



# DEVELOPMENT DAYS CONFERENCE

HELSINKI, FINLAND

**Crises and Futures  
of/in Development**

**15–16 FEBRUARY 2024**

**#DevDays2024**

**Book of Abstracts**

**Development Days 2024 Conference:  
Crises and Futures of/in Development**

*Organized by the Finnish Society for Development Research (FSDR)*

**University of Helsinki  
Helsinki, Finland  
15–16 February, 2024**

## Crises and Futures of/in Development

In the midst of rapid advances in communications and technology, our global society is grappling with an accumulation of simultaneous and interrelated crises. Today, humanity faces an array of significant challenges, including the climate emergency, the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic, the prolonged Ukraine-Russia war, the intensification of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and various other longstanding geopolitical tensions. These challenges coexist in a complex and uneven landscape, persisting alongside poverty, privation, inequalities, and injustices across countries. Yet it is important to recognize that it is not only the actual subjects and concerns of social science research that are in crisis, but also the study and practice of development itself.

The past, present, and future of development as a field of scholarly and practical endeavor are inextricably linked to how the so-called 'polycrisis' in the economic, ecological, societal, and political spheres has evolved over time. The slogan 'rethinking development' may sound cliché, yet a critical self-examination of our development thinking, relations and engagement is an essential part of the solution to these problems.

The 2024 Development Days (#DevDays2024) conference is dedicated to sharing research results and ideas about and in response to crises and futures of/in development studies, policy, and advocacy. To this end, while development actors and stakeholders need to have moments of introspection to reflect upon the history of crises of/in development, it is equally important to have a forward-looking perspective on how to envision and strategize for futures of/in development.

Crises and futures of/in development as a process and policy could refer to the causes and effects of specific development efforts and interventions in particular cases. Presentations and discussions on this theme may also touch on the implications of political dynamics for the sustainability of—and availability of resources for—international development cooperation. Crises and futures of/in development as an academic concept and discipline involves issues in the research and teaching of development studies. This may range from questioning established theories and paradigms to reflecting upon how externally generated factors, such as changes in global institutional agendas and university-level funding cuts, impact on the activities and opportunities of researchers and students.

Crises and futures of/in development as a profession and vocation may problematize the current sociopolitical context in donor countries like Finland and other Nordic countries, and the European Union where there has been resurgence of nationalism, right-wing populism, and conservatism. These phenomena are conditioning public perceptions contradictory to the principle of global responsibility, justice and solidarity.

Indeed, how we respond to and navigate multiple facets of crises can profoundly influence the trajectory and outcome of development in the years to come.

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## Keynotes



### Barry K. Gills, "Reflections on (a) Life in Development"

**Abstract:** Development as linear progress? Or Development as perpetual multiple crises? Reflections on five decades of "life in Development."



### Jayati Ghosh, "Development in the Time of Climate Crisis"

**Abstract:** Lower income countries that still face the development challenge are now threatened by climate change, even as external economic conditions worsen and financial constraints mount. How can these multiple challenges be overcome?



### Alfredo Saad-Filho, "Neoliberalism in Crisis: Challenges and Alternatives"

**Abstract:** This session examines the urgent challenges facing the advanced economies and the developing countries. An alternative will be sketched, in order to outline how these difficulties can be addressed while, at the same time, securing improvements in the living standards of the majority.

## DocShop 2024: How to make an impact? Research based policymaking and advocacy

The Finnish Society for Development Research (FSDR) together with the Finnish University Partnership for International Development, (UniPID), the Faculty of Social Sciences – University of Helsinki, and the Inequality & Development Working Groups of the Young Scholars Initiative – Institute for New Economic Thinking (YSI-INET), warmly welcomes all interested participants to join the DevDays DocShop.

**Objective:** In this workshop organized in connection with the Development Days conference 2024, we encourage participants to reflect on the connections between research and policymaking and advocacy processes, thus highlighting the importance of research impact. Questions such as “What/How/Why is policy relevant in your research?” and “How to call for advocacy as part of your research impact?” will be addressed during the workshop through a panel discussion and co-sharing of knowledge(s). The workshop is chaired by Marikki Karhu (Secretary General, Development Policy Committee). The invited speakers are: Niko Humalisto (Leading Advocacy Specialist, FELM, docent at the Department of Geographical and Historical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies), Neema Komba (Doctoral Researcher at the Department of Entrepreneurship, Management and Organization at Hanken School of Economics University), Pekka Seppälä (Senior Adviser, Department for Development Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland ), and Alfredo Saad-Filho (professor of Political Economy and International Development at King’s College London, UK).

## Working Group 1: Crisis and futures of ‘civil society’ in development

**Chairs:** Judith Kahamba, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Jyväskylä; Tiina Kontinen, Associate Professor, University of Jyväskylä; Eija Ranta, Academy of Finland Research Fellow, University of Helsinki

The working group will discuss the implications of the current ‘polycrisis’ to the research on, and practices of, ‘civil society in development’. Civil society actors are engaged, in multiple levels, in addressing the new emergencies and needs arising from the crisis all over the world; both by mitigating the consequences as well as addressing some of the root causes. At the same time, world is experiencing decline of democracy, partly manifested in increasing state restrictions to civic space, as well as enabling certain forms of civil society actors while hindering others. Moreover, the traditional North-South civil society collaborations are challenged from decolonial and anti-racist perspectives calling for restructuring the power architecture and forms of organizing. Simultaneously, the worldwide rise of conservatism and populism, including in donor countries, has affected the forms and resources of civil society development cooperation. We invite academic papers and reflections from practitioners and activists to tackle a wide variety of questions related to ‘civil society’ in development: How diverse actors – NGOs, INGOs, CSOs, social movements, activists – in civil society are affected by polycrisis and what are their roles therein? How are the changes related to democracy and civic space manifested in different contexts? What are the challenges and future scenarios of civil society development as practice and profession, including in donor countries and Finland? This hybrid working group invites contributions from a wide range of academic disciplines from all parts of the world, with a special focus on development studies and participants from the Global South. We request max 350 words abstracts that feature a title, a name and affiliation of the author(s), summary of the paper/reflection to be presented inclusive of reflection of its resonance with the overall theme of the group. Prior circulation of full papers is not requested.

### *Presentations*

#### **“Tone down a bit”: Intergenerational dynamics in times of disillusionment in the Kenyan feminist civil society spaces**

Martta Kaskinen, University of Helsinki

**Abstract:** Kenyan feminists have for generations fought for women’s rights in political and everyday spaces, and women have indeed achieved foothold in many levels of policymaking. However, the feminist movement has become more fragmented as young, radical feminists are distancing themselves from the established understandings of gender equality work. While an ‘intergenerational gap’ may characterize the contemporary feminist movement on a global scale, the Kenyan socio-political and historical context for civil society movements brings nuances to the phenomenon. In Kenya, development institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been increasingly dominant and powerful actors in the civil society, and during the past decades, they have pushed a particular focus on gender. As part of this trend, the established Kenyan feminist movement has largely co-opted an institutionalized understanding of the gender and development framework, incorporating in their activism development buzzwords such as ‘women’s empowerment’. In this context,

many young, radical and/or queer feminists perceive the contemporary organizational feminist formations firstly, inadequate in their ideas and aims for transformative change and secondly, inaccessible in their established elitist compositions. Many feminist activists thus find themselves in a position of double-disillusionment between a patriarchal society, and a limited access to meaningful civil society organizing. This paper investigates the contemporary dynamics within the Kenyan feminist movement, focusing especially on feminists' dynamic positionalities and controversial conceptualizations of feminist agendas within the civil society. Based on interviews and focus-group discussions with 55 feminist-identifying activists on different levels of civil society organizing in Kenya, this paper argues that the rising dissent within the feminist movement should not be viewed solely as a negative phenomenon for the future of the movement. On the contrary, this paper suggests that distinct and even contradictory understandings of and means for feminist activism can potentially push civil society organizing towards more feminist and radical understandings of gender equality work.

### **Will Technology Solve It All? Green futures in Chinese NGO advocacy**

Taru Salmenkari, University of Helsinki

**Abstract:** This paper uses Chinese NGOs' preparation and participation for COP28 summit as an empirical case to study Chinese civil society participation in climate policy making. It analyses civil society meetings and platforms to study NGO preparation towards COP28 and follows COP28 side events organized by Chinese civil society, including NGOs, foundations, business associations, and research institutions. This paper examines what it means to work with an authoritarian, albeit consultative, government in foreign policy areas. COP28 is a good setting to study the role of NGOs in Chinese foreign policy, specifically in environmental issues. Before international climate summits, Chinese preparatory events reveal coordination between official, expert and NGO circles, although NGO voices and networks at the summit are their own. The COP28 program shows who represent civil society on international climate arenas and for what ends, as Chinese civil society representatives are by no means limited to NGOs, even less to GONGOs, nor to the non-profit sector. Likewise, COP28 provides an opportunity to track what kind of space Chinese NGOs take in a larger civil society, domestic and global, and on discussions over the ways to tackle climate change. How to position Chinese NGOs among global actors, public and private, or their agendas among the numerous topics and approaches linked to climate in COP28? COP28 reveals which regions of the world are important in Chinese NGOs cooperation and which global discussions Chinese NGOs join. I am writing this proposal when the COP28 (and my observation of it) is still ongoing, but several key themes of the WG1 already stand out, including NGO responses to polycrisis, authoritarian impact to civil society, and South-South cooperation.

### **The Role of Yemeni Tribes in Post-conflict Peacebuilding**

Adel Dashela

**Abstract:** The majority of Yemen's population are tribes. Historically, the Yemeni tribe has significantly contributed to local-national reconciliations and influenced the social and political landscape of the country. Hence, the role of Yemeni tribes in post-conflict peacebuilding is crucial, as they play a significant part in shaping the country's security and social fabric. In this context, this paper highlights the tribes' role in peacebuilding and how

they can be absorbed into state institutions so that it could be essential for the long-term process of state-building. Research problem: The tribes can play a decisive role in resolving the conflict and participating in achieving a just peace if they get support from the political parties. Thus, the study aims to fill the gaps in knowledge and policies regarding the role of the tribes in peacebuilding. Study questions: The paper addresses these crucial questions: what are the challenges and future scenarios of the Yemeni conflict? What is the tribes' role in peacebuilding and national reconciliation? How can tribal norms be used for peacebuilding? Theoretical framework: There is a focus on the tribes' role in the conflict and ignoring the reasons that led them to engage in military conflicts. In addition to this, there is a lack of concentration on their significant role in peacebuilding and national reconciliation due to several difficulties, including logistical and methodological ones. This paper seeks to provide a clear vision of the tribes' role in peacebuilding. Also, it uses the historical approach to clarify the tribe's previous contributions to national reconciliations. Objectives of the paper include clarifying the role of the tribes in peacebuilding; to show how tribal sheiks have historically played a role in conflict resolution; to highlight how tribes can act as mediators in the current conflict; to describe how the tribal customs and traditions can contribute to lasting peace; to explain the importance of absorbing the tribes into state institutions during the post-conflict period, whether in the parliamentary, Shura Council, or local councils.

### **Political parallelism in times of pandemic: Covid-19 in the Tanzanian mainstream press in 2020-2022**

Judith Kahamba, University of Jyväskylä; Tiina Kontinen, University of Jyväskylä; Emmanuel Elia, University of Dar es Salaam

**Abstract:** Research in political communication has predominantly focused on contexts with some varieties of liberal democracy and comparatively strong freedom of press, which is considered one of the cornerstones of civic space. However, there have been increasing calls to analyze and re-theorize political communication in non-Eurocentric and non-liberal political systems. In response, this article investigates the ways in which newspaper reporting reflects narratives of government and President in hybrid political contexts such as Tanzania with electoral democracy but practically one ruling party. This is done based on an example of newspaper reporting on Covid-19 in Tanzania, known as one of the countries where general lockdown was never issued and as a nation declared Covid-19 free in the early stages of the pandemic. The paper investigates the ways in which mainstream newspaper reporting followed the changing official narrative over the period of 2020-2022. Based on a content analysis of 3381 articles in two newspapers, the paper explores the sources of information and contextual frames used, how these were connected, and changed over time. The findings are then discussed in relations to the political regime changes and other events that took place during the pandemic. The findings show how newspapers reported in alignment with the official narratives and events, even if changing narrative, rather than providing multiple perspectives or science-based knowledge on the Covid-19 pandemic. The paper adds to understanding of the dynamics on the role of mainstream media in shaping the civic space in non-Eurocentric political system.

### **Black feminist and anti-racist activism: Past and present of struggles for racial justice in Cuba**

Aracely Rodríguez Malagón, Institute of Philosophy, Havana; Eija Ranta, University of Helsinki



**Abstract:** The Cuban Revolution as a social project has had, and still has, many pending issues, one of them being the recognition and incorporation of the different forms of social activism to the process of construction of Cuban socialism. In recent decades, a new activism has been emerging from anti-racist collectives, feminist groups, and LGBTQIA+ activists, among others, mainly aimed at the defense and recognition of the rights of women, Afro-descendants, and sexual and gender minorities, and the incorporation of subaltern persons into society as socially active subjects. We analyze the past and present of black feminist thought, the role of anti-racist feminist activists in Cuban society, and the extent to which the Cuban State recognizes – or does not – the contribution of feminist and anti-racist collectives to the socialist project. Furthermore, we examine how the contribution of Afro-descendant feminist activism has affected government programs. We argue for the importance of the decolonizing search for a more just, equal, and democratic society in which the contributions made by anti-racist and feminist activists are essential. We demonstrate that public institutions often appropriate and ignore the achievements, ideas, and proposals of activists, thus delegitimizing activism.

## Working Group 2: Development towards an unequal future? Rethinking development for a fair future

**Chair(s):** Young Scholars Initiative (YSI)

In a decoupling world, where inequality continues rising and enduring challenges like poverty and environmental degradation reaching critical points, it is imperative to reevaluate the developmental paradigms and strategies for the future. For this purpose, the YSI Working Groups on Development and Inequality invite young scholars working on the fields of inequality and development to present their innovative research findings and theoretical developments that contribute to reimagining the future of development within an increasingly complex landscape. We enthusiastically welcome submissions from postgraduate and early career researchers that explore a wide spectrum of themes, including but not limited to:

- Critical appraisals of conventional development methodologies and the urgency for alternative approaches.
- Innovative strategies for mitigating poverty and inequality, encompassing social safety nets, participatory development models, and community-driven initiatives.
- The intricate interplay between inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation and their profound implications for the developmental agenda.

We encourage prospective authors to adopt a critical and heterodox perspective towards development, drawing upon diverse disciplinary lenses such as economics, sociology, political science, and development studies. Moreover, we eagerly anticipate contributions that amplify the voices and experiences of marginalized communities and societal segments.

### *Presentations*

#### **Platform cooperatives as a complementary strategy for empowering vulnerable platform workers (in person)**

Gabriël van Rosmalen, Utrecht University

**Abstract:** This paper delves into the challenges confronted by platform workers in the digital economy within the context of rising inequality and enduring challenges like poverty and a lack of livelihood. Digital labor platforms, such as Uber and Deliveroo, often leave workers in precarious and vulnerable positions, lacking the benefits afforded to traditional employees. The EU has embarked on a mission to address this issue by reclassifying the employment status of platform workers. However, this paper questions the effectiveness of this forthcoming legislation, as research shows how platform companies have shown adeptness at circumventing regulations, thereby maintaining inequality. In response to the limitations of reclassification, the paper advocates for a more comprehensive solution: platform worker cooperatives. Platform worker cooperatives empower workers to set the rules and conditions of their work, ensuring fair compensation and flexibility in defining their employment status. Research has indicated that worker cooperatives can rival capitalist firms in productivity, generate jobs, and grow effectively, providing a positive path forward for addressing the inequality platform workers struggle with. However, the establishment and scaling of platform cooperatives face significant barriers, from access to capital to competition with established platforms. This paper highlights a missed opportunity in the EU legislative process,

where platform cooperatives are given limited attention. Member states and local governments can play a vital role in promoting these cooperatives by providing economic support, improving infrastructure, enhancing legal frameworks, and offering political support. The European Union's reclassification efforts are a positive step, but they may not provide a comprehensive solution to the systemic challenges within the platform economy. This paper argues that the inclusion of platform cooperatives is crucial to fundamentally address and reform the power distributions in the platform economy.

**A voice to the voiceless refugees with Disabilities and language divide in terms of accessing braille and Rohingya-friendly sign language through an inclusive justice system (in person)**

Natasha Israt Kabir, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

**Abstract:** This study aimed to describe how persecuted, abused refugees with disabilities experience a lack of legal process, a process that includes being included by the camp authority and actors during the preliminary investigation and meeting other professionals from various agencies under the sheer negligence of their caregivers and parents to report it. Method: Face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted with 83 caregivers—parents—whose children with disabilities could be under the potential threat of being the survivors of child sexual abuse.

**Occupational Segregation and Wage Differentiation by Race in the Brazilian Labor Market (online)**

Rafaella Pereira Prandi

**Abstract:** The study delves into occupational segregation and wage disparities within the black population in the Brazilian labor market, focusing on two theories: devaluation and queue. The devaluation theory suggests that employers set lower salaries for jobs where minorities predominate, while the queue theory posits that racial minorities are hired for already poorly paid positions. Chosen due to extensive international literature and limited national research, the objective is to identify the dominant theory during the selected period. The research utilizes data from the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD Contínua) by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and the Censuses of 1980, 1991, and 2000. The aim is to correlate salaries with occupations, considering racial distinctions. Nationally, despite the black population constituting slightly over half of the workforce (54.9%), they accounted for about two-thirds of the unemployed (64.2%) and underutilized (66.1%) in 2018. Additionally, 47.3% of individuals of black or mixed race were in informal occupations, compared to 34.6% of employed individuals of white race, as indicated by the IBGE study (2018). Internationally, research by Kmec (2003) underscores that jobs predominantly held by black and Latino individuals pay less per hour than those held by whites. Huffman (2004) demonstrates systematic segregation of blacks into jobs with disproportionate black representation in the USA. Catanzarite (2003) discusses the concentration of minority groups in specific occupations and its impact on the wages of all workers, irrespective of whether wages influence minority concentration or both processes are in effect. Salvatore (2019) contributes sociological insights into racial/ethnic inequality and labor markets. Understanding these theories and the connection between occupation and income is pivotal for comprehending the reasons behind racial wage inequalities in the

labor market. It provides a foundation for designing public policies aimed at mitigating these disparities, addressing the pressing need for a more equitable and inclusive workforce.

### Working Group 3: Ecological Restoration Through Tree Planting in the Global South—A Means of Achieving Climate Justice or Greening Extractivism?

**Panelists:** Risto Isomäki, Author; Hanna Matinpuro, Executive Director, Siemenpuu Foundation; Johan Slätis, Amazonian Managed Forests Expert, National University of Brasilia; Maria Ehrnström-Fuentes, Hanken School of Economics, Management and Organization; Markus Kröger, Global Development Studies, University of Helsinki

**Panel Facilitators:** Ossi Ollinaho, University of Helsinki, Global Development Studies; Sophia Hagolani-Albov, University of Helsinki, Global Development Studies

**Panel Topic:** We warmly welcome you to join us for a panel dialogue focused on ecological restoration through the lens of tree planting. Ecological restoration is an important emerging topic in debates on the mitigation and governance of climate and ecological crises. This panel dialogue will examine the multiple meanings associated with ecological restoration, including the socio-political dimensions, and interlinkages to tree planting activities in the global South. To provide an overview of ecological restoration, we will present three overarching themes: (1) the historical background and the multiple definitions associated with ecological restoration; (2) green extractivisms and manifestations of the politics and financialization of the climate/biodiversity crisis; (3) restoration as a form of socioecological transformation, highlighting the circumstances wherein planting trees contributes to achieving true climate justice. Ecological restoration—yet another concept full of promises—serves as a lens through which the assumptions and aspirations related to development in the global South can be scrutinized and critically examined in the age of ‘polycrisis’. We will discuss how ecological restoration can be assessed along a continuum—from a continuation of (green) extractivisms to a true transformative alternative, which contributes to more just socioecological futures. We intend to delve into the potential of the associated developmental processes and policies, especially within the confines of the current Finnish government and their role and relations to ecological restoration practices in the global South.

**Panel Agenda:** This panel will feature experts on ecological restoration, extractivisms, and tree planting schemes from an array of disciplinary backgrounds in conversation with policy actors (panelists to be announced). The panel discussion will begin with short interventions by each of the invited panelists followed by a chair facilitated dialogue with the panelists. The session will conclude with a robust question and answer period with the audience participants focused on bringing a variety of voices into the dialogue space. This session will be highly relevant for anyone who is interested in the interplay of ecological restoration, tree planting, extractivisms, and development.

## Working Group 4: Challenges of Women in Developing Frontiers

**Chair:** Diana Figueroa, Free University Berlin

Rural, urban, indigenous and afro- women in developing countries experience various forms of violence, including economic violence. Most women in developing countries work in the informal economy, where access to social services is limited at best. Compared to their male counterparts, their access to credit is also constrained. Additionally, women spend more hours than men doing unpaid work. Nevertheless, women have also demonstrated a very strong capacity for positively intervening in their local context. Identifying the multifaceted role that women play in sustaining households, communities and the environment will shed light on alternative sources of value and their contributions to this process. Frontier regions in developing countries have been characterized as sacrifice zones for many reasons. In addition to the institutional marginalization to which they are subjected, in these regions the state, the TNCs, among other actors legitimize and make invisible the suffering of the locals and the degradation of the land at the expense of an economy based on the export of commodities. This dynamic is present in the extraction of fossil fuels, agricultural commodities and critical minerals necessary for the transition towards green energy. This workshop aims to explore the challenges faced by women in the frontier regions of developing countries. We will explore the impact of extractivist development on frontier regions and the fundamental but ignored role of women's work in this process. By recognizing the central role that women play through their care work in their household, their communities and the environment, we can understand how women's labor and reproductive work are downplayed by an extractivist logic. We strive to build a network of scholars of different career levels and from different subfields and neighboring disciplines who relate to the above issues in original and cross-fertilizing ways. Workshop participants will discuss the extent of gender differences resulting from the persistence of the extractivist logic. Also, they will examine to what extent a commodity-export based economy fails to address the value of women's daily practices and reinforces or increases inequalities. Thus, the emphasis on the "frontier" will provide us with a more comprehensive basis for assessing gender equality programs at both the local and global levels.

### *Presentations*

#### **Paths to Progress: Considerations on the Way Forward in International Support for Women's Rights in Tigray**

Hannah Brüggemann, Leipzig University

**Abstract:** In the wake of the severe humanitarian crisis in Tigray in northern Ethiopia as a result of the armed conflict, this article addresses often overlooked systemic factors that perpetuate a system of vulnerability, particularly among marginalized populations. Using the specific example of the gold mines in Tigray, it explores the impact of the extraction industry on women and the consequences for their adaptive capacity and recovery in conflict and post-conflict situations. The peculiarities of Tigray as a border region exacerbate this situation. A critical perspective on human rights offers implications for national and international actors in the endeavor to safeguard human rights. Critically assessing the inadequate allocation of

resources and targeted measures in Tigray, the article calls for a reassessment of development policies to address pressing issues such as sexualized violence.

### **Understanding Indigenous Women's Resistance in the Coal Mine of Cerrejón in La Guajira, Colombia**

Mariana Eugenia Rivas Salazar, Free University Berlin

**Abstract:** This article explores the multifaceted challenges faced by women in the extractivist landscape, focusing on the Carbones del Cerrejón coal mine in La Guajira, Colombia. Centered around the Wayuu indigenous community, this investigation shows how women-led resistance navigates intersectional challenges amidst geographical, gender, and cultural frontiers imposed by the mining project. The Wayuu's ancestral territory faces environmental degradation, disrupting indigenous traditions. This research emphasizes the intricate interplay of environmental justice, indigenous rights, and gender equity, calling for a paradigm shift and collective action toward sustainable alternatives in the face of emerging green extractivism.

### **Community Feminism in Bolivia: Women's Resistance to Gold Mining Extractivism**

Mariela Lucía Castro, Georg-August-University Goettingen

**Abstract:** This study focuses on the Vilcabamba - Amboró Conservation Corridor, a border area between Bolivia and Peru, where women have been organizing as community feminists for more than a decade to resist the modern patriarchal apparatus. Highlighting the gendered impacts of mining on women, such as environmental pollution, economic opportunities and violence, and the challenges faced by women in the region, the responsibility of family work, the lack of access to healthcare and education, and the restricted property rights to their land and bodies. It explores women's fields of action and potential in defending territory/land and territory/body and emphasizes the need to develop a new conceptual framework that acknowledges the existence of multiple worlds without essentializing women's indigenous knowledge.

## Working Group 5: Reflections on views of global responsibility — Finding tools to bridging divides

**Chairs:** Meeri Tiensuu, PhD researcher, Tampere University; Inka Havanto, Specialist for International Cooperation and Global Citizenship Education, YMCA Finland

**Abstract:** The main objective of this workshop is to address and shed light on the following questions: Why do we need a shared sense of global responsibility? What is my role: how can I participate in building global citizenship and hinder the polarization around the topic? We invite the participants to explore the possible future actions that should be pursued to foster a shared sense of global responsibility. According to the Youth Barometer 2021, 85-94% of 15–29-year-old Finns consider it important that Finland acts internationally e.g. to build peace and everyone has access to school. At the same time, the latest opinion poll on Finnish perceptions of development cooperation reveals a growing divide in Finnish society regarding global responsibility and international development. Although the majority of Finns consider humanitarian aid and development cooperation to be important, more and more critical views of international development cooperation are emerging. The divide in opinion is particularly evident when looking at differences based on gender, education level and political party support: e.g. 80% of women and 46% of men considered development cooperation important. This result could be seen as indicative of a broader attitude to global responsibility. Against this background, we have recognized a crisis: A lack of common commitment to global solidarity. In this workshop, we bring together professionals in development cooperation and communications, development research and global citizenship education to discuss and reflect on the increasing polarization of global responsibility. We will delve into the factors that contribute to this growing divide among people and explore how to bridge this gap. As an outcome, we aim to find tools and identify collaborations for a more inclusive way of working towards and discussing global responsibility. Please note that this participatory workshop welcomes all interested participants to collectively brainstorm and explore the concept of global responsibility. There are no requirements for participation, however, we kindly ask you to register for the sake of planning the session. The chairs of the session will facilitate the participatory activities, aiming to collectively discover practical ways to contribute the shared perspectives on global responsibility.



## Working Group 6: Political imagination of development

**Chair:** Eeva Mäkinen, University of Lapland

Political research on development has tended to focus on development as an object or tool of power, ranging from its historically exploitative nature to its neocolonial relations. The concept of development has been haunted by the question “What is development?” due to limitation of the ontological tools available to analysis; that ‘development’, as the theoretical stumbling block, reflects some of the limits inherent in the ways in which development theories have approached the question that totalize the object of development as a problem to be solved. This intentional view of development, as something to be achieved with specific end goals and means, may distract, or keep development in an apolitical cage of exploring additional dimensions of how we may understand new ways or forms of political thought of development. This raises questions of political autonomy of development, as well as rethinking or formulating politics of development beyond traditional paradigms of development. The working group welcomes papers in optional form (e.g., research proposals, idea papers, manuscripts) from a variety of perspectives that deal with the question of political imagination of development.

### *Presentations*

#### **The Trojan Horse of Development? – Examination of Finnish Development Policy and its Hidden Consequences in Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia**

Ilmari Huotari, University of Helsinki

**Abstract:** This dissertation proposes to explore the evolution of Finnish development policy and practice through Finnish-funded water management development cooperation projects in East-Africa from the beginning of 1970s’ to late 2010s’. The work critically examines several aspects within the projects conducted in Tanzania, Kenya, and Ethiopia, giving the most attention to gender component, community participation component, commodification of water resources and the expansion of capitalist frontier through “forced markets”. Indeed, exploring the spreading of the individualistic and capitalist world view using the community as a vessel of this kind of development in the center of this dissertation. The research examines the Finnish development policy and practice through archival material and intertwines this data to real-life impact on the target area’s experience as well as the experience of development practitioners. In other words, what was meant to be done, and what was in fact done? What kind of development Finland has been looking to provide to Global South? Whose development Finland has been producing and on who’s terms? By emphasizing the key policy changes, this research aims to trace the evolution of Finnish water-related development cooperation and thus to uncover patterns, successes, and challenges in sustainable water-related development cooperation and its desired and/or unintended byproducts. The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the institutional setting that Finland has implemented, of course without neglecting the local realities on the project areas. The end product thus will be indeed composed of diverse archival material, interviews with development practitioners and local “beneficiaries”. Implementing a theoretical thought that explores the complex dynamics of markets shaped by external factors, such as policy interventions, will bring depth and new perspective to this kind of research on development.

### Why developmentalism matters for ending VAW in Pakistan?

Suvi Baloch

In the past few decades, developmentalism has lost its status as almost a taken-for-granted theoretical paradigm in academic inquiries into 'development'. The shift owes largely to critical theorizing from the Global South, as well as to the destructive effects of 'development'. Yet, in this paper to be, I argue that developmentalism may still be highly relevant as a political resource in complex postcolonial realities. I think from my master's thesis, "This is democracy in action": Critical discourse analysis on women's rights organizations' approaches to ending VAW in Pakistan", which I'm in the process of turning into an article. The work is therefore empirically anchored in feminist activism and advocacy within community groups, NGOs, and government agencies in urban Pakistan. Amongst the rights groups, VAW and its supposed fixes are constructed by reference to three developmental trajectories rooted in 'human rights developmentalism'. Evidently, this ideological basis raises a valid decolonial-postcolonial critique on a macroscale, i.e. the question whether the organizations merely function as part of the development apparatus and entrench global inequalities. However, I argue that developmentalist discourses are cultivated in Pakistani women's rights organizations for they constitute a locally meaningful counterforce to state endorsed misogyny. The study shows how local contexts inform the politics of development, making 'development' far from an apolitical notion. It captures how 'development' works at the micro-scale, and the difficulty it poses to decolonial aspirations; the civilizational ethos renews its skin not only through a linguistic limbo, but also because it is so embedded in contemporary social relations.

### Ontological politics of freedom and imagination

Eeva Mäkinen, University of Lapland

**Abstract:** This PhD research studies political thought of imagination. The objective of the research is to study political freedom and imagination as an ontological processual concept. The specific focus on imagination in this research takes its cue from a common critique of reason and epistemologies in development and postcolonial studies as foundational components of homogenization entrenched since the beginning of modernity of the Enlightenment. However, imagination has received less attention even though it was considered a creative faculty already in ancient Greek philosophy before its golden age of romanticism and Enlightenment. A study on imagination and its relation to the production of political thought aims to move beyond a deconstructive analysis of decolonization from the western episteme towards an investigation of affirmative political freedom through an ontological space of imagination. This delineates the investigation on political thought beyond its limitations to representational reason and capitalism towards a search for a productive political gesture of imagination.

### Gender equality in Finnish foreign and development policy – why, what and how?

Milma Kettunen, University of Lapland

**Abstract:** The promotion of gender equality and the status of women has been an integral part of Finland's foreign and development policy for decades. The view of Finland as a

promoter of gender equality is repeated in government programs, other documents guiding foreign and development policy, as well as in parliamentary debates. However, this high-level consensus on the promotion of gender equality conceals different goals, contradictions and ambiguities. This becomes evident, for example, in the comparison of recent government programs. In my own research, I will study how Finnish and Tanzanian MPs understand and justify the promotion of gender equality. I will also interview Tanzanian women whose lives are ultimately affected by Finland's foreign policy through e.g. development cooperation. In this first part of my study, my aim is to find out what MPs who are behind the Finnish policies think about the promotion of gender equality in foreign policy. Why do they think Finland should act for the rights of women and girls internationally? What themes and means should be emphasized? How does Finland relate to the countries in which the foreign policy is implemented: what kind of understanding of "development" does the work for equality imply – does it actually build a division between "us" and the racialized "them", the powerless victims of the third world? (Jauhola & Lytikäinen 2020, Mohanty 1992) And how does Finland's foreign policy relate to the feminist foreign policy practiced by many of Finland's peers, such as Canada or Spain? In my paper I wish to draw together recent research on feminist foreign policy and link it with the MP interviews that I aim to do during spring 2024.

## Working Group 7: Green transition—pathway for equal and just planetary futures?

**Conveyors:** Ilona Steiler, Marjaana Jauhola – Tampere Peace Research Institute, Tampere University, Satu Sundström, EnVi(ro)Care

Green transition has created high hopes for sustainable futures, but also raised fears, confirmed by concrete current examples, of new forms of conflict, violence, and exclusion. Green transition appears to intensify existing divisions and inequalities. For example, the negative consequences of increasing demand for natural resources and commodification of the environment, frontier extractivism, land acquisitions, soil degradation, and loss of biodiversity particularly affect indigenous populations and people in the global South, who are often excluded from debates and decision-making regarding sustainable development. Green transition further exacerbates social and class divisions within societies regarding the affordability of ‘green’ lifestyles and the distribution of costs of green politics. At the same time, geographically distant conflicts and (hidden) violence are often entangled with motivations to contribute to better futures and ethics of care, for instance, in the production and consumption of natural fibers as alternatives to plastic, or in struggles for food/seed/soil sovereignty. Thus, green transition also raises questions of representation, voice, and social inclusion of peasants, migrants, workers, and people with low incomes struggling for livelihoods.

### *Presentations*

#### **An exploratory Study: Impact of Green Transition on Labor Markets in Developing Nations - A Case Study of Morocco**

Abdelmalek Azzouzi, University of Moulay Ismail; Yassine Ismaili, University of Moulay Ismail

**Abstract:** In recent times, Morocco has encountered a sequence of significant crises, encompassing the 2008 financial downturn, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the conflict in Ukraine. These occurrences have exacerbated the nation's susceptibility to climate variations, persistent environmental deterioration, and its reliance on energy due to fossil fuel scarcity, resulting in adverse effects on economic growth and employment rates. Consequently, Morocco has embraced the concept of a green and inclusive economy, aiming to enhance long-term human well-being, mitigate social inequalities, and safeguard the environment for future generations. In order to comprehend more comprehensively the challenges and opportunities associated with this transition towards a green economy and the promotion of green jobs, an exploratory and comparative study of international practices was conducted. The principal aim was to evaluate the repercussions of this transition on the Moroccan labor market. The conclusions drawn accentuate three pivotal elements:

- Limited references and strategies for creating sustainable short-term jobs, particularly in developing countries.
- Job creation in this sector demands substantial investments and a convergence of medium and long-term macroeconomic policies to foster a conducive environment, while encouraging local initiatives to overcome market-specific hurdles.

- Nonetheless, international indicators demonstrate the robustness and sustainability of green job creation processes when diverse labor market stakeholders maintain regular communication and coordinate their actions systematically.

**“Natural” does not imply that it is fair and sustainable: approaches to the artisanal work of bamboo and ecological care**

Violeta Gutiérrez Zamora, Natural Resources Institute Finland, Luonnonvarakeskus (LUKE)

**Abstract:** Over the past 25 years, scientists, engineers and designers from various industries have shifted their focus toward finding, innovating and incorporating renewable materials into their production processes. Natural materials and fibers, such as bamboo, rattan, jute and sisal, have re-emerged as bioeconomic solutions for everyday use. Especially there is a growing global interest in using bamboo as economically valuable non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and nature-based materials. Bamboo, among other NTFPs, has been recognized for supporting the livelihoods of rural communities in tropical and subtropical forests, providing both subsistence and income generation. In recent years, the uses of bamboo have expanded to include renewable and biodegradable materials, which has led to increased demand in global industries such as new textiles and bioplastics. International intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have promoted several initiatives to improve the sustainable management of bamboo and add value to commodity chains under the frameworks of sustainable development and green economy transitions. This context of global demand and international interventions turns out to be fertile ground to investigate how bamboo and the work for its transformation is valued, not only economically but also culturally, aesthetically and ecologically at different scales and geographies. Drawing upon a feminist political ecology approach the manuscript focuses and raises question over how artisanal work and ecological care are interrelated in sustainable development projects carried out in Lao PDR. Theoretically, I take as a departure point the recent discussions within feminist political ecology that have urged scholars to consider the relations between human labor, subjectivity and material matter in socio-ecological relations and practices. However, my methodological and theoretical perspective is deeply involved with an anti-colonial praxis where Other forms of being, knowing, and creating in technology and art are recognized as contributions of theoretical formation. By taking an anti-colonial perspective, the research examines critical research questions over the distribution of labor, recognition of values and representation in decision making in bamboo craftsmanship.

**Urban Mining: the dark side of the circular economy? (work in progress)**

Paul Jonker-Hoffrén, Tampere University

**Abstract:** The European use of concrete in urban and industrial construction is a major source of emissions. Technically, there is not necessarily a restriction on the reuse of concrete, because existing tests and regulations can help ascertain the reusability of concrete. At the scale of individual buildings, reuse of concrete has great potential to reduce the emissions of GHGs. However, at a broader geographical scale, such as the city or region, “harvesting” concrete (and other materials) for reuse might have significant social and political dimensions. The moniker “urban development” of “urban restructuring” often involves demolition of real estate. Increasingly, cities and regions have adopted declarations on the need of urban mining to fulfill (local) climate objectives. The assumption often is that material flows from urban

mining, through circular (construction) economy processes help the local entity to reduce its overall emissions. However, demolition of especially housing often involves a variety of political, technical, and economic reasons. Tenants often do not have a large say in such decisions, especially when urban areas with many social-economic problems are concerned (Jonker-Hoffrén 2023). Land and real estate ownership are decisive. Urban mining is therefore a fashionable concept with potentially severe consequences for inhabitants with a weaker social and political position. In the name of a greater good (emission reduction through circular economy) their right to adequate housing could be threatened, resulting in forced relocation or higher costs of housing. In this context it is important to problematize the concept of urban mining and connect it to representation in local decision making. Failure to do so may result in weakening support for the green transition – in Europe and elsewhere.

### **The Andean zinc rush: Green extractivism and climate vulnerabilities in the Peruvian highland waterscapes**

Anna Heikkinen, University of Helsinki

**Abstract:** Zinc is becoming an essential green mineral as it is increasingly required for manufacturing of low-carbon technology. This demand has been promoted by the Global North led green policies to mitigate impacts of climate change. However, at the same time expanding zinc mining risks further entrenching existing climate-related vulnerabilities in fragile socio-ecological environments such as the Peruvian highlands. This paper analyses the linkages between the accelerated green extractivism of zinc and experienced water-related climate vulnerabilities in the Cunas watershed in the Central highlands of Peru. The analysis focuses particularly on recently re-opened Azulcocha zinc mine in the Cunas highlands, and its socio-ecological effects on the local waterscapes amidst climate change. The analysis draws on political ecology approach to green extractivism and vulnerability to disentangle the multi-scalar power dynamics embedded in the global climate agenda, accelerated green extractivism and (re)production of climate-related vulnerabilities in the expanding resource frontiers. Using ethnographic methods and documentary review, the study focuses on the multiple interrelations between (re)emerging zinc mining, climate change and related policies, and the ways the residents perceive these shifts in their lived environments. The study shows the urgent need to rethink the global proposals for tackling climate change in a way that they do not (re)produce climate-related vulnerabilities in already marginalized waterscapes in the Andean region and elsewhere in the Global South.

### **Green transition in the Sámi area - Sápmi and the Well-being of the Sámi Indigenous People**

Kukka Ranta, University of Lapland

**Abstract:** The Indigenous People Sámi have multiple burdens to carry. Over the past centuries and decades, every region and generation in traditional Sámi territories have had their own experiences of forced assimilation and loss of lands. Current generations are still trying to adapt their culture to the environmental changes that occurred during previous generations, which is further complicated by the new challenges brought by climate change. Traditional lands and Sámi livelihoods are threatened by new growing industrial land use pressures under the Europe's new growth strategy of Green Deal. In my paper, based on my PhD research work in progress, I present what green transition looks like in the traditional Sami lands with case examples. I find out what a just transition means from indigenous rights viewpoint and

ask what kind of challenges the "green" energy transition means for the Sámi from the perspective of settler colonialism. States and companies are boosting investments in the green transition with extensive land use plans. At the same time, debate, and regulations on climate justice in relation to indigenous rights are only at the beginning. How does the fast-moving industrial development effect the rights and well-being of the Sámi Indigenous People? Ultimately, my paper opens a debate on how legal frameworks configure the relations between green transition and indigenous rights.

### **Seeing Like an E-Platform: Imaginations of Green Commodities and Labor in Etsy**

Ilona Steiler, Tampere University; Marjaana Jauhola, Tampere University; Violeta Gutierrez-Zamora, violeta.gutierrez.zamora@luke.fi; Satu Sundström, Tampere University

**Abstract:** Can we save the world by consuming green commodities? Attempts to change our lifestyles and patterns of consumption, and production, are multiplying, following global calls for green transition and sustainable development. Green commodities are offered as responses to violent and extractivist practices, and their disastrous human and environmental consequences. The online marketplaces, organized via digital platforms such as Facebook or eBay, connect conscious consumers with small-scale producers, offering to by-pass unsustainable and exploitative global supply chains. At the same time, digital platforms act as hidden intermediaries, steering production, labor and consumption according to platform company rationales and algorithms. In this paper we analyze Etsy, a platform described as low threshold access, ethical e-commerce site (Krug 2014) through which one can buy and sell hand-crafted, unique, and sustainable products (Johnson 2021) but also analyzed as a marketplace that creates new forms of gendered unpaid labor, that is digital labor and domestic work (Jourdain 2021). We use netnography to study date palm and bamboo products, with attention to the entanglement of care and violence, and social reproduction. We address the narrative of technological innovations for a green future, or supportive of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and raise the critical questions of: how are relations of care and of production (including human-non-human relations) established and presented on Etsy?; to what extent do platforms such as Etsy render exploitative structures (in)visible by creating new forms of 'domesticity' (Matchar 2013)?

### **Environmental, social and legal contradictions of green energy transition in Quid-e-Azam solar power project, Pakistan**

Usman Ashraf, University of Helsinki

**Abstract:** Chinese investments in coal power in Pakistan under the Belt and Road Initiative drew a lot of criticism from multiple environmental groups. The push for more greener energy sources culminated in Quid-e-Azam Solar Power Project (QASP). The project constructed in Cholistan desert is spread over more than 600 acres and hosts about 1.6 million solar modules. This research using green extractivism framework highlights the environmental, social and legal contradictions of the solar power project. The analysis show that the solar power project is situated inside Lal Sunhra national park → established to protect Chinkara deer, Caracal and Houbara bustard. In addition, bi-monthly 124 million liters of water is required for washing the panels to remove high quantity of sand deposited because of desert geography. This reveals the contradictory nature of green energy transition in which green energy has precedence over other environmental objectives namely biodiversity and water

conservation. Socially, the nomadic herders of Cholistan are displaced and their access to land and pastures has been cut off, hence threatening their livelihoods. Legally, the land acquisition act of Pakistan under which the national park was established in 1970s does not allow any use other than designated i.e. conservation. In contrast, the land has been leased to private for-profit companies at an exorbitantly low price of 1\$/acre/annum. The research concludes by showing multiple contradictions of green transition narrative in which certain 'green' projects are preferred though at the same time these projects are a threat to biodiversity and water conservation as well as social justice.



### **Working Group 8: “Students Against Cuts” activist forum**

The Student Association of Global Development Studies (Kehitystutkimuksen opiskelijat ry) organizes and moderates an activist forum with representatives from the nation-wide Students Against Cuts movement in Finland. Keho ry invites participants from campuses around Finland to discuss the occupations, their motivations and objectives, as well as the outcomes of the movement in a panel discussion at the Development Days Conference 2024. The forum will touch upon the contemporary challenges that students in Finland and elsewhere face during a time of global interconnectedness, e.g., the growing insecurity of student livelihoods, the increasing indebtedness of students, lack of affordable student housing, the discriminatory policy gaps between international and Finnish / EU / ETA students. Our panelists are activists who have played a central part in the nation-wide mobilization of students and have first-hand experience of community-based efforts to affect change. Activists will also be given the opportunity to share their personal experiences during the occupations on different campuses. This event will offer listeners an opportunity to reflect on the role of institutions, such as universities and academia in general, in grassroots movements and the loci for solidarity that these movements present.

## Working Group 9: Master's Workshop—Navigating the road to completion

The Finnish Society for Development Research (FSDR) and Finnish University Partnerships for International Development (UniPID) warmly welcome master's students to a Master's thesis workshop organized as part of the Development Days Conference 2024.

**Objective:** This workshop aims to guide master's students to identify and address challenges encountered during writing a thesis, while fostering a collaborative environment that enables them to deliver constructive critics and feedback on their peers' research papers. The master's workshop is designed for students currently engaged in the writing process as well as for those who are about to start their thesis writing soon. However, as in the workshop we will focus on thesis abstracts, it is a prerequisite that participants have a coherent idea for their thesis.

All master's students are invited to participate. Diversity in the level of studies and stage of thesis completion is encouraged to facilitate networking and peer-to-peer learning. The workshop is free of charge and will last for two hours and 45 minutes. The participants can join the workshop in person or online. The workshop is facilitated by Martta Kaskinen and Violeta Gutiérrez. Additionally, some semifinalists of the UniPID Master's Award 2023 will be participating and contributing to the workshop.

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