

EXCHANGE TO CHANGE

ECHANGER POUR CHANGER

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**PEASANTS, POWER AND THE PAST
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AFRICAN FEMINISTS

THE EVALUATION SOCIETY OF KENYA

CONFERENCE 'MICROFINANCE AND THE NEW LEFT IN LATIN AMERICA'



IOB

Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsbeleid en -beheer
Universiteit Antwerpen

Belonging

Editorial:

Belonging

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To be honest, this is the most difficult alumni letter that I have written since I started eleven years ago - not because of its content but because of, well, me.

Last summer I and my family came back from Egypt where we had lived for eight years. We had to make Belgium our new home. Even for me - who had been raised here - this was a challenging experience since both I and my country of origin had changed a lot. For the first time in their lives my children were no longer nomads, moving between countries and homes. They are no longer home-schooled in the lively and unpredictable capital of Egypt; they now live the 'standard' life of a child growing up in a Flemish village and a Flemish school. As for me, I started a full-time job as a diversity consultant in the Antwerp Minority Centre. I am happy to be working in a multicultural environment that challenges and inspires me. The current wave of monocultural Flemish nationalism suffocates me and I am trying hard to find my way in this society which has changed so much over the past eight years. The combination of creating a new home, working full-time, raising three children and integrating into Belgian society once again drains my energy.

I actually considered giving up editing this alumni letter. Thank goodness I did not. Meeting with new IOB students, talking to IOB staff, listening to their new projects, all of this has given me a tremendous boost, a true feeling of having come home! IOB stands for intercultural exchange based on true dialogue and equality. It is a place where we really get to know and understand 'The Other' and where we are all 'others' and equals at the same time. IOB is a place where identities are challenged, changed and enriched and where we can critically reflect on labels and free ourselves from them - or redefine them in order to clarify our own identity, just as Tomupeishe says in her article on feminism in Africa. I am convinced that our studies at IOB provide us with the knowledge, experience and self-confidence that we need so as to be able to redefine ourselves, our perceptions and our positions in life, and then take a clear stance.

That is why I feel honored to be able to continue editing this alumni letter. IOB, its staff, its students and alumni have given me a feeling of belonging. I am grateful and proud to be part of the IOB family.

Thank you.

Eva Vergaelen, editor



Dear Alumni

WHAT IS THE USE OF DEVELOPMENT (STUDIES)?

In one way or another this question has come up on various occasions during the last few years and months. True, as the chair of an Institute operating in the field of development studies, I have perhaps become extra-sensitive to messages ending with this question. And yes, the question already seems to convey the answer: not good enough, and therefore in need of rethinking. The question has been asked in the wake of four different streams of debate. The first debate concerns the follow-up of the Millennium Development Goals after 2015. By 2015 we will know to what extent the Millennium Development Goals have been achieved. But apart from that, 2015 will be a year like any other. Perhaps setting this deadline has helped us to focus our thinking and our actions, but at the same time concentrating on pre-2015 makes thinking about the post-2015 era all the more problematic. At IOB we have promoted the debate on the so-called "Development 2.0" era in our Series of Debates (see further in this issue).

A second and more important stream of debate has focused on the work of Andy Sumner and his colleagues who have observed that, whereas by the end of the 20th century most of the world's poor were living in poor countries, ten years later the majority of poor people are living in middle-income countries. Countries such as China and India have become middle-income countries, with capable administrations and economies strong enough to also tackle the problem of poverty from within. In other words, whereas previously there was a clear need for an international anti-poverty agenda, this is much less the case in the current situation. At IOB, this debate was carried further in this year's opening lecture by ISS-colleague Peter van Bergeijk. In a seminar with Geoff Wood, the current president of the Development Studies Association (DSA UK) and a member of our Scientific Advisory Board, we reflected on the consequences for Development Studies Institutes in Europe. Wood himself argues that we definitely need to transform development studies from studies on developing countries into studies on international or world development.

Wood's argument also makes sense from the perspective of a third stream of debate voiced in the literature on the debt crisis currently affecting European countries. The IMF, well-known in development circles as one of the key agents imposing structural adjustment policies in the Global South in the late 20th century, is now promoting very similar policies in Greece, Ireland and Spain, policies that have a similar poverty impact and that, in a similar

way, curtail states' capabilities. Déjà vu?

A fourth element forcing itself onto the global agenda is the issue of climate change and the concomitant agenda of sustainable development. As today's industrialised countries are currently focused on the economic crisis and on how to overcome it by reigniting growth, we will probably see them re-connect to pre-crisis growth patterns, whereas the green economy will become the new fad promoted by the development industry. This logic arguably needs to be reversed: from a green perspective, industrialised economies - and consumption patterns - need less rather than more growth whereas good old-fashioned development in other parts of the world, while probably still increasing our global ecological footprint, remains a valid objective from the perspective of international social justice.

True, it is always prudent to resist "the rage to conclude", especially in a field so concerned with human suffering that frequently the urge to act prevents us from taking enough time to think twice. To begin with, the observations by Sumner and others have a time-perspective of one decade in contrast to, for example, the century-long time perspective adopted by Branko Milanovic, according to whom the shift from within-country inequality to between-country inequality remains one of the most important stylised facts characterising our current global situation. Furthermore, even while it may be true that most of the poor nowadays live in middle-income countries, this does not mean that the problems haunting the least-developed countries have evaporated. In this sense it still remains valid to focus on this particular part of the problem of global development. This is particularly true for the African region, where many of the poorest countries of the world are still concentrated. This is also the region, by the way, on which we as an Institute have accumulated a lot of expertise in the recent past.

In view of all of these elements there is still a case to be made for an Institute such as IOB, privileging "the poorest developing countries and, in other countries, the poorest and most disadvantaged groups and regions", as our mission statement puts it. What we have to take on board, however, is an increased focus on how the dynamics of these regions and countries fit in with the broader patterns of world development. In this respect the focus on multi-level governance which we adopted while designing our new research infrastructure provides an excellent opportunity for engaging in such an undertaking.

Tom de Herdt 

Peasants, Power and the Past

The Gacaca Courts and Rwanda's Transition from Below



In December 2012, Bert Ingelaere successfully defended his PhD dissertation entitled 'Peasants, Power and the Past: The Gacaca Courts and Rwanda's Transition from Below'. His supervisor was Prof. Dr. Filip Reyntjens. What follows is an abstract.

Although there is a considerable body of writing on the Rwandan genocide and Rwanda's regime change the actual experience of transition by the population itself remains largely unexplored. This study therefore adopts a bottom-up perspective on transition and focuses on a bold experiment in transitional justice, namely the modernised gacaca courts. The gacaca process dealt with 1,958,634 cases in the period between its nationwide introduction in 2005 and its final application in June 2012.

The objective of the research is, firstly, to establish a comprehensive empirical record of the gacaca practice in its modernised form. To this effect a data-driven approach has been adopted. Secondly, this study is also informed by theory and aims to conceptualise the dynamics observed. Thirdly, the research approach suggests new avenues of investigation and reflection in the fields of transitional justice,

political transition, international relations and peace-building. The dissertation is based on over 30 months of fieldwork in rural Rwanda spread over 8 years. The research approach is characterised by five principles, namely *immersion*, *iteration*, *multi-sitedness*, *mixing methods* and *diachrony*. The analysis is based on numerous ethnographic encounters as well as 1,571 recorded interviews with 1,359 (rural) Rwandans and 1,917 recorded observations of gacaca proceedings that dealt with the allegations lodged against 2,573 individuals.

This empirical material is used to present an anatomy of the gacaca practice and its impact on Rwandan society. It will be argued that the court system functioned according to a prosecutorial logic that aimed to establish the forensic truth. The findings also suggest that the introduction of the court system gave rise to discord and anxiety among the population. The notion of truth takes center stage in

Current Students' Kick-Off Weekend and other activities

the analysis since it emerged as the crucial factor in the empirical analysis of the design and practice of the court system as well as in the experience of the Rwandans practising gacaca.

The modern gacaca court system will be conceptualised as an assemblage. Consequently, this study moves beyond both the established conceptualisation of transitional justice mechanisms and the prevalent meaning(s) of truth in the domain of transitional justice. It is argued that the gacaca process assembled four expressive forms of truth: the forensic truth (owing to the design of the court system); the Truth-with-a-Capital-T, being the influence of the state, the authorities and the regime; the effectual truth, a notion referring to the consequentialist ethics inspiring the gacaca from below and, finally, the moral truth, which refers to the socio-cultural and primarily non-discursive everyday practices and interactions deployed by the peasant population to deal with past violence.

The study identifies the dominance of these expressive forms - styles of truth - in the gacaca assemblage and the nature of their interaction. It will be argued that the gacaca practice was both characterised by power dynamics and a facilitator of processes of justice and reconciliation in the aftermath of genocide. These power dynamics were simultaneously emerging from below and operating from above. They infused the gacaca assemblage with a Machiavellian *virtù*: just or good is what has the preferred consequences in the given circumstances. The latter insight is used to qualify the nature of Rwanda's transition and to examine the so-called 'transition paradigm' in a critical manner.



Every year IOB organises a 'kick-off' weekend for new students. For the class of 2012-2013 the kick-off weekend took place in Brugge on 6-7 October 2012. The venue was De Karmel, a hostel where the participants had ample opportunity to get to know each other away from the hectic life and demanding coursework awaiting them in Antwerp.

Two of the current students, Rosemary Victoria M. Atabug ('Roma' to her friends) and Genene Belayneh Hayle, shared their views on the kick-off weekend and other student activities with Exchange to Change. Roma really enjoyed the weekend and appreciated the quaint old town's peaceful environment. Genene made it clear that if he were allowed to choose a place to live it would have to be Brugge since he admires good architecture and was fascinated by the ingenious construction of the canals. Brugge also appealed to him because he loves everything old and beautiful. The boat ride in the cold and incessant rain was quite an experience for them but it taught them a valuable lesson - whatever the weather in Europe you must go on and simply have fun.

According to Roma the teambuilding activities, the party and sharing the various weekend experiences helped the participants to match names to faces and so it gradually became easier to remember the many people they were meeting. Genene felt that the kick-off Weekend offered many opportunities to form new friendships as the activities prompted people to talk about their families, their home countries and their future plans. The stay in Brugge laid the foundations for the truly 'international' group that the students were to become.

Genene explained that the class representatives on the student committee were also elected in Brugge. Despite the busy class schedule, since then the student committee has tried to keep the same fun-loving atmosphere alive by organising monthly birthday parties. A Facebook group page

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Group picture in Brugge

was formed, which among other things allows all activities to be synchronised. With the class being divided over three programmes in the second semester, Thursday evenings have been set aside as the time for all the students to meet over drinks and catch up on each other's stories and experiences.

Some members of the class live in the international student house (ITBS), which organises various cultural activities that all IOB students are welcome to attend. Roma said that there is a good balance between the various types of activities and that these offer a welcome break while at the same time providing an insight into Belgian culture and life in and around Antwerp. So far the ITBS trips have included a visit to the cathedral in Antwerp, a Brussels city tour and a tour of the Port of Antwerp. The cultural activities have included a harp and

flute concert and weekly survival Dutch language classes. As a student at the University of Antwerp Roma is also happy to take advantage of the sports sticker and the culture card.

Another IOB activity was the trip to the Christmas market at Cologne in Germany. Genene described it as a memorable experience because for him and many others in the class this was where they had their first experience of snow. Germany was also the second European country they visited. Whereas Antwerp had mostly welcomed them with rain (and more rain ...) Cologne offered freezing snow and a taste of German culture in the form of hot and spicy glühwein. Both Roma and Genene look forward to the IOB visit to Paris in April.

Roma admits that the transition from working in the Philippines to studying in Belgium has been overwhelming but that she has adjusted well, having discovered that time management is crucial. The number of courses in the first semester and the different exam structures were a tough challenge for her but she learnt to prepare well. Living alone and becoming independent whilst mixing with the international group at IOB has opened her mind to a whole range of new opportunities. Being part of an international group of people with very diverse backgrounds has forged strong bonds. All IOB students share the exciting experiences and challenges of living and learning in Belgium and the many new friendships are greatly valued.



Rosemary Victoria M. Atabug (Roma)

Migration and the Labour Market: An analysis of Argentina

Daniela Cristina is an IOB alumna (DEM 2002-2003). She recently successfully defended her PhD thesis entitled ‘Migration and the Labour Market: an Analysis of Argentina’. Her supervisor was Prof. Dr. Walter Nonneman. What follows is a synopsis.

The objective of the thesis is to examine the labour market effects of migration in Argentina, focusing principally on two questions: “Why do people move?” and “What happens when they move?”

In order to answer these questions the thesis investigates the following three key elements: the reasons behind an individual’s decision to move; the typical characteristics of migrants which distinguish them from the local inhabitants (focusing on self-selection); the dynamics of integration into the labour market.

The empirical answer to the first question posed above is analysed on the basis of the individuals’ responses to regional wage differentials, using individual data. The research shows that people actually migrate if the real expected income exceeds the expected income in their place of origin, which suggests that there is indeed an element of rational calculation in the decision-making process. Amenities also influence a potential mover and this also applies to Argentina: when individuals consider migrating they also take into account additional factors such as the level of security in the area to which they intend to move, the government benefits they would be entitled to receive, and the presence (or absence) of infrastructure, with the likelihood of migration rising with higher average temperatures, better health and employment programmes, better infrastructure and a lower crime rate in the metropolitan area of destination.

One of the standard propositions in the migration literature is that economic migrants tend to be favourably self-selected for labour market success. In other words, migrants are described as, on average, tending to be more able, ambitious, aggressive, entrepreneurial, or otherwise more

favourably selected than similar individuals who choose to remain in their place of origin and the thesis examines whether migrants are drawn randomly from the population or are somehow self-selected. In actual fact, we demonstrated the presence of negative self-selection in the case of Buenos Aires and Mendoza and there is some indication that in the other metropolitan areas this result also holds. Consequently, the thesis’ research findings contradict those presented in most of the literature on self-selection.

The last part deals with the effects on the labour market which appear once migration has taken place. The focus is on Greater Buenos Aires and Capital Federal, and on the unemployment dynamics that both migrants and local workers face in the destination areas, more particularly, on the exit rates out of unemployment for both locals and migrants and on whether these rates vary with the time spent in the host region. However, there seems to be no difference in terms of hazard of employment between locals and migrants. There is, however, weak support for a higher hazard of employment if a longer period of time is spent in the host region. A second step in the research was to check if, as a result of the high flexibility of Argentina’s labour market, segmentation occurs via prices instead of via differences in the length of periods of unemployment. The analysis seeks to determine whether there are long-lasting differences in the average wage rates among groups of workers which are presumed to be equally productive or to have an equal capacity for productivity. The estimates show that in Argentina the wages of migrants are indeed lower than those of local workers.



Alumni It's more fun in the Philippines!



Catching up with the Filipino alumni “meisjes” (girls) of IOB 2010-2011 is always a warming experience. Having been back in the Philippines since October 2011 they have lived up to the slogan “It’s more fun in the Philippines”. Most alumni go their separate ways after graduation but Che, Joy, Kriz, Macky, Mymy and Sugar have stayed in touch and continue to have lots of fun together. They have even linked up with other former classmates. We were eager to find out their recipe for fun, which is why Exchange to Change asked them a few questions.

Did you all meet in Antwerp?

Che, Joy, Mymy and Kriz all worked in the same Ministry prior to Antwerp so they already knew each other professionally but they were not close friends. Joy and Mymy had friends in common so they too had met each other. Macky and Sugar joined the gang in Antwerp.

Did you go back to your previous jobs upon your return to the Philippines?

Che, Joy, Mymy and Kriz all went back to their previous jobs in the same government ministry as stipulated by the VLIR scholarship terms and the two-and-a-half year government bond they had agreed to.

What were the main adjustments you had to make, first, when you came to Belgium and then again when you returned to the Philippines?

The major adjustment was learning to live

independently without family and friends, away from a secure comfort zone. Getting used to doing all the chores that come with living alone - cleaning (even though the rooms were so small!), laundry, cooking, and so on and doing all this in the cold, especially in the first couple of months. But it all became easier after a while. Also, it was surprisingly great fun to do whatever you wanted whenever you felt like it - that is one of the advantages of being on your own.

Strangely enough, returning to the Philippines after a year required adjustments too. We had become so used to the simple, clean, efficient way of life in Europe that the inefficiencies in our own society in terms of infrastructure, public transport and sanitation became all the more obvious. The European way of life facilitates some things which appear tedious in the Philippines, such as travelling and shopping. Manila has a terrible public transport system so we miss Antwerp’s trams the most. Most of us moved out of our parents’ homes when we got back. We love our independence too much now! Having had new experiences which are so different from those of our friends and relatives whom we had left in the Philippines, on our return we noticed a change. In some cases we felt we had grown apart and relationships came to an end but the six of us have remained very close friends on the basis of our common European adventures.

What do you miss about IOB, Antwerp, Belgium?

Everything except the masses of course work and long hours spent studying! We miss all the classmates, the trips, the dinners, the picnics, the parties, the shopping, exploring new places. It was great having friends from different parts of the world. We learned a lot from them. It is a revelation to see Africa evolve from one big place into so many diverse cultures. It was an honour to be able to share our Filipino food and culture with our fellow students and also get a taste of theirs. The weather is also something we miss as there are four distinct seasons. The Philippines generally has endless sunshine so the snow and the colourful autumn leaves were much appreciated. The change in seasons also brought the “solden” (sales) – we love

shopping! The easy access to many other European countries also allowed us to travel widely and we eagerly ticked off the various Schengen states on our list.

What memory of IOB will you always cherish or complain about?

The bitter-sweet graduation and the most fun-filled field trip ever to Paris. In Paris, the best moment was when the birthday girls Chizzy (Chisala Mateyo) and Winnie (Winifred Qin) sang on the bus. It was impromptu but they were fantastically good – Zambia and China singing a beautiful Whitney Houston duet – globalisation or one world, one love? There is not much to complain about except the amount of reading that the professors expected us to do within a very short period.

Any ‘big’ events that have occurred since graduation?

Che and Kriz got big promotions in 2012. One of Kriz's IOB papers is currently a working paper in collaboration with Nathalie Holvoet and Liesbeth Inberg. Mymy is now the Officer in Charge – Chief Economic Development Specialist, a stressful position, but she holds it responsibly. We have also added two baby boys to the family, Sugar and Thea (still in Europe) are the proud mums, and Mymy is engaged to her Belgian beau, her “knappe gast”.

Have you met other IOB classmates since you got home?

Che travelled to Jakarta in January 2012 and linked up with the Indonesians Lanny Jauhari and Achmad Fauzi.

In June 2012 Che and Kriz travelled with Joy to celebrate her birthday in Thailand, where they also met up with Suriya Kalasin in Bangkok and he turned out to be a wonderful tour guide. He already had experience as he had also hosted Mymy on a similar trip a few weeks before! Suriya showed us a few Thai secrets, such as a small pottery village hidden from tourists, and took us on an adventurous tour of the red light district, but we chickened out of the ‘ping-pong’ show, preferring to go in search of Belgian beers instead.



John Mfungo from Tanzania is the first IOB visitor to the Philippines who came on business. It was exciting to catch up with a former classmate and show him around. We simply had to take him to the SM Mall of Asia, a major tourist destination, help him shop for his family and share dinner with him on the two occasions he was in Manila as he was working in another city the rest of the time.

How do you stay connected?

Well, four of us still work in the same government Ministry – as friends now, not just as colleagues. We have also learnt to take advantage of technology to keep friendships alive and keep in touch constantly via text messages and Facebook. Facebook has also been great for staying connected with those from other continents and it is always lovely to see what people are up to via the pictures they post. We also enjoy meeting up for dinner or drinks to celebrate each other’s birthdays.

Anything extra that you would like to add?

The IOB experience is one of a kind. Antwerp and all our IOB friends and colleagues will always remain a wonderful memory. We hope there will soon be a Meet-and-Greet session in Manila!



Debating Development

Debating Development is offered as an interfaculty course within the University of Antwerp. The 2012-2013 Debating Development cycle was entitled "Development 2.0: New Players, New Rules". As in previous years, a cross-section of UA students attended the debates along with various people interested in the development sector. Supported and organised by IOB, the University Foundation for Development Cooperation (USOS), MO* Magazine and VLIR-UOS, Debating Development has over the years proved to be a worthwhile project.

Debating Development invites expert speakers from renowned international institutes to enter into open and frank discussion with each other on the future of international cooperation and development. The editorial staff of MO* Magazine moderated the discussions.

Why "Development 2.0: New Players, New Rules"? According to the organisers, in today's globalised world crucial changes are taking place in the field of development cooperation at an ever-increasing pace. These changes, which challenge ongoing practice and tilt existing power balances, have prompted the emergence of new players who appear to be creating and encouraging the formulation of new rules in development, thus laying the foundations for new and different approaches.

For some UA students, attending the debates and taking the examination is worth 3 ECTS. Although Debating Development is an IOB project it is not a standard course for IOB students so attendance is optional. However, over the years IOB students enjoy attending the debates, questioning contributors and giving examples from their home countries. This year, in view of the general acceptance that the South is a prominent player in 'Development 2.0', IOB students were particularly interested in the 'Africa on the rise, the beginning of a Golden Age for Africa'; 'South-South cooperation: on whose terms?' and 'Involving the Diaspora: finding new ways in development co-operation' debates.

An interesting phenomenon reiterated by several presenters was the generally negative and often uninformed perspective on Africa that we have. Understanding basic yet crucial facts, such as the size of this vast continent, can become an eye-opening experience, which results in a shift in perspective and an acknowledgement of Africa's potential, and can also be a potential catalyst for a positively effective Development 2.0.

<http://www.edge.org/documents/Edge-Serpentine-MapsGallery/high-res/Krause.pdf>.



A brief summary of the individual debates follows:

1. The future of development cooperation: what are the upcoming challenges and opportunities?

16 October

Speakers: Gilles Carbonnier (The Graduate Institute, Geneva) and Fred Van der Kraaij (former inspector in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Moderator: Olivia Rutazibwa

Professor Carbonnier acknowledged the dramatic changes in the global development landscape influenced by five major factors:

- 1) Growth driven by developing/emerging countries.
- 2) Multiplication of aid actors and instruments.

- 3) Aid narrative's focus on global risks, pushing global public goods as a new justification for aid.
- 4) Demographic shifts: Africa becoming labour-abundant, enhancing its competitive advantage as regards industrialisation.

5) We are entering an era of resource scarcity.

For continued poverty alleviation Carbonnier proposed focusing on inequality and tackling it by means of governance, taxation and redistribution.

Fred Van der Kraaij commented that poverty alleviation is not the only objective of development cooperation. Rather, aid serves multiple objectives, particularly peace, profits and principles. He suggested putting a stop to 'aid' and replacing it with genuine international cooperation.

2. Bits for Development, windows of opportunity or further burden? 23 October

Speakers: Peter Manderick (Close the Gap, Brussels); François Laureys (International Institute for Communication and Development, The Hague)

Moderator: Maarten Lambrechts

Peter Manderick argued that more and better ICT furthers development, linking ICT for development with all the MDGs, the World Bank's "four I's" for harnessing the power of youth (expanding Infrastructure, improving the Investment climate, harnessing new Innovation and building Institutional capability) and good governance (citing access to information and the Arab Spring). With the immense potential come the challenges of e-waste management and disposing computers. Manderick called for sustainable and environmentally sound approaches.

Maarten Lambrechts expanded upon the criticism of e-waste, adding other disadvantages of ICT for development. These include the inappropriate use of scarce resources (money, energy); the increase in South-North dependency (limited local ICT-industry); the continued availability of ICT for the rich in the first place, hence increasing the rich-poor divide; the increased cultural supremacy of the

West as very little Southern content is available on the Internet). Lambrechts suggested a shift in the balance between invention and use with a view to enabling ICT to contribute more to development.

3. From climate to conflict: implications for aid policy? 30 October

Speakers: Asif Zaidi (United Nations Environment Programme); Katie Harris (Overseas Development Institute, UK)

Moderator: Alma De Walsche

Climate change may become the principal cause of future violent conflict. International organisations and Western governments have developed policy plans with regard to climate and security. These policies co-determine how international actors will react to natural disasters in developing countries and where, how and to whom help will be given. The debate discussed the impact of this new climate-security orientation upon relations with developing countries and the way in which development cooperation with these countries is perceived and provided.

4. The (non)sense of a Financial Transaction Tax as an innovative development financing instrument. 6 November

Speakers: Lieven Denys (Vrije Universiteit Brussel); Werner Heyvaert (Jones Day, Brussels)

Moderator: John Vandaele

In the wake of the global financial crisis terms such as Bank tax, Tobin tax, Robin Hood tax are increasingly in the media and used by many European. In late October 2012 the EU Commission allowed the implementation of a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) by ten member countries, including Belgium. It is up to individual countries to decide how to spend the funds raised by the European FTT, be it on domestic deficit reduction, job creation, climate change mitigation or poverty reduction, etc. What do such international levies on financial activities actually mean in practice?

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Do they make sense from a financial stability perspective or not? If they could potentially make sense, under what conditions would that be? Professor Lieven Denys, discussed and defended the feasibility and the desirability of such international taxes. Werner Heyvaert, a Belgian lawyer specialising in tax issues, provided his critical comments. The discussion also considered the question of how and to what extent FTTs can raise money to support development in the South, hence acting as an ‘innovative’ development financing instrument.

financial system has evolved. The general policy has become to foster well-functioning markets based on the promotion of transparency of data and policies which anchor the expectations of financial markets. He acknowledged that in terms of governance structure the power of the Board has been reduced in favour of de facto influence of the Managing Director and a number of ‘leading’ countries, namely the G7 and the main creditors, based on bilateral and informal contacts, although voting powers are essentially based on country rankings of GDP, openness, variability and reserves.

5. Africa on the rise, the beginning of a Golden Age for Africa? 13 November

Speakers: Ama Uzowuru (See Africa Differently, UK); Théodore Trefon (Africa Museum Tervuren, Brussels)

Moderator: Olivia Rutazibwa

Africa has done relatively well in the past few years: average economic growth of 5%, a significant decrease in the number of poor people, a school attendance rate of 75%. More and more observers are concluding that Africa’s Golden Age is approaching. But is this the case?

Jesse Griffiths argued that the IMF needs to do more to cope with the shifting global economic order. He criticised the fact that the governance of the IMF is stuck in the 1940s, the era of its formation, hence not democratic, especially in terms of leadership, as it is generally accepted that the Managing Director of the IMF is a European and the President of the World Bank is an American. This means continued promotion of European and US dominance, of a world out of touch with the rise of BRICS. For instance, Belgium has more voting power in the IMF than Brazil, and tiny Luxembourg more than populous and growing Uganda. Furthermore, there is a lack of transparency and accountability as IMF meetings are held secretly and the system of executive directors representing many others is outdated. For example, the Caribbean countries are represented by Canada, which sounds distinctly colonial. With the numerous errors embodied in structural adjustment programmes, the IMF cannot be trusted to solve global economic problems. Griffiths suggested that since the IMF has become a highly political institution rather than simply a financial one, the best solution would be a shift towards the UN system of one-country-one-vote as opposed to the current one-dollar-one-vote system. This would fundamentally change global economic discourse.

6. Is the governance of the IMF suited to the changed global economic order? 20 November

Speakers: Willy Kiekens (Executive Director of the IMF constituency of Belgium); Jesse Griffiths (Director Eurodad, Brussels)

Moderator: John Vandaele

With emerging markets in the South replacing the traditional North as the powerhouses of the world economy, one question that comes to the fore is whether or not the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reflects this changing reality. Are the recent reforms in country representation on the IMF Executive Board (which is responsible for the Fund’s day-to-day management) sufficiently far-reaching? If not, are these reforms at least a step in the right direction? Willy Kiekens, one of IMF’s 24 Executive Directors and the representative for the group of Belgium (which includes nine other countries) for several years, explained that the international

7. South-South cooperation: on whose terms?

27 November

Speakers: Antony Otieno Ong'ayo (Utrecht University); Ward Warmerdam (ISS, The Hague)

Moderator: John Vandaele

Countries that were previously viewed as 'poor' and 'dependent' have gained considerable economic and political power; now called 'emerging powers', they have assumed a new role in development cooperation. Consequently, development cooperation is not a question of mere North-South relations anymore but also of South-South relations. Does this 'new' development cooperation substantially change today's development cooperation rules and mechanisms? How do power relations change and is South-South cooperation in the end (more) beneficial to poorer countries or not?

Antony Otieno Ong'ayo examined Africa's development trajectory from decades of economic stagnation, political instability and tough structural adjustment programmes. He portrayed South-South relations as an alternative that will lead to new voices, diversity in choices, a means to trade rather than aid, and the building of infrastructure. In comparison to Africa's relations with the West, South-South relations are less conditional or prescriptive, rather they are framed in a win-win context where help has to help – there is no 'dead aid'. Ward Warmerdam warned, however, that South-South relations are not empowering but simply an alternative. The reality is that the West and also primarily China as an emerging power are fighting for influence. He used the proverb 'when elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers'- China and the West being the elephants, and Africa the grass. He recommended that Africa exercise its political influence and take ownership of its markets and economic resources.

8. Involving the Diaspora: finding new ways in development co-operation. 4 December

Huub Severiens (Wereldse Zaken, The Netherlands); Joris Michielsen (University of Antwerp)

Moderator: Tine Danckaers

Involving the Diaspora in development projects seems to be a valuable complement to traditional forms of aid as it helps reduce and overcome cultural barriers. After sketching an overview of the different forms in which migrants can contribute to the development of their country of origin - remittance, public co-funding, social media, transnational networks - Huub Severiens focussed on a few success stories. Subsequently, Joris Michielsen raised a number of issues to illustrate why such involvement is far from a panacea as migrants are caught between their home and their host countries. Migrants have no real allegiance to their host countries, particularly when faced with host country 'integration' programmes.



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The future of development cooperation: what are the upcoming challenges and opportunities?
Gilles Carbonez (The Graduate Institute, Geneva)
Fred Van der Kraak (Former inspector at Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Moderator: Geert Goossens

TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER | R.002
Bits for Development, windows of opportunities or further burden?
Peter Maes (Cinex The Gap, Brussels)
François Luyens (International Institute for Communication and Development, The Hague)
Moderator: Maarten Lambrechts

TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER | R.002
From climate to conflict: implications for aid policy?
Asaf Zaud (United Nations Environment Programme)
Klaus Deininger (Development Research Center, USA)
Moderator: Alme De Walck

TUESDAY 6 NOVEMBER | R.014
The (non)sense of a Financial Transaction Tax as an innovative development financing instrument
Lieven Denys (Vrije Universiteit (Brussels))
Tim Worstall (Independent writer, UK)
Moderator: Jan Verhaegen

TUESDAY 13 NOVEMBER | R.002
Africa on the rise, the beginning of a Golden Age for Africa?
Ama Luzzatti (See Africa Different!, UK)
Théodore Treton (Africa Museum Tervuren, Brussels)
Moderator: Geir Gørtz

TUESDAY 20 NOVEMBER | R.002
Is the governance of the IMF fit for a changed global economic order?
Willy Kiekens (Executive Director of the IMF constituency of Belgium)
Jesse van den Dungen (Coudenberg, Brussels)
Moderator: John Vandaele

TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER | R.002
South-South cooperation: on whose terms?
Antony Otieno Ong'ayo (Utrecht University)
Peter Konijn (Knowing Emerging Powers, The Netherlands)
Moderator: John Vandaele

TUESDAY 4 DECEMBER | R.014
Engaging Diaspora: finding new ways in development co-operation
Huub Severiens (Wereldse Zaken, The Netherlands)
Joris Michielsen (University of Antwerp)
Moderator: Tine Danckaers

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Political Islam and Democratic Transitions in the Arab World

By Nadim Abu Shaikha, IOB 2011

After two years of Arab uprisings the Arab Spring countries are now, more than ever, facing new challenges related to security, sectarianism, and ideological divisions. The fall of many authoritarian regimes and the subsequent political turmoil in some countries have created power vacuums in many places in the region. This, in turn, has led to crime, the deterioration of human rights and the spread of extreme conservatism. Nadim Abu Shaikha looks at some of the main changes and challenges in the Arab world.



Nadim Abu Shaikha

Although the changes in Egypt and Tunisia can be regarded as examples of smooth transition towards democracy, both countries are still going through a critical period. Post-revolution Egypt and Tunisia are unstable. The protests continue and the protesters insist on the need to achieve the goals of the revolution. The same forces which led the revolts against the autocratic regimes are still out on the streets demanding justice and economic development.

In Egypt and Tunisia the social and political movements against the rule of dictators were not ideological. However, after the victory of political Islam in the last elections society has become divided along ideological and political lines in both countries. The recent clashes in Egypt between secular and religious forces over the constitutional amendments have been quite violent. Again, the struggle with regard to the new constitution between the secular protesters and the Islamists is not primarily about religious issues but rather about

power since the Islamic government is trying to dominate the political process.

Despite all the guarantees regarding individual freedoms given by moderate political Islamist parties there is widespread suspicion about what is perceived to be the hidden agenda of the Islamists and their goal of turning Egypt into a dictatorship once again. The Islamist government has granted itself almost absolute powers. The attempts of the government to impose its vision of the country's future constitution have created fear about individual freedoms. The opposition's main concern is not the interpretation of Shariah (Islamic law) as the basis of legislation but rather the exclusion of other views in the political process.

It was generally expected that the revolts would bring about democracy, good governance and economic development in many countries in the region. Unfortunately, so far people's aspirations have not been met. Although the political scene is different in Egypt and Tunisia, countries such as Syria and Libya are facing civil war, violence and the threats of foreign intervention and of foreign-supported conservative Salafi groups.

In the light of growing political turmoil and instability the conservative Salafi ideology has gained new momentum in the Arab world. In Libya many Sufi Muslim sites and historical shrines have been bombed and destroyed by the conservative Salafi Muslims. Several Salafi-inspired groups have also become more active in some parts of Tunisia near the Algerian and Libyan borders as well as in the Sinai peninsula in Egypt.

According to the International Crisis Group (2012) Salafi-inspired jihadists are playing a key role in the conflict in Syria. The Nusra Front is one of the most active militant groups in Syria and its fighters are recruited from all over the Arab world. This network for the recruitment of so-called Mujahideen to fight the al-Assad regime has the backing of Wahhabi Sunnis supported by Saudi Arabia.

The growing influence of the Salafi conservative ideology is not only the result of the power vacuums and the political turmoil caused by the Arab Spring, it must also be understood in the context of the ongoing regional power struggle. After the wave of revolts in the Arab world in 2011 and the subsequent collapse of many regimes in the region, many regional and international players attempted to further their own interests in the new order which was emerging.

The Alliance of Sunni States together with the USA have found common interests in attempting to topple the Syrian regime. A region without the al-Assad regime would be able to curb the growing power of the resistance movement 'Hezbollah' in Lebanon and that of Iran, which has been a staunch supporter of the Syrian regime. Both Hezbollah and Iran are perceived by the USA as enemies of the West. By actively supporting the conservative Sunni oppositions and international military intervention - and thus the fall of al-Assad - the USA hopes to strengthen its own and Israel's power in the region. Russia, China and Iran on the other hand are opposed to any international military intervention in the hope of being able to protect their own geopolitical interests in Syria. The cold war continues on Arab land.

It may be too early for an assessment of the impact of the Arab uprisings but it is already obvious that the conservative Islamist parties are the primary beneficiaries. In the light of the political and ideological differences between the secular and Islamist forces the risk of conflict and civil war in Egypt is real unless the political parties can reach a consensus on the issues which divide them.

Moreover, in the Middle East civil war is not only a threat in countries with considerable tribal and religious diversity such as Syria and Lebanon, even the most homogenous countries in the Arab world, such as Egypt and Tunisia, are at risk of internal conflict based on ideological differences and power struggles. For example, the victory of Islamists in Algeria (1990) and of the Islamic movement (Hamas) in the Palestinian territories (2006) have led to internal conflict and civil wars.

Once again, it may be too early to assess whether the Arab Spring will ultimately pave the way for freedom, justice and development. The transition towards democracy will not, unfortunately, be a smooth and fast process, which is what many people were hoping and expecting. The protests in the region have given rise to a variety of ideological and sectarian conflicts and have opened the door to conservatism and civil war. Nevertheless, the Arab Spring has enabled people to shake off dictatorial regimes and has made free and fair elections possible in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.

So far the new Islamist governments have not proved to be the best representatives of the revolutionary ambitions of the people in the Arab world, mainly because they have no clear development policies for tackling economic challenges. In addition, the absence of a political culture and their limited knowledge of governance issues can to a large extent explain the social and political unrest in the region.

The logic of democracy does not always provide the best solution for the problems caused by transformation. The current Islamist governments must be aware of this critical period of transition. Majority rule may be a problem in the post-revolution era because it is associated with conflict and power struggles. As a result, the best way forward for the Arab world in this transition period involves greater political participation and power-sharing.



African Feminists

By Tomupeishe Maphosa, IOB 2011



Photos: AFF photographer Nyani Quarmyne

THE PERSONAL

"You - Feminist!" he shouted antagonistically.
"Are you a Feminist?" she whispered with a mixture of shock and awe.

Having finally accepted one of life's expectations - that I must be something; be placed in a neatly labelled box for all to see and understand who I am -, I went to sit in the box. With the label. The box, I soon found, was not the typical four-corner-know-your-limits type, but a beat box that boomed the rhythm of my heart. The label was not an easy-to-rip-off sticker but a tattoo etched deeply yet delicately across my soul. What else could I be? Who else could I be? Finally the often disapproving reflection in the mirror forgot my pimples, knobby knees and crooked smile. Instead, with a wink of approval it agreed – this is what a feminist looks like.

Few words are as contentious as the word feminist. Some people find it insulting, others accept it hesitantly. But for a growing number of women across Africa this is what they are - Feminists. Full stop. No ifs or buts. There is no need for qualifying statements. One never says "I'm African, but...". So being a Feminist must follow the same logic. Such a contentious word, Feminist,

open to misinterpretation, misrepresentation. Its elusiveness makes it a target for censure but also enables it to embrace change, remain relevant and continue to provide strength to those fighting inequality and seeking humanity's potential for good.

Admittedly, I find it quite energy-sapping to explain who or what a Feminist is to people who are determined not to understand me. It is not something I can separate from my being. Asking me about my Feminism is like asking me the colour of my skin – obvious savannah mud that it is. This is not an introduction to Feminism. This article is about African Feminists and their creation of an autonomous space, a place which many women call their own, a space filled with pro-active conversations, internal reflection, energy-sharing, revival of dignity and decisive action. This is the African Feminist Forum (AFF).

THE POLICY

In order to share this space with kindred spirits, a common ground was established in the form of the Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists. The Charter is an essential foundation which many Feminists perceive to be a simple yet powerful document which finally puts their thoughts and feelings into words. A first reading of the Charter is often followed by "Wow! Others finally get me!" Having negotiated my body alone for so long through the hazardous pot-holed streets named gender, affirmative action, participation, culture, mainstreaming and the like and jerking my brakes when faced with the constantly looming red light of patriarchy, Feminism seemed to urge me to "go, go, go". There came a sense of relief, of arrival, of a true homecoming, accompanied by the feeling of belonging.

The Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists was formulated at the first AFF held in Ghana in 2006. From then on its members agreed to uphold this basic ethical framework, which functions as both a practical tool for assessing personal and institutional ethics and articulating a

minimum set of principles on which unified activism is based. Embracing Feminist identity is central to the Charter along with the alignment of individual and institutional ethics with a view to nurturing quality feminist leadership.

THE POWER

The AFF's power is symbolised by the ability to bring together women from across Africa and the Diaspora, all working at different levels of feminist engagement and activism, from local, national, regional and international NGOs, academia, the arts, the media, law, politics and philanthropy. All leaders in their own right. The AFF is the first African regional platform of self-identified feminist activists who have chosen to position themselves beyond NGO projects and international development goals.

The AFF itself was launched in November 2006 with the theme 'Reclaiming Our Spaces'. Since then it has become a biennial conference. Uganda (2008) hosted vibrant forums with the theme 'Feminist Power, Agency and Resistance: New Visions for a Revitalised Continent'. Senegal (2010) opted for 'Reconnecting with Ourselves and our Communities'. AFF 2012 rode the internet wave with the webinar 'Feminist Cyborgs: Activism, Fundraising and Security Online'.

National Forums are encouraged to sustain this level of energy and have the multiplier effect of boosting Feminist action. Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, and Zimbabwe are some of these countries. Tanzania has integrated AFF goals into its existing national feminist platform.

The AFF is not averse to name-dropping and flaunting the Feminists who have made the movement 'move'; after all, what is the point of a revolution if we cannot dance? The books, 'Voice, Power and Soul: Portraits of African Feminists' and 'Women Leading Africa: Conversations with Inspirational African Women' focus on some of these women. It is imperative to mention the achievements of the many women who have

swelled the ranks of the AFF: women who lobbied for the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, women who challenge homophobic legislation in Nigeria and Uganda, women who protected the victim in the then South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma's rape trial, women who campaigned for access to ARVs in South Africa, women who founded African grant-providing institutions, women who challenged Liberian president Charles Taylor and rebel leaders to bring peace to Liberia and laid the groundwork for the first female African president, and so on. The list of such powerful herstories is long and impressive.

THE POLITICAL

The above-mentioned achievements of various African Feminists are definitely of a political nature. The AFF is aware that the personal is political and that successful action stems from engagement with power structures and patriarchy. The state embodies power and patriarchy and often seeks to control women's personal lives. For example, rape, homophobia and the criminalisation of sex work affect individual women's personal lives but are decided via political processes. Hence, the necessity for Feminists to become involved politically.

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In the beginning the AFF may have struggled with religious and cultural fundamentalism in particular but the acknowledgement of diversity - along with a shared commitment to a transformative agenda for African societies and African women - has propelled the movement forward. The aim of making a positive critical difference has held the AFF together. This has allowed the movement to include often avoided issues such as sexuality. Africa's history of colonialism and liberation struggles and its current place in a globalised world cannot be excluded. Intersectionality then forms a basis for investigation into the experiences of African women.

Living 'lives of dignity' and 'walking the talk' are some common catch-all phrases used to justify African Feminist actions. Take, for instance, the uproar against Western projects entitled 'Undies for Africa' (from Canadian company Nectar Lingerie)¹ and 'Knickers for Africa' (New Zealand company Hot Milk). These projects claim that:

"In many parts of Africa women go without bras and panties because they simply can't afford them. This was reason enough for us to want to be involved. However, this is not the only reason we want to send the women in [insert country] underwear. In many parts of Africa, simply wearing underwear can reduce the instances (sic) rape and helps stop the spread of infectious diseases. Underwear is not considered a necessity, so by having underwear it raises the woman's social status making her less likely to be raped."

There is no evidence whatsoever for any of these claims. It is offending to say the least that donating second-hand underwear to African women could solve unrelated issues of rape and infectious diseases. Rape, gender violence and HIV, all serious structural issues the world over, become trivialised by such campaigns. In a victory for online activism African Feminists called a halt to such a narrow-minded attack on women's dignity.

Walking the talk is a difficult road to travel but the solidarity of African Feminists ensures that it is not a lonely one. Nobel Laureate Leymah Gbowee resigned in 2012 from her post as the head of the Liberian National Peace and Reconciliation Initiative and voiced her disappointment in President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's government, which she criticised for nepotism and corruption. Leymah has tried to demonstrate a form of feminist leadership guided by integrity and accountability. She walked the talk rather than remain embroiled in what she recognised as being wrong.

THE POTENCY

The inclusive and multi-generational approach of the AFF ensures that something is always brewing. Many young women have formed their own organisations and spearhead initiatives with the support of the 'vanguard' of African Feminists. Mentoring, teaching, sharing, learning and working are all principles enshrined in the Charter. Creativity rekindles the embers of Feminist activism. The 2012 webinar is a good example of how to remain relevant in a digitalised world. Numerous theatre groups, artists and writers also use the various media for feminist expression. Once marginalised groups – lesbian, bisexual and transgender women,

¹ The project has since been removed from the company's website.

The Evaluation Society of Kenya

By Jennifer Mutua*



sex workers, women with disabilities – benefit from the solidarity of the movement and contribute to African Feminists' political presence. If you are looking for democracy in Africa, look at the AFF. The AFF has succeeded in furthering some of the most basic democratic ideals, such as participation, inclusivity, equality and representation – all central to human rights.

IN PARTING

One of the objectives of the AFF was to provide an umbrella for the numerous yet separate efforts of African activists striving to bring about lasting transformative change to the status of African women while defining and claiming a distinct African conceptualisation of Feminism. It has done much more than that. The African Feminist space has grown over the years and it is an honour and a privilege to be part of it. Not simply to be present and have one's name ticked off in the register as is the case with many similar initiatives which have sadly been reduced to mere headcounts of participants, but to dance, to ride on a wave of laughter, to stand on the shoulders of others whilst hoisting up yet another. It is a space for reflection, a learning process, a giving process, a receiving process. Enthralling, enriching.



BACKGROUND

The Evaluation Society of Kenya (ESK) is a growing network of professionals in the field of programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E). In Kenya one of the problems with regard to the evaluation of the development agenda is the lack of professional input by M&E practitioners. Within the framework of Kenya's new constitution, which has devolved development to the grassroots, ESK's overall objective is to enhance the country's development efforts by encouraging its members to provide M&E professional input for Kenya's development agenda via a multi-stakeholder approach.

ESK was officially registered in July 2011. However, it needs to be stressed that efforts to establish a vibrant professional evaluation body had already been made in late 2008 when a series of meetings of M&E practitioners and a number of other activities were organised on the initiative of an interim committee. M&E practitioners had already been trying to breathe new life into the moribund Kenya Evaluation Association (KEA), which had been registered in 2002 in the context of the first African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) Conference in Nairobi. In a meeting held on 18th June 2010 M&E practitioners decided to form a new national evaluation body with a view to furthering their interests. This resulted in the establishment of the Evaluation Society of Kenya (ESK), which was officially registered in July 2011.

One of ESK's organisational aims is to build partnerships and alliances with relevant stakeholders, including the government, development partners, the academic world, M&E practitioners and civil society. ESK has, for example, forged a strategic partnership with the Monitoring & Evaluation Directorate (MED), which runs the country's National Integrated Monitoring & Evaluation System (NIMES). NIMES tracks and provides feedback on the implementation of development policies, programmes and projects outlined in the country's Development Blueprint

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- Vision 2030 and its five-year Medium-Term Plan (MTP). ESK plans to use its partnership with NIMES and other development partners to enhance the standing of and demand for M&E in the country.

November 2012 saw the very successful high-visibility launch of ESK as part of an event organised jointly with the Monitoring & Evaluation Directorate within the Ministry of Planning, namely the first National M&E Week, which will in future be held annually. The launch of ESK took place on 13 November, the first day of the event. The theme of the launch was “*The Evaluation Society of Kenya: Making M&E count in development practice*”. ESK’s objectives and strategies were highlighted as well as the benefits of having a vibrant professional Evaluation Society in the country. In addition the event provided an opportunity to present the newly elected executive committee to the public.

ESK, MED and other development partners made use of this platform to explain the role of M&E in Kenya and to foster a culture of and growing demand for M&E. The event also provided a welcome opportunity to raise the visibility of both ESK and NIMES as instruments for tracking and communicating development results as well as for sharing experiences and for learning from evaluations so as to encourage a culture of dialogue. UNICEF Kenya contributed substantially to the funding of the launch.

Participants were drawn from the national and sub-national levels, including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the government, UN Agencies, the academic world and research institutions among others. Keynote addresses were given by the Deputy Minister for Planning, UNICEF’s Country Director and DFID’s high-level representative from the UK Evaluation Office. Other speeches were made by representatives from the MED and UNDP and the ESK chair. During the event UN Women conducted a workshop on “*Evaluation from a Gender Equality and Human Rights Perspective*” and the participating universities made a presentation on an initiative aimed at developing

an M&E curriculum supported by the MED and UNICEF.

The National M&E week also saw the official launch of a Capacity Development Programme for the NIMES supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Presentations were made by representatives from the World Bank and by the Kenya Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (KCoP-MfDR). The African Gender Development Evaluation Network (AGDEN) and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IRR) among others conducted M&E training workshops. The event was also covered in the media. For example, in a live radio show aired by the publicly-owned Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) the Chair of ESK and a representative from NIMES explained the role of these two bodies in improving the country’s development outcomes by means of evaluation and also responded to questions from the public.

One of the next steps involves implementing a three-year strategy by means of Annual Work Plans (AWPs) whereby members of ESK participate in multi-sector thematic technical working groups of NIMES.



*Jennifer Mutua is an IOB alumna and founder member and elected chair of ESK. She is also the representative of Eastern Africa on the Board of the African Evaluation Association (AFREA).

Conference ‘Microfinance and the New Left in Latin America’

The conference, held over two days (Monday 12 November and Tuesday 13 November 2012) at the Province of Antwerp’s Provinciehuis explored the diversity of Latin American contexts, with a focus on microfinance and the New Left. It brought together people from diverse backgrounds - stakeholders from the microfinance sector, social and political movements and New Left governments as well as academics, and led to lively debate and discussion.



The ‘Microfinance and the New Left in Latin America’ conference was jointly organised by the Latin American and Caribbean Forum for Rural Finance (FOROLACFR), the French Microfinance Network CERISE (Comité d’Échange, de Réflexion et d’Information sur les Systèmes Épargne-Crédit), the Centre for European Research in Microfinance (CERMI, the University of Mons) and the Institute of Development Policy and Management (IOB, University of Antwerp).

The key words in the conference title may need some explanation.

Microfinance: the provision of a broad range of financial services to people who generally lack access to such services.

New Left: (broadly speaking) anti-neoliberal Latin American political movements and governments opposed to the consequences of globalisation and supporting those historically discriminated against and/or displaced.

The conference was subdivided into five main sessions:

1. Microfinance and the challenge of economic, social and political transformation in Latin America.
2. Microfinance and New Left Governments – Country Experiences.

3. Microfinance, social impact and structural transformation: what kind of microfinance for equitable and sustainable development.
4. Trends and new challenges for public policies: the pressure for a banking model for microfinance and the requirements of social transformation.
5. How to advance towards constructive cooperation in the fields of social transformation and poverty reduction.

The first session, presented by Johan Bastiaensen (senior lecturer, IOB), focussed on the five themes of the debate about the transformative action of microfinance and its - often problematic - relations with the New Left. These five themes are:

- i) What does the reduction of poverty imply? A simple income-based or multidimensional well-being approach? (Related to the vivid debate about ‘Buen Vivir’: Living Well)
- ii) Social impact of microfinance and its limitations.
- iii) Strategies of economic and socio-political transformation of the New Left.
- iv) Tensions and conflicts between microfinance and the New Left.
- v) Microfinance: multilateral mainstream pressure and the critique of the New Left - polarisation trends in practice.

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Evelina Dagnino (Professor of Political Science, Universidad de Campinas, Sao Paulo) expanded upon the challenge of democratisation faced by Latin America as she criticised the often predominant 'dichotomic and Manichaean' view of the relationships between 'bad' (New Left) governments and 'good' social movements/civil society. She emphasised the need to focus on the nature of the 'political project', which is promoted by key players within either the state or civil society (and within microfinance, for that matter), this being the set of political ideas which takes into account the diversity of players whilst revealing the heterogeneity of usually polarised sectors, namely civil society and the state.

The agenda of socio-economic transformation under the New Left was explained by José Luis Caraggio (Economist and Social Policy Analyst; Professor Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Buenos Aires) as an attempt to make people's lives the main centre of concern whilst questioning capitalist and new market systems and emphasising development and progress in the provision of social rights. He also introduced the concept of 'social economy' in order to conceptualise alternative associative forms of popular economic activities and analysed its role in the improvement of the 'popular economy' of those excluded.

In a bid to portray the trends and tensions in Latin American microfinance development the particular experiences of four countries - Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Brazil - were presented. The basic format of the presentations was as follows: first, the history of microfinance in the country; second, the new context and new politics in microfinance; third, the new strategies in the new context; and fourth, the perspectives on the future of microfinance. Similar country experiences showed that there is an urgent need to clarify the terms of the debate and - probably - for all sectors within a country to work towards synergies and complementarities. Microfinance itself should be reconnected with the broader strategy of economic and socio-political change (proactive industrial, agricultural

and financial policies with investment) so as to enhance its effectiveness in promoting economic development and social transformation. This might require complementing the commercial approach to microfinance which is at present dominant in Latin America and has contributed significantly to a spectacular increase in the number of institutions and clients. In addition to this successful upscaling of microfinance, there is a need for further diversification of institutions and products. The experience of Brazil represents an interesting exception as this country has maintained the dominance of government-led development finance and now seeks to reconnect these initiatives with those of financial cooperatives. The comparison of Brazil's experience with that of the other three countries which all have substantial private microfinance sectors seems to generate important lessons: the private model is generally better in efficiency and entrepreneurial governance but the Brazilian model offers interesting avenues as to how to promote microfinance with broader strategies of change supported by both government and local social movements (cooperatives).

In the third session assessing the social impact and structural transformation of microfinance, Milford Bateman (Professor of Economics, University of Juraj Dobrila Pula and author of 'Why Doesn't Microfinance Work?') offered a very critical view of microfinance in the context of Latin America as undermining sustainable local economic development. He cited the greed and exploitation present in many commercial microfinance institutions as undermining crucial social capital and solidarity. Furthermore, the commercialisation of microfinance has already caused Wall Street-style disasters in Latin America (financial bubbles). He also considered informal micro-enterprises to be incapable of serving as the driving force for development or poverty reduction based upon expensive microcredit, and argued for a focus on viable small and medium-sized enterprises. Bateman described the current trend within Latin America as the phasing out of microfinance and the re-emergence of community-based financial institutions, such as financial cooperatives, credit

unions, national and local development banks and social venture capital funds.

Using their study of the Nicaraguan microfinance crisis, Johan Bastiaensen and Peter Marchetti appeared to agree with some of the points Bateman made. Their study shows that current forms of urban-biased, short-term commercial microfinance are indeed often part and parcel of a populist neoliberal political project – portraying it as a panacea to combat exclusion, poverty or inequality. Yet their detailed analysis of the dynamics of the politically sponsored client rebellion against microfinance (the so-called Non-Payment Movement) also shows that apparently anti-neoliberal reactions against microfinance do not guarantee the adoption of more favourable economic strategies. Their research indeed demonstrates that the political exploitation of the attack on Nicaraguan microfinance served to hide fundamental injustices in agricultural value chains (cattle) which are of strategic interest to both traditional and ‘New left’ elites. In this way, they support Dagnino’s view that we need to focus on the nature of political projects and certainly not fall prey to Manichean stories of ‘good’ leftists and ‘bad’ neo-liberals. Microfinance clients and institutions are clearly vulnerable to political risk and market manipulation. Political interests, as highlighted by Carmen Velasco (Co-founder of Pro Mujer, Co-Chair of the Executive Committee of the Seal of Excellence, Peru), destroy the potentially positive results of microfinance. Instead, diverging interests ensure that there is no synergy in the microfinance process - the various interest groups put obstacles in each other’s way and see each other as competitors rather than allies; their missions become distorted; they lose track of their long-term goal and no sustainable results are achieved. The consequences of these challenges include over-indebtedness, excessive growth, too much focus on financial revenue. Moreover, the microfinance model is ‘bankised’ and social groups with fewer resources are abandoned while the results are concentrated in the institutions and not in the client. However, the picture is not entirely negative. Measures can still

be taken to return to the basic ideal of microfinance, such as client protection campaigns, increased transparency of microfinance institutions, social standards for the social efficiency of microfinance and creating a Seal of Excellence. Carmen Velasco made suggestions as to how microfinance can be used to combat poverty. She argued that the active participation of the population is essential, that the services should be adjusted to its needs and that all the multiple players should be committed to action.

The regulation of microfinance was also discussed, both by Veronica Trujillo (a PhD student from Peru) and Marcelo Zabalaga (the president of the Central Bank of Bolivia). Regulation is faced with the challenges posed by the continued expansion of microfinance services and the innovations in the field which seek to respond to particular social groups by making the best use of newly available (ICT) technology. Overall, relatively few regulations are in place. These concentrate on products, institutions and implementation in four different ways: without regulation, with a specific approach to micro-credit, with a focus on products, or with a focus on institutions and products. By and large regulation mostly affects micro-credit, with little attention to micro-savings and micro-insurance. In this way, it follows the innovations in the practices of microfinance, which usually do and should precede any regulatory initiatives.

The conference included participants from the following Latin American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and Uruguay. In addition it was attended by Belgian, Croatian, French and Spanish participants with an interest in the field of microfinance and/or the context of Latin America. Agreements were made to continue the more academic reflection that was initiated during the conference and to start working together with the relevant stakeholders in order to bring development (rural) microfinance institutions closer to progressive social movements and sectors in government, among others via a follow-up initiative in Brazil to be organised by FOROLACFR.

Portraits



Paola Suntaxi, Ecuador, DEM

When she was six Paola travelled all over Latin America with her father, a teacher who also taught her throughout their one-year journey together. Paola, raised in a protected upper class environment, had the opportunity to play with children from very different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds and she says that this was when and where the seeds of her social involvement were planted.

"When my dad and I returned to Ecuador I was encouraged to focus on my education. I wanted to take over the family business in order to show dad that his daughter had grown into a capable woman so I studied business and became a process engineer. However, I felt that I was missing an important link with real life, the real life that I had observed when I was a girl. I volunteered to take part in an education programme for street vendor girls. By doing so I felt more human and I realised that the business world should become more sensitive to people's everyday reality."

In 2006 I took part in a UNESCO pilot programme that set up e-learning platforms for people in vulnerable circumstances so as to enable them to obtain higher degrees. UNESCO

provided the computer rooms and we developed the material to empower the target groups. E-learning is a powerful tool that provides new opportunities for hundreds of people in unfavourable environments. Our President Rafael Correa recognises that education and technology form the foundations for the development of future generations. Education is high up on his government's agenda because he experienced first-hand the difficulties of access to a quality education system. Having been born into a family with limited resources he had to work hard to obtain a scholarship in order to be able to study abroad since only the elite class had the privilege of attending international and high-quality schools. Currently he is heavily investing in education, internet access and high-tech universities. Even in remote villages we now have virtual teaching rooms or communal rooms with internet access which are affordable to all. Not only do these reduce the educational and technical gap, they also boost people's creativity and encourage them to come up with personal initiatives.

While I was working on this project I met a man from a different culture who made me realise that I wanted to see more of the world and learn about other cultures and realities and so I applied for an internship in a Swiss NGO in Zurich. This turned out to be a very challenging experience that helped me to improve my knowledge of English and to understand Europe's work ethic and efficiency. However, due to the financial crisis and other factors I was not allowed to renew my visa and I had to leave the country. At that time, I have to admit, I was disappointed and frustrated. Furthermore, a long-distance relationship is hard to maintain, but things happen for a reason.

Only two weeks after my return to Ecuador I was offered a job as a junior supervisor in the country's largest retail company. Because of my former job experience and the work pace to which I had become accustomed in Switzerland I was soon promoted to purchasing manager. I was young and female and was the object of many

chauvinist comments about my promotion. I really had to prove myself and I did. I restructured all the departments and travelled around the country supervising the construction of new malls and shops. But every time I witnessed the poverty just outside these huge malls I felt angry and helpless. I decided to set up a social programme in the company, which was not taken seriously since unfortunately our managers still lack a long-term vision which incorporates social responsibility and welfare for all. Although the job was really challenging and glamorous I did not feel at home in the business world. After a few months God again opened a new door for me. Within a month I was able to join the Presidential Office as a Presidential Compromise Monitor. I had to monitor and programme all the requests to and commitments of the President, which involved dealing with all the ministries and local authorities. I had the privilege of seeing with my own eyes the power of politics and the importance of a visionary leader. I really appreciate the efforts made by our President to foster a work culture within the existing political structures. Every political decision has an impact on daily life. We bear a huge responsibility to society. With the presidential team we were able to add many social issues to the presidential agenda. With his background, his awareness of reality and of people's real needs, and his efforts to improve the well-being of the poor, President Correa is widely considered to be the Americas' president with the highest level of recognition among both the citizens and the international community.

Together with him I travelled to the most remote places in Ecuador, which opened my eyes to the richness of my country in terms of diversity, human capital and natural resources. For decades politicians have created barriers to development by the inefficient use of these resources or by corruption. For example, a politician would decide to have a water tap installed in a village. He would just sign the contract with a company on whose support he could count without proper investigation of the

needs of the people, without comparing prices, without follow-up. These days politicians are being trained also to monitor the projects that they have set up, but I realise that there is still a long way to go in our fight against corruption and our struggle for structural development.

Working for President Rafael Correa was a most rewarding job in which I learnt something new every day. I had the opportunity to meet many international personalities and felt very comfortable in my post but my boss challenged me to take another step forward. He had studied abroad himself and told me that it was an experience which I should have too. He made me understand that we need more specialised people who really care about others. Moreover, in today's world having a Master's degree has become a requirement rather than a mere advantage. That is why I wanted to pursue further studies in policy evaluation and monitoring. I applied to IOB because it seemed to focus on all the issues that I want to learn about. I have a lot of empirical experience but I lack a sound academic grounding. So far IOB has turned out to be the perfect fit for me. I learn theories and discuss practices. The most enriching thing for me is the exchange of ideas with other students. I am eager to use my new knowledge in the development of my country. As I have already said, our president invests considerably in education as a tool for development. The cost of my studies here is completely covered by the government. I was one among 800 high-performance individuals who obtained a scholarship to study abroad this year. The only condition is that we go back to Ecuador after obtaining our degrees in order to contribute to the further development of our country. Cooperation is the only way forward. Ecuador helps me and I want to give something back. I am very grateful for all the opportunities that I have been given."



Yu Pei Wu, Taiwan, Master in Development Evaluation and Management



Yu Pei's eagerness to question and to think critically shows in the openness of her face and the modesty of her speech. Even at IOB she feels that she is a diplomat representing her country, Taiwan, albeit an outspoken one: a diplomat who dares to reflect on her own ideas regarding development and on her own role in it.

As a result of her studies in Political Sciences and International Relations Yu Pei felt attracted to the world of diplomacy. In 2004 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent her on her first mission abroad, across the ocean to Chile. Her main responsibilities were to promote Taiwan's culture and to promote interaction among the 2,000 Taiwanese expats living in Chile. She also had to administer scholarships and encourage young Chileans to study in Taiwan.

After three and a half years she was moved to

Nicaragua, where she supervised a number of Taiwanese technical assistance projects. "That is what triggered my interest in development issues. My two-and-a-half year stay in Nicaragua was a life-changing experience. Nicaraguans are a most charming and welcoming people, eager to overcome differences by focusing on what unites us all: our humanity. For the first time I truly listened to the stories, experiences and wise observations of others. I realised that my work in the development field could really make a difference to the lives of many. It was an eye-opener."

After her return to Taiwan Yu Pei supervised all overseas technical assistance projects, more than 100 projects in a total of 28 countries. The new listening skills which she had acquired in Nicaragua helped her to broaden her perception of development. "Before we just taught local people how to plant rice or other crops in our own way, without caring too much about local contexts and traditions and thus about the outcome of the projects. Together with other people in the field, I want to see reform in our development policy. It is a challenging process but I feel that there is political openness, although it will take a lot of time and effort to implement the necessary changes."

Taiwan is only recognised as an independent country by 23 countries and is dependent on these allies to be heard at the international level. Yu Pei explains: "Foreign aid has always been one of the key elements in the maintenance of stable political relations with our allies. If they needed technical support we provided it without caring too much about the feasibility and even the results. We have slowly realised that if we want to become a responsible donor country we have to follow the international trends in development. I believe that the improved welfare of local people and positive project results are important building blocks in a still fragile diplomatic relationship. If we ignore the outcome of our development projects we risk becoming completely isolated and we will never be accepted as a true international player."

Alumni News

"I have tried through dialogue to raise awareness of these issues at our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, my lack of profound knowledge regarding development management has proved to be a handicap, which is why I applied for this Master's in Development Evaluation and Management. I feel that I am holding one of the keys for reshaping Taiwan's development policy and I am convinced that IOB can help me in my effort to bring about the necessary changes. I hope to learn more on implementing the monitoring and management processes in our policy. I want to see a link between strategy and reality: what is really needed and how it can be achieved. In order to be able to do so we will have to question our methodologies and our views on development."

"I find it very enriching to discuss different views with fellow students at IOB. Although the Master's programme is very demanding we manage to spend a lot of time after class discussing development issues. I thought that as a diplomat I had considerable experience of what goes on in the world, but here at IOB I have realised that in fact I know very little. Although Taiwan itself received aid in the past it is now capable of working together with the international community by offering various types of assistance. This makes me look at things from two perspectives: that of a country in the South and that of a donor country. What I really appreciate about IOB is that we are encouraged to think critically and to ask questions. And that is my own aim as well: to bring about change, not only to change my country's views and policy regarding development, but also to change myself and my own ideas. IOB has opened up a whole new world for me and I am eager to continue to explore it."



CALL FOR PAPERS: IOB RESEARCH DAY

After having completed your studies at IOB you returned to your country or perhaps discovered new horizons elsewhere. Wherever you are now, we hope that you have been able to make good use of the new insights and knowledge which you acquired during your stay at IOB. We would like to keep in touch with you and learn about the interesting work you have since been involved in.

On the 21st of May 2013 IOB will organise the third IOB Research Day. Several IOB researchers will present their academic or policy-oriented research. The floor will be open to our PhD students, post-doctoral researchers, professors and ... alumni! One presentation slot of 45 minutes (20-minute presentation followed by 25 minutes of discussion) will be reserved for a presentation by an IOB alumnus selected by the review committee. In your presentation you may discuss academically-oriented research findings or policy-oriented work in which you have been engaged.

The presentation will be part of the IOB Research Day attended by IOB staff. Moreover, all presentations will live streamed so that alumni all over the world will be able to tune in. Last year alumni from 27 countries all over the world did so for the seminar. Later on the e-seminar will be made available via our website. The presentation by our alumnus/a will take place on the 21st of May 2013 from 11.00 -11.45 am (Belgian time). The travel and hotel costs for the selected alumnus will be covered by IOB but there will be no financial reward for the actual presentation. The paper may be written in either French or English but the presentation has to be in English. Alumni who submitted a paper for the 2012 alumni seminar are more than welcome to submit a paper again.

The application form should be completed and sent to alumni.iob@ua.ac.be BEFORE the 15th of March 2013. A background paper/report/document (covering more or less what will be presented in the presentation) and a PowerPoint presentation (no more than 20 slides) should also be attached. The decision of the academic review committee will be communicated on the 29th of April 2013.

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Previous IOB alumni presentations at the IOB Research Day:



2011

The impact of targeted social transfers on cooperative behavior in beneficiary communities: a case study of Ghana's cash transfer program, by Joseph Asunka.



2012

The "tragedy of the non-commons" – rethinking participation in protected area management in Vietnam, by Quang Ngoc Nguyen

UPCOMING IOB E-SEMINARS

(exact date and hour to be confirmed on our website)

"The conflict in the Great Lakes Region and the role of the UN Group of Experts" – Guest lecture by Mr. Steven Spittaels, former member of the UN Group of Experts on the DRC – 29th March 2013

"Peace and justice in European Union foreign policy" - Guest lecture by Dr. Laura Davis – 29th of April 2013

"Spectres of the State: Problematics of Government after State Collapse in Somalia" - Guest speaker: Tobias Hagmann, Associate Professor, Dept of Society and Globalisation, Roskilde University - 29th of April 2013

"From rebel movements to political parties: the principle of civilian supremacy in civil-military relations. The case of Burundi" – Guest Lecture by Ms. Liz Mc Clintock

ONLINE ALUMNI COMMUNITY

Looking for someone?

IOB recently launched its own IOB Online Alumni Community (<http://alumniioib.ua.ac.be>). The Community is the online meeting space for the more than 800 IOB alumni and staff. The community is secured by means of a password. Only IOB alumni and staff are granted access.

What is in it for you?

- You can update your own personal information.
- You can contact other IOB alumni (name, nationality and email address are made public).
- You can ask to receive the IOB newsletter or Exchange to Change.
- You can make use of e-learning opportunities via the alumni community.

If you do not wish your name/ nationality or email to be made available to other IOB alumni kindly inform us via iob_alumni@ua.ac.

COMPETITION REGARDING HELP WITH PROMOTION

IOB would like to ask your help in the promotion of the IOB Master Programmes 2013-14. We hope you all cherish fond memories of your studies at IOB and the good times you had here, making many new friends from around the world and acquiring new skills and knowledge.

If indeed you did appreciate studying at IOB, please forward the promotion email that was sent to you to all those in your personal and professional networks that you think might be interested in studying at IOB! Perhaps you could also put up the IOB poster at work or post it on your Facebook page.

Our analysis of previously received applications clearly shows that applicants who received information about IOB programmes from IOB students/alumni are generally very successful because the people in your networks actually fit the IOB profile well. That is why we would really appreciate your help in forwarding the promotion

email (which has been sent to you separately) to your contacts.

To make it even more worthwhile for you we have decided to launch a small competition!

The alumnus who is mentioned most often by the applicants selected to study at IOB will win a very beautiful prize! When filling in the application form, the applicants will be asked how they first learned about IOB. One of the possible answers is "via an alumnus" with a separate box to fill in a name. Of all those who are selected to study at IOB in 2013-14, the alumnus who is most often mentioned as the source of initial information about IOB will **win a voucher for Amazon worth 100 Euros**, which will enable you to order, for example, a book or an e-reader.

[flyer, brochure in attachment] and poster in the paper version?

has been perceived as a favourite destination for those seeking educational and research opportunities. Every year thousands of Indonesian students pursue their higher studies in a large number of universities in Europe. In view of this great demand the Delegation of the European Union to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam organized the European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) in 2008, which has since become an annual event supported by the EHEF Committee. It is now the largest European Education Fair in Indonesia. Its aim is to facilitate the dissemination of information on educational opportunities in Europe and it is supported by all member states and participating universities.

For EHEF 2012, which was held on 3-4 November 2012, I was asked by my Alma Mater to participate in the event and work alongside the representative of the Belgian Embassy in Jakarta. My responsibility was to man the stand, hand out flyers and share information about the University of Antwerp in general and about studying at IOB in particular. I also assisted the Embassy in the preparation of the event and accompanied the staff to the welcome dinner attended by Ambassadors and officials of EU Member States, Representatives of EU Education Centres and EHEF exhibitors.

The fair itself was a very busy event with over 8,000 visitors in two days. The Belgian Embassy recorded more than 260 people who signed the guest list but the actual figure may be much higher. Representatives from several colleges and universities in Indonesia also visited the stand and inquired about the possibilities of creating a joint programme with a university in Belgium.



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Throughout the day I had to explain how the higher education system in Belgium works and how to apply for study grants and scholarships. I also shared my experience of student life in Antwerp with many prospective students. Overall, it was a very exciting and interesting experience for me as an alumna to participate in the education fair on behalf of my Alma Mater. Moreover, I also had the opportunity to add other European alumni to my network, which I hope will benefit me in my professional life.

MEET-AND-GREET SESSION NICARAGUA



An IOB 'Meet-and-Greet' session will be organised in Nicaragua on Friday the 1st of March 2013. All IOB alumni residing in the vicinity are very welcome to join us!

Prof. Johan Bastiaensen will host the Meet-and-Greet session in the 'Cocina Doña Haydee' in Managua at 6 p.m.

Address: Carretera a Masaya km. 4 ½ Optica Matamoros 1 c. abajo No. 71, Tel: 270 6100 Managua
<http://www.lacocina.com.ni/>

PHOTO COMPETITION

When we asked the students graduating last year what they had appreciated most about IOB many of the comments were about meeting new friends from around the globe, building very strong friendships with them, living in a modern yet historical town where it is safe, having had the benefit of interactive teaching, and so on. We would like to provide the outside world with a better idea of what it is like to

study in Antwerp and in particular at IOB together with students from around the world. That is why we are organising a "Photo Competition" on the IOB Facebook page. Almost everyone has a camera these days, either a small digital camera or a camera function on their (smart)phone so we hope to see Antwerp and studying in Antwerp through your eyes! What makes studying at IOB such an enjoyable experience for you? Having a drink together after finishing your group work at 3 am in the morning? Having a joint birthday party? Hearing students from another continent relate experiences you have also had? Just draw our attention to the small funny differences that you have observed - how Belgians never seem to talk in lifts; that "Nice weather today" is a relative concept; that the city provides a "badboot" (bathboat) to dive into, to name but a few. Short video fragments are also welcome!¹

It is up to you... no need to be a professional photographer, it is the feeling which the image evokes that is most important. We have created a Facebook page where the pictures can be uploaded. At the end of the year a professional photographer will make a selection of the best photos, which will be on display at a small exhibition that we shall organise to coincide with the graduation ceremony. Please show us 'the IOB experience' through your eyes!

Photo competition
Why study in Antwerp?

What do you like about studying in Antwerp/at IOB?
Capture it on camera and post it on Facebook.
The best photos will be shown in a special exhibition.

¹ Clearly all persons on the photos or in the video fragments should agree to having it posted on Facebook/YouTube. No embarrassing or disrespectful photos or videos will be allowed.

NEW RESEARCH STRUCTURE AT IOB: FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES, KEY PLAYERS AND POLICIES

From 2006 until 2012 research, education and policy advisory work at IOB were the remit of four "Thematic Groups". In the course of a review process including several external audits and internal seminars we learned that in terms of research performance IOB holds its own with the best Development Institutes in Europe. In order to do even better in the future we have opted to re-structure IOB into a single research group with a view to consolidating the Institute on the basis of one research agenda and a coherent Institute-wide research policy. Given that the development process in today's globalised world is the patchy result of the interplay of a variety of key players and factors operating at different levels, it makes no sense to study them in an uncoordinated way.

Since IOB's staff combines expertise ranging from the local to the global level, we are well equipped to cultivate an original perspective and consider very carefully how to act effectively in this new reality. In practice, this means four research lines. More information on the research groups can be found on the links below.

Although IOB is a global research centre, the African Great Lakes Region will remain one of the main areas in which we study the interaction between the local, national and international levels. Finally we shall also continue to encourage local research and development practice by cultivating more partnerships with the South.

SUMMER SCHOOL ON THE POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF AID (POLEC-AID)

From the 24th of June until the 5th of July 2013, the University of Antwerp (BE) the University of Florence (IT), the University of Cantabria (ES), the University of Birmingham (UK), Erasmus University Rotterdam (NL) and the University of Olomouc (CZ) will jointly organise the first Summer School on the Politics and Economics of Aid. The programme will be financed by the Erasmus Lifelong Learning programme, IOB and EADI.

In spite of major aid efforts, poverty and poor

governance persist in a large number of developing countries. Various visions on aid and various approaches have been proposed throughout history in order to overcome stalled development, with varying but overall disappointing results. Since the turn of the millennium political, economic and institutional factors have been considered to be determinant with regard to pro-poor development and aid has been promoted as a lever for institutional change in both the economic and political spheres of governance. In spite of the enthusiasm for the Millennium Development Goals (2000) and the commitment of donors to change the way in which they deliver aid (Paris Declaration 2005), progress has been slow and uneven. Today, the world has become an increasingly complex scene with more donors than ever before. Aid and development concerns are furthermore affected by concerns regarding economic downturns, climate change, health pandemics, food and fuel crises, and so on. The intensive programme "The Politics and Economics of Aid" will address the past, present and future challenges with respect to aid for development, its modalities, its key players and their (changing) contexts.

The primary **objective** of the programme is to **support ongoing research into the political, economic and institutional aspects of development** cooperation (aid) and aid effectiveness. This research may take place in **university** settings (for example, PhD research), but also in **policy-oriented** settings such as NGOs, think-tanks, aid agencies, etc. Next, the programme aims to contribute to the creation of a sustainable research network on aid so as to enable the exchange of knowledge regarding aid effectiveness and cross fertilisation between academic and policy-oriented research arenas.

The POLEC-AID intensive programme aims to attract two types of participants: **academic researchers** working within a university setting and with a strong interest in policy-relevant research and **policy-oriented researchers** (evaluators) active in think-tanks, NGOs and aid agencies who have a strong interest in broadening their theoretical and methodological horizons. The deadline for application is 01/05/2013.

The Summer School can also be attended online (after logging in to the website).



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