

CONCEPT NOTE: SPOTLIGHT SESSION NO. 1

The Illusive Impact of Development Cooperation: towards a new understanding of the application of Effectiveness Principles

12th December from 10:00hrs to 11:30hrs (CET)

Background

Tracing the impact of the [effectiveness principles](#) and its approaches represent the critical *problematique* permeating the development co-operation discourse—in terms of the transmission of impact, its distribution across varying factions of society and the various factors that catalyse a more synergistic and inclusive process. Indeed, the effectiveness of the approaches, methods and measurement tools in this respect have been continuously challenged and rearticulated. This forms the basis of conducting this session in the context of availability of new evidence and analysis on the concerned issues.

International development co-operation is a powerful tool to help countries realise their own development goals and contextualized priorities. In an era of intertwined systemic challenges—a post pandemic recovery, the climate emergency, and socioeconomic shocks—effective development co-operation is more urgent than ever, to effectively mobilise the efforts and resources of domestic and external actors, from government, bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs, CSOs and philanthropies, the private sector, and other development actors, to deliver better and more impactful results with the resources available.

Closing the gap between academic analysis and policy praxis, interventions in this session seek to reflect on the challenges, opportunities and lessons learned from evidence-based research findings on how the application of the effectiveness principles in development co-operation have the potential to contribute towards delivering better development results for people and the planet, building stronger capacity, and helping to reduce aid dependency while representing good value for money. In the midpoint of the Agenda 2030, achieving and sustaining development impact to accelerate progress towards the SDGs will require that development actors work better together, guiding multi-stakeholder partnerships by the imperative of effectiveness in development co-operation.

Purpose of the Session

The purpose of this Spotlight Session is to (i) get a *snapshot* of how the effectiveness principles in development co-operation translate into actions on the ground; and (ii) from that *snapshot*, explore how to – in terms of moving forward – strengthen the effectiveness of development co-operation in the current context.

Objectives

1. To share the findings of frontier research on aid effectiveness and its impact.
2. To update our understanding of the impact of effectiveness at the country level.
3. To understand the implications of new research findings for the GPEDC framework.

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Expected Outcomes

- A shared understanding of the impact of effectiveness based on evidence presented during the session.
- A basis for informing reflections at the GPEDC on its delivery model in the way forward.
- Provide a point of departure for further discussion on the impact of the implementation of the effectiveness principles to transition towards concrete actions.

Deliverables

- A presentation of research findings derived from the [International Research Conference on the Effectiveness of Development Cooperation](#), jointly organized by UNU-WIDER and the European Commission (DG INTPA) under its capacity leading the work of the GPEDC [Action Area 1.1](#) focused on Demonstrating the Impact of Effectiveness.
- Presentation of the research project titled “Exploring ‘Development Effectiveness’ at the Sectoral Level in Southern Countries” by the Centre for Policy Dialogue in Bangladesh;
- A session where participants acquire a better understanding of what is needed to strengthen the effectiveness of development cooperation at the country level.

Guiding Questions

1. Does the aid effectiveness discourse adequately place emphasis on understanding and measuring the impact of effective development cooperation in a recipient country?
2. How important is the consideration of contextual or specific circumstances of a recipient country to realise the impact of effective development cooperation?
3. How could the data deficit (particularly for disaggregated data) for impact assessment of effective development cooperation be dealt with?
4. How can the diverging circumstances in both provider and recipient countries inform the way forward for a more effective GPEDC monitoring framework?

Session Focal Points:

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