the dynamics of poverty and the underlying concepts such as income and assets and conditional convergence in financial globalisation. He also works on aid issues together with Danny Cassimon.

Bjorn regards teaching and research as two important tasks. Although they are difficult to combine, teaching is beneficial to research. Teaching forces the researcher to really understand the material that he is going to teach. The preparatory work for a class includes taking a fresh look at the material, which is always useful when doing research. Furthermore, Bjorn enjoys his teaching at IOB more than the teaching he has done

at other universities. Teaching experienced and motivated professionals from developing countries on a topic that really interests them is quite different from going through dull exercises on economics with law or philosophy students who just want to pass the exam. In that sense IOB is an inspiring environment for Bjorn.

Bjorn is not yet sure whether he wants to pursue an academic career. He started working in the academic world but after a few years he felt he needed field experience. His fieldwork in Tanzania left him with fundamental questions that he wanted to do research on, which is why he enrolled in this PhD programme. However, he is increasingly beginning to feel the need to get in touch with tangible reality in the field again. When he has completed his PhD Bjorn would like to return to fieldwork for a few years. He is already wondering whether that experience will lead him back to the academic world with new questions to be examined.

More information can be found on his personal site:

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Wim Marivoet

“I am more of a reflective doer than a thinker.”

Wim is a member of the thematic group ‘Political Economy of the Great Lakes’. In the context of his PhD Wim mainly conducts quantitative and qualitative research on the DR Congo. His research fits in with the theme group’s academic and policy-oriented research, which aims to understand and provide guidance on how the spirals of conflict can be broken and how to go about fostering human development. As an economist, Wim’s main focus is on the latter: how can we progress from post-conflict situations towards inclusive development.

Wim has only just enrolled in the PhD programme so his research and teaching complement each other, as intended under the new IOB structure. In the first

module he did a lot of teaching. Wim feels that students oblige you to look at problems from a different angle, which is a bonus. You need to anticipate questions and try to discover why some students find particular issues difficult to understand. He finds it interesting to observe how people from different backgrounds think and how they view things differently. Wim enjoys preparing his classes and devotes a lot of time to the pedagogical aspect, making clear powerpoint presentations and providing students with all the necessary information.

Wim finds the links with the field particularly inspiring, for example the institutional cooperation with the DR Congo. The interdisciplinary approach of the PEGL group is not an easy context and Wim likes the challenge of translating his research into the kind of language that someone from a different field and background will understand.

Wim is not pursuing a purely academic career. He regards himself much more as a reflective doer than as a thinker. That is why he likes working within the context of institutional cooperation. He likes fieldwork and implementing the results generated by academic work and by thinkers.

More information can be found on his personal website:

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Inge Wagemakers

“You have to learn to combine the different tasks in the first year.”

Inge is a member of the thematic group ‘Poverty and Well-being as a Local Institutional Process’. Her PhD research focuses on community-based organisations and the provision of public services in the DR Congo. So far her fieldwork has mainly focused on Kimbanseke, a community on the outskirts of Kinshasa.

As a teaching assistant Inge is involved in three courses of the PIP module: 1. Access to public services, 2. Gender and development, 3. Local governance and administration. She also provided assistance

on three courses on research methods in the first module: 1. Participatory research & development methods, 2. People as informants: qualitative interviews and focus groups, 3. Tools and instruments for participatory development research.

Since Inge is only in the first year of her PhD programme she is still in the process of finding her way around. Sometimes it is hard to prioritise as educational duties often have to be followed up immediately whereas the PhD research is a long-term project. So in the first year assistants have to learn to combine the various tasks. She finds her educational activities inspiring and beneficial to her research as on the whole they are complementary to her own research area.

Inge finds it is too early to start thinking about her post-PhD future but she definitely wants to continue to work in the development sector.

More information can be found on her personal website:

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An Ansoms

“My professional dream is to build a career in the development field.”

An is a member of the thematic group ‘Policy Economy of the Great Lakes’. Her PhD research thematically focuses on poverty and inequality, at both the micro and macro levels. Her theoretical expertise is in the fields of institutional economics and the livelihoods approach. Geographically she concentrates on Rwanda. An’s PhD research examines the opportunities and constraints facing Rwanda’s rural population, which is confronted with extreme scarcity of resources. Access to land appears to be an important issue in the fight against poverty. An’s analysis is based on both quantitative and qualitative data.

As a PhD researcher in her final year, An is already very experienced in teaching. In the first years of her PhD programme she did a lot of teaching and assisting whereas in the last few years she has been given

more time for research. Although in the beginning PhD researchers mainly teach introductory courses they are encouraged in later years to present their own research to the students in the context of a specific course. An finds this very interesting as the students’ comments and points of view can be inspiring and thought-provoking. An likes combining teaching and research because teaching gets researchers away from their desks and their private little islands. However, it is also a challenge to have to prioritise and find a workable balance between the two.

An finds the IOB environment very inspiring, especially her own thematic group, which is very interactive and interdisciplinary. Being exposed to different points of view broadens one’s own disciplinary knowledge. On the other hand she also likes to cross the boundaries of her thematic group by combining her regional focus with examining topics on which colleagues from other thematic groups are working.

An hopes to be able to build a professional future for herself in the development field. Since she likes both research and teaching the academic world is definitely an option.

More information can be found on her personal website:

www.ua.ac.be/an.ansoms.

Her ‘diary of fieldwork mission’ that she kept during her research stay in Rwanda in May - June - July 2007 is a very personal and very interesting report on her fieldwork. Unfortunately for many alumni it is written in Dutch.

Sara Geenen

“As a budding researcher I welcome any input.”

Sara is a member of the thematic group ‘Policy Economy of the Great Lakes Region’. She joined IOB in 2007. Her tentative PhD title is ‘Local players, global in-

terests in South Kivu’. The purpose of her PhD research project is to analyse how local players interact with global interests and what the outcomes of these interactions appear to be. Her research is to be carried out within the framework of the IOB partnership project on Local Governance and Post-Conflict Development with the Université Catholique de Bukavu. In the context of this project information on the exploitation of mineral resources in Southern Kivu will be collected. Sara’s PhD research aims to link these local dynamics to international networks and interests.

As a teaching assistant Sara is responsible for organising the sessions on ‘how to write an academic text’ and ‘how to write a dissertation’, which form part of ‘Research Methods’ in the first module. Having taught this part of the course she has become the ‘Citing and Referencing’ lady to students. In the second module she is responsible for organising “From conflict to inclusive development in Sub-Saharan Africa”.

In general, she really loves teaching and interacting with students. As a budding researcher she welcomes any input. She is also looking forward to more teaching because she finds the specific backgrounds of IOB’s students very inspiring. Since she only recently enrolled in the revised PhD programme the research focus of her thematic group is clearly defined. However, she still has to determine which particular topic she wants to work on. She expects her fieldwork in the DR Congo in March to enable her to start focusing her research.

Although Sara was not specifically looking for an academic career she is happy that she has ended up working at IOB. For the time being she intends to focus on the next six years rather than on the more distant future.

More information can be found on her personal website:

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Geovanna Benedictis

“The interaction with students and colleagues is helpful in defining my own research.”

Geovanna is a member of the thematic group ‘Impact of Globalisation’. Her research focuses on the impact of globalisation on people from the point of view of trade and the issue of migration. Geovanna is in her second year of the PhD programme, which means that she is now in the process of defining her topic. She is currently analysing how the movement of people is related to economic reasons, networking and other social characteristics.

As a teaching assistant Geovanna is involved in the course ‘Research Methods and Techniques’ (Inference and Regression Analysis) as well as in ‘Basic Tools for Trade Policy and ‘Theories of Trade’. In the first year most of her time went to student coaching. Now she has more time for research but as she also takes classes in the context of her own PhD programme her life is quite hectic. She hopes that once she has clearly defined her topic her life will become more structured. Geovanna finds the interaction with students and colleagues at the Institute helpful in defining her own research. As a result she finds it interesting and challenging to combine research with teaching responsibilities.

In the future Geovanna would like to combine academic research and teaching with fieldwork or consultancy work in an NGO or organisation involved in development. Ideally she would like to work in Ecuador but unfortunately there are few funds available for research there. That is why she would like to foster links between Belgian and Ecuadorian institutions with a view to promoting joint research.

More information can be found on her personal website:

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Jos Vaessen

“If life is about finding a workable work/life balance, I think that academics run a high risk of tipping the balance in favour of time and energy spent on work.”

Jos is a member of the thematic group ‘Aid Policy’. His research is situated within the field of evaluation methodology. When evaluators are asked to assess policy interventions they implicitly develop abstract frameworks about reality. However, often evaluators are unaware of the specific delineation and framework of reality that shapes their evaluation exercise. Bias in perspective, information collection and interpretation may, unbeknown to them, result in incomplete and incorrect assessments of policy interventions. An evaluation approach that helps to counter some of these problems is theory-based evaluation (TBE). The basic premise of this approach is that every policy intervention represents a theory about how to change reality in view of particular goals and an evaluation is its test. TBE can help evaluators to better understand the ‘why’ of policy interventions and their contexts. In his PhD research Jos tries to reflect critically on TBE and apply it within the context of development interventions. More particularly, he focuses on policy interventions in Central America within the field of rural development and environmental conservation.

In terms of teaching his main task has been student tutoring and occasionally teaching classes on research methods and techniques. Jos enjoys teaching and student tutoring. Teaching provides researchers with opportunities to explain their research to an audience in a systematic and accessible way, something which also benefits their own research. The students at IOB are development practitioners who are quite capable of challenging some of the researcher’s views and ‘forcing’ him/her to reflect on and demonstrate the ap-

plicability or usefulness of his/her theoretical hypotheses.

There are also other aspects which make IOB a good place to work, such as the high degree of academic freedom. Nevertheless too much freedom, especially in the early stages of an academic career, can be dangerous as young people are more likely to find themselves lost. However, Jos thinks that the new theme groups provide young academics with a solid basis for further exploration of the development field. Moreover, thanks to the new structure several groups within IOB are visibly building capacity and positioning themselves as high-quality expert groups on particular topics. In short, IOB is an environment that stimulates interaction with and learning from people from many different countries and cultures, which he finds particularly appealing.

Whether or not Jos sees his future in the academic world is not very clear yet. If life is about finding a workable work/life balance he feels that academics run a high risk of tipping the balance in favour of time and energy spent on work. Academic work is not just a job. In this sense academics are a little like musicians, painters, or even entrepreneurs (although the underlying incentives are somewhat different). His opinion is that it is impossible to continue doing academic work unless one finds great personal satisfaction in (some parts of) the work. Jos really loves certain aspects of the work that he is doing now although he is somewhat worried about his own work/life balance!

More information can be found on his personal website:

www.ua.ac.be/jos.vaessen

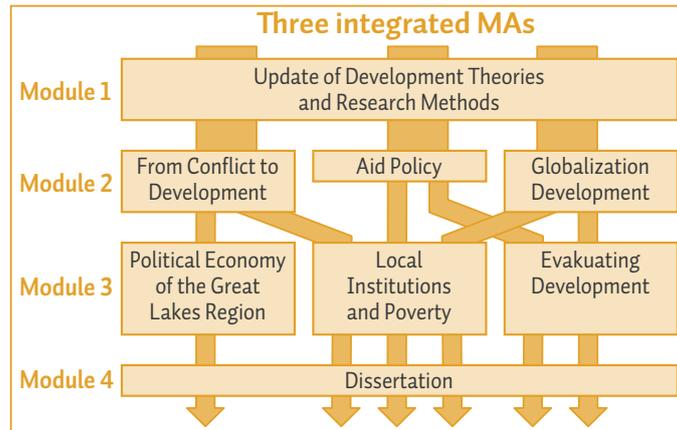


THE STRUCTURE OF THE MASTER'S PROGRAMMES: WHAT'S NEW?

As from this year IOB has started to implement its new curricula for all three MA programmes. The rationale (or the ambition) behind the introduction of, on the one hand, the new curricula for the three programmes (Development Evaluation and Management; Governance and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa; Globalisation and Development) and, on the other, a modular system is first of all that IOB wishes to strengthen its multidisciplinary approach and create a more explicit link between the teaching it provides and the research which is carried out at the Institute. Secondly, IOB aims to make the learning process more student-centred, moving from 'teaching' to 'learning' by putting the student in control of his/her own learning process, with lecturers acting as facilitators. Moreover, students are encouraged to assemble their own study package by offering them choices between and within a number of modules. One way of realising this is the mentoring system: During the first days of October every student is allocated a mentor. This mentor, a member of the assistant staff, will guide the student throughout the year, assisting him/her in all kinds of matters such as settling into a new country and study environment, preparing for exams, and choosing a topic for the master's dissertation.

The new modular structure is as follows:

- The first module (12 weeks) introduces theories of development and familiarises students with research methods and techniques, both general and programme-specific. Students are evaluated by means of a variety of assessment methods: participation in class, short written assignments, group work, presentations, exams, etc.



- The second and third modules (9 weeks each) offer research-driven interactive training packages that are specific to each of the programmes. At the end of each module students are requested to present a paper at a mini-conference. Upon completing the second module - which forms the basis for their Master's programme - students are presented with two options for the third module. Both modules are organised by the staff of a specific theme group (see article 'A closer look at IOB' in this issue for more information on the theme groups).

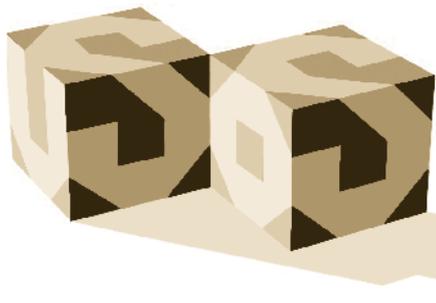
- In the fourth module (15 weeks) students undertake a personal research project under the supervision of a supervisor. Topics chosen for the master's dissertation must relate to the thematic focus of the previous two modules and the papers presented there. The master's dissertation is the subject of a public presentation and defence during a conference; students will also be evaluated on the presentation they give. Some of the main criteria for evaluating the quality of the research paper are policy relevance and academic soundness. IOB will also provide travel grants for students from Southern countries who wish to carry out field research or do an internship.

IOB has also decided to organise MA Programmes in English only, which reflects the fact that English has become the lin-

gua franca on the international development scene. In order to be able to continue catering for non-English speaking students, IOB provides special language facilities: an intensive language course is offered free of charge during August and September and French-speaking students are given the option of writing their research papers and master's dissertation in French.

While the new educational structure is being implemented the staff and students of the academic year 2007-2008 are experimenting to test and, where necessary, improve its efficiency. They are assisted by Hilde Deman, who has been appointed specifically to follow up the process and to communicate any changes to the students. One particular mechanism that has been implemented in this respect is the establishment of focus groups, i.e. groups of nine students who meet once a month to discuss the current state of affairs and to exchange ideas on how the new educational structure could be improved or modified. In order to measure the actual workload generated by the new programmes the focus group participants keep track of the time spent on a particular course each day. On the basis of these results recommendations for change will be made to the IOB board.

[Source frame: Master's Programmes p.6]



THE BENEFITS OF LONG-TERM INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Stefaan Marysse, full-time professor at IOB, is also the co-founder of USOS (the University Foundation of Development Cooperation), which operates on three levels. The first level focuses on student exchange programmes between Belgium and developing countries. The second level concerns long-term institutional cooperation between Belgian institutions and counterparts in the South. In this respect USOS has started cooperating with universities in India, Nicaragua and the DR Congo. IOB has also invested in projects with Nicaragua (see 'Exchange to Change April 2006) and the DR Congo. Its choice of partners was motivated by existing expertise and by the academic focus of IOB research. According to Stefaan Marysse, long-term cooperation has the advantage of being more sustainable. It takes time for institutions to get to know each other and to build trust. The challenge of this kind of cooperation is to link research to action and to engage in socially relevant academic work.

Following up on a process that started with USOS in 1989, IOB and the Faculty of Economics and Development in Kinshasa agreed in 2004 on the framework within which their long-term institutional cooperation would be implemented. The main aim of the project is enhancing knowledge about processes of human development and poverty in the DR Congo. Activities include the exchange of staff and students, the training of young assistant researchers, joint action research, round tables and logistic support. Experience has shown that the most

sustainable form of cooperation is the investment in human capital that has taken place in the Congo.

Two projects have resulted from this long-term institutional cooperation:

1. A project on micro credit in an extremely poor area of Kinshasa. During the process researchers started to understand certain local mechanisms behind micro credit. The success of the project was demonstrated by the strength of the networks that were built up during the long-term cooperation and the mutual trust they generated.

2. An examination of the role of the informal economy in daily life. The study showed that the informal economy is not only a survival strategy but has enormous development potential since it requires a bottom-up approach based on local experience. Seed money was subsequently made available for poverty research resulting in the launch of a participatory Social Urban Fund project of 3 million euros financed by BTC (Belgian Technical Co-operation). The project is now being repeated in other regions.

Both projects are spin-offs from academic cooperation and research and are being implemented in the field. They show the importance of networking and long-term commitments to socially relevant academic work.

IOB and/or USOS now extend their long-term institutional cooperation to other countries in Africa, such as Uganda, Bu-

rundi, South-Africa and recently also Morocco. The last named country is particularly interesting as a partner since it enables migration issues to be incorporated into development cooperation. In order to achieve a better understanding of migrants and ethnic minorities in Belgium it is important to take the situation in the countries of origin into consideration.

Although long-term institutional cooperation projects require considerable commitment and expertise, the return is very substantial. Such projects offer IOB a stable context for fieldwork, which is a prerequisite for geographically focused academic research. For researchers at IOB this is clearly an asset as it enhances their knowledge and understanding of non-European societies and of the complexity of diversity.





USOS AND IOB: PARTNERS IN CAPACITY BUILDING

In September 2007 Janus Verrelst replaced Joris Michielsen as scientific coordinator for USOS (the university association for development cooperation). Just the right occasion to reflect on the link between IOB and USOS.

At first sight USOS and IOB may not appear to have much in common. While IOB is a research and teaching centre with a clearly defined status, USOS focuses on development education in a broad sense, well beyond the limits of standard university curricula. However, a closer look at how both these organisations are related to each other reveals that there is sufficient reason to speak of a symbiotic relationship.

USOS can boast a long - over 20 years - cooperation with academic institutes in the South. Over the years, USOS has built solid partnerships in Nicaragua, the D.R.Congo, Morocco and India. Since IOB's mission statement includes reciprocal academic capacity building, USOS' partnerships with the Faculté d'Economie et Développement (FED/FCK) in DRC and the Universidad Centroamericano (UCA) in Nicaragua have offered IOB access to a well-established forum for reflection and exchange with academic institutes in the South on a long-term basis. The shared IOB-USOS partnerships with FED and UCA have also turned out to be very effective with regard to engaging in joint research and development projects and activities. Apart from jointly generated funds, the main mutual benefit of the IOB-USOS partnerships concerns com-

plementary capacity building at all levels of the academic pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid the partnership creates opportunities for the exposure of Flemish students to the South, a crucial experience in view of the value of experiential knowledge as a key complement to curricular and academic work on development and exclusion. At the next stage University of Antwerp students (including those of IOB) can engage in field research within the framework of their dissertation and hence contribute to the ongoing research and development activities of partners in the South. At the third level of the pyramid the partnerships organise exchanges of researchers to facilitate fieldwork in the South on the one hand and exposure to literature and to other countries' experience in the North on the other. On both sides, this may result in PhD work. Right at the top of the pyramid, the partnership provides opportunities for the exchange of lecturers and scholars with regard to academic teaching, research and policy advisory work. A long-term basis of cooperation is an invaluable tool in this respect, partly to offset the obvious discrepancies that exist between partners as regards the availability of financial resources and information.

In addition to symbiosis regarding partnerships in the South, USOS also offers various campus activities relating to issues concerning North and South, such as like the annual 'Tweespraken' cycle of debates. Here USOS benefits from strong support by IOB, which considers these

activities to be part of its agenda to contribute to development knowledge and UA awareness building with respect to development issues in the South.

Janus Verrelst 

PROFESSOR RENATO FLÔRES AT IOB



Renato Flôres calls himself a wanderer in the vast field of knowledge, a “vagabond of knowledge”. “Life kindly obliged me to take a path that I had not really planned.” The course he has followed has not exactly been linear but rather the result of an evolution. Starting with a formal training in engineering and mathematics Renato moved to statistics and applied research methodology. But in all these fields he felt restricted so he started to work in economics, specialising in international trade. However, his experiences at the WTO confronted him with other kinds of restrictions, namely legal ones. Behind the legal aspects of economic measures lie the political, cultural and even philosophical considerations of the context in which these measures are taken. Given these concerns and his knowledge of both developed and developing world areas, he eventually focused on development issues. Renato has come to regard the development field as the ideal area for researchers as it enables them to examine how economic, political, cultural and social powers interrelate and influence each other.

His current research interests are globalisation and development. Within this fairly broad context Renato’s work at IOB deals with two major issues: i – how to measure and evaluate policies and decisions related to development; ii – how to organise the social context which creates growth and equitable prosperity (in our globalised world). He acknowledges the latter to be a rather ambitious pursuit as there are no tried and tested recipes available and insights from different disciplines – including anthropology and history – have to be combined to arrive at tentative answers. In Renato’s view his-

tory in particular is an essential source of knowledge for anybody interested in the development process.

Renato is very happy to be at IOB for a while as he finds it a very inspiring environment for researchers. He especially appreciates the interaction with students from different countries and backgrounds. “I try to explain to my students that there is no one single recipe that leads to development and that we as academics must find general principles and ideas behind it. In order to be able to achieve this we need a strong methodology and a basic knowledge of other disciplines, such as culture, philosophy and geography.” “I believe that the key to development is education. Only when all partners in the development process have the ability and the openness to understand and communicate can an active and constructive attitude be achieved. It is also very important to know your opponents and their motivation. Never shut the door on dialogue.”

His intellectual meandering has turned out to be most useful. “Yes, as researchers we do need to specialise but we should never lose sight of the broader context in which development takes place.” Having realised that the study of art and culture can enrich our understanding of development Renato has started once again to explore new horizons. “In a few years’ time cultural diversity will be having a great impact on development”, Renato predicts, wondering where these new paths will lead him.



Maria Phiri, Zambia

Governance and Development



Ten minutes into our conversation I put away my piece of paper with prepared questions. There was no point. Maria has a way with words. She knows exactly what she wants to say. I wonder why she is following a Master's programme rather than teaching on one. She smiles. "I am actually combining two Master's programmes. This one and one on Gender and Peace-building. My passion is gender, especially in conflict regions. In order to be able to understand the wider framework of development and policy I opted for this programme in Governance and Development."

Maria has a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication and Public Administration. Soon after her studies she joined COMESA where she was a temporary assistant to the senior Gender Affairs Officer. Their priority was to integrate women into the policy decision-making process, trade, infrastructure and other economic activities. They coordinated gender mainstreaming activities in 19 member countries. It is her experience that most governments do regard gender as an issue but that it often remains just that. "Gender is the

missing link when implementing development policies. Development requires the involvement of all people. In Zambia 70 percent of the population is made up of young people and women. Although the latter are a majority, their economic participation is very low. Women are too often considered solely within the context of the home. As a group they are underused and underprivileged. So how can you move towards development when focusing on only a quarter of the population?"

Are women ready to assume their role in development? "Actually, they already do, but this is not recognised. Awareness building is a first step towards greater participation of women." Maria gives the example of a Namibian judge. "She goes to rural areas and explains to both men and women why women should take up key roles within the context of the home. Once this has been accepted, she moves on to other fields of society." Maria realises that awareness building without the appropriate policy initiatives and resources is merely a castle in the air. "The problem is that gender development is often perceived as gender competition rather than as a crucial part of overall development. It involves both men and women."

"When you look at gender and peace on the one hand and governance and development on the other it is clear that these concepts are very much interrelated. In order to be effective in one aspect you have to work on the others too. If we lack peace within a particular household setting or within a particular country it is very hard for women to become key contributors economically speaking and to be heard as a political force to be reckoned with. Talking about human development means addressing the needs of the whole population."

"This way of thinking is a process that we all have to learn. If you had asked me five years ago how I saw development I would

not have mentioned gender. Now I am absolutely convinced of the importance of gender in development. My future definitely lies in the gender field, preferably in Africa. However, this does not mean that Africa is a unique case. Gender inequality is a universal problem. Depending on the specific culture or region, there are a number of solutions available. An advantage in the African context is that it cannot be denied that women face discrimination and thus people are willing to address the problem. In Europe on the other hand the general view appears to be that women have won the fight for equality, which is not the case, and consequently it is no longer considered to be an issue."

"The global struggle to engender development is still a long one. Even within the United Nations gender issues are not regarded as a priority. The gender office does not participate in policy-making as a major player, but rather as a third party. How can you be effective when gender issues are secondary issues? That is the reality. And other organisations follow suit. Regional organisations such as NEPAD and SADC Union propose a wide range of recommendations on gender issues but these are seldom implemented. The one exception is the African Union, which has implemented most of the gender policies and activities. However, we have to be optimistic. We must not focus on what has not been achieved yet, but on what can be done now and in the future."

Ninh Nguyen Trong, Vietnam

Development Evaluation and Management



Very modest. And very much at ease. "I have travelled to the most remote areas of Vietnam. Coming to Belgium was not a culture shock," Ninh explains, "the practical information provided by IOB was more useful to me than a course in cultural awareness. It is by talking to people that you get to understand them. That is why I am looking forward to more interactive classes in the second module."

Ninh has seven years of field experience working for an international NGO in Vietnam. His primary interests are natural resource conservation and enhancing the rights of the poor in policy making. Poor people are the first victims of poor resource management and are the last to benefit from income generated from resources. While travelling in Vietnam he obtained first-hand experience regarding the very different conditions of living of the poor. In order to find an answer to his key question as to why poor people lack the opportunities to participate in policy-making, he enrolled in the Master's programme of

Development Evaluation and Management. Ninh wants to understand the role of poor people in a society and how donors can contribute to better opportunities for the poor.

Soon Vietnam will become a medium-income country. As a result the role of international NGOs will decrease dramatically. At the same time donors tend to regard the democratisation process as a prime criterion for the allocation of resources. As a result, the importance of civil society and local NGOs will increase. But are they ready? Ninh is both positive and realistic. "We need a better background. We lack expertise as well as evaluation and fundraising skills. At the moment local NGOs work too much as consultants to international NGOs and worry too much about income. Many lack a clear vision. My contribution is to share my knowledge and new skills with local people. I try to create opportunities for other Vietnamese people to contribute to the development of their country. I do believe that, as in the market, the best will win and be able to make contributions to the development agenda."

Once the international NGOs withdraw, local NGOs and civil society will contribute to the management of the development process. An important aspect in this is the participation of all people, including the poor. Ninh hopes that the better economic position of Vietnam will increase educational opportunities for all and will thus lend greater strength to the voice of the people. This will to a considerable extent also depend on the flexibility and limitations of the policies in question. Until now 90 percent of the NGO landscape has consisted of international NGOs which transfer work to local agencies. These are, however, restricted by the policies of their own governments and are often discouraged from addressing certain sensitive topics, such as democracy and human rights. If civil society and lo-

cal NGOs - supported by donors - become more powerful and become third parties in policy-making, they could play an important role in overcoming these taboos.

For Ninh, being open to other experiences is a key to development. After having obtained his Master's degree he would love to work for a while in Africa or in a neighbouring Asian country, Cambodia for example, to see how the various players in other societies approach their development work. Ninh finds the exchange with students from other countries very enriching. He also likes the way students are forced to think about research. "In Vietnam research methodology is poor. Until now monitoring and evaluation have mainly been carried out by expats. Better research techniques and an improved monitoring and evaluation system will contribute to greater transparency and accountability."

Ninh is very interested in one specific optional course, namely Gender and Development. "Gender cannot be separated from poverty and inequality. In Vietnam gender is seen as an additional aspect - incorporating some activities for women into a project, for example. We lack the knowledge and skills to understand how to engender development. Gender should be an integral part of the whole development process."

I think Maria Phiri could not agree more.



STUDENT TRIP TO PARIS: A STUDENT'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE 'CITY OF ROMANCE'

It is every person's wish when they first arrive in Europe to see Paris, the city of romance, and to visit its rich historical collections, admire the monuments dedicated to Napoleon and, of course, climb the world-famous Eiffel tower.

It was therefore sheer bliss when after a few exhausting weeks of adjusting and getting used to the academic pressure of the ever busy University of Antwerp (IOB) we were told that a trip to Paris had been organised for us – particularly as we had just had to endure our first challenging open book exam and could certainly do with a well-deserved four-day holiday!

At first some of us were a bit reluctant to take time off this early into our studies as we thought we might lose valuable time and our work would suffer. But when the day of departure approached almost everyone had signed up for the trip. "The more the merrier", as the saying goes, and our Paris trip certainly proved this to be absolutely true.

On the morning of 31st October, with our bags packed and eager to be on our way, we set off on the 6-hour coach ride to Paris. During the journey happy voices filled with anticipation and excitement rang throughout the coach and time passed very quickly. When the coach stopped to fill up with petrol we immediately knew we were in France by the friendly 'Bonjour' with which we were greeted when purchasing some refreshments. We did not stop again until we arrived in Paris towards mid-afternoon. Upon arrival the

IOB staff who were accompanying us immediately saw to it that students were shown to their respective rooms. As most students were anxious to start exploring the city the staff distributed tourist maps and off we went.

By the evening of our first day in Paris almost all the students had been to the Eiffel Tower while the others had visited museums, the Place de la Concorde or the tranquil River Seine. The next day a city tour with a French tour guide was arranged and we were able to view the imposing Notre-Dame Cathedral and a vast number of amazing historical places – far too many to list. An incredible number of photos were taken during the tour. Another visit took us to the Louvre Museum. It was so hard for us to comprehend how so many century-old artefacts could have been gathered under one roof. In the evenings the city was bright with lights and full of people drinking coffee, having dinner or merely caught up in the mesmerising beauty of Paris by night. There was so much to see and do that sleep became a luxury to be indulged in at a later time.

It is said that time flies when you are enjoying yourself. The next few days we tried to explore as many areas of this fascinating city as our feet would allow. As we loaded our bags onto the coach on Sunday morning all of us could attest to the fact that when it comes to Paris there is never enough time to satisfy one's desire to discover all the treasures of this beautiful capital.

Maria Phiri 

ANNUAL PRIZES FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Every year the authorities of the Province of Antwerp award Prizes for Development Cooperation to students from the University of Antwerp and the Institute of Tropical Medicine. In 2007 three of the seven prizes were awarded to students from the Institute of Development Policy and Management of the University of Antwerp:

Ms. **Natalia WILLS Gil** (Columbia) "Public Spaces and Transport as Policy Instruments for Reducing Inequality. The Case of Medellin." (Master in Development Evaluation and Management). Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Nathalie Holvoet

Mr. **Henry MBAWA** (Sierra Leone) "Democratic Decentralization and Chieftaincy in Sierra Leone." (Master in Governance and Development). Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Saskia Van Hoyweghen .

Ms. **Andrea SALVADOR Navarro** (The Philippines) "Looking behind Remittances: a Counterfactual Analysis of the Impact of Migration and Remittances on Poverty in the Philippines." (Master in Globalisation and Economic Development). Supervisor: Prof. Dr. German Calfat.

CAREER NEWS

Farid Sobhani (Governance and Development 2000-2001) has left Bangladesh to enrol in a PhD programme at USM, Penang, Malaysia. He is working on Corporate Governance. 



Practical information on IOB:

Master programmes:

- 1 Globalisation and Development
- 2 Governance and Development in Sub-Sahara Africa
- 3 Development Evaluation and Management

More information can be found on the institute's website:

<http://www.ua.ac.be/dev>

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