

Workshop: Decolonise development cooperation and aid

March, 15, 2023, 10:00 – 13:00 (CET), Albert Schweitzer Haus, Vienna

The debate about “decolonise development” has been inspired by post-colonialism and post-development theories over decades. This critical perspective on development and aid did not always reach the development institutions and organisations in the Global North. Western-framed development cooperation and aid are therefore more and more challenged by critical intellectuals, anti-racist movements and diaspora communities from the Global South. While some development and aid organizations in Europe have already addressed the criticism of the "white gaze and savior image", the debate in Austria seems to be still at its beginning.

Institutions and organizations from the Global North should acknowledge the different preconditions for cooperation. They should reflect and acknowledge the fact that the European colonial legacy, white supremacy, and racism continue to frame the global system in which they operate. Furthermore, critics point out that the development and aid systems themselves perpetuate forms of economic and financial dependency. The Global South is often constructed as a place of crisis and vulnerability, whose people are defined as beneficiaries rather than acting subjects. Without recognition of historical injustices, unequal power relations, local perspectives and knowledge, development cooperation and aid are in danger of remaining inefficient and paternalistic.

The workshop will bring together practitioners and intellectuals from the developmental and aid sector, diaspora and guests from the Global South, to explore forms of more equal collaboration.

Guiding questions:

- What are colonial or racist aspects within the prevailing development and aid models and practices?
- Can development cooperation and aid be decolonized at all or will it remain the “soft power” of an hegemonic European structure and white supremacy?
- Will "green capitalism" lead to another form of imperial extractivism?
- What can we learn from solidary practices of the climate justice movement?
- What are forms of just and innovative cooperation?
- Are there role models of transcontinental partnership and what is the role of the African diaspora?

Brief inputs

Grace Atuhaire is a poet, freelance writer and social justice activist. She is a member of Africans Rising and FemWise Africa.

Mutemi wa Kiama is a community organiser with Kongamano La Mapinduzi, a social and political movement in Kenya. He is part of the Africans Rising Coordinating Collective, the network’s management board.

Alexander Behr is a political scientist, journalist and author of the book “Globale Solidarität”. He co-founded the Afrique-Europe-Interact network, which brings together West African and European grassroots movements.

more to follow....

Moderation: **Johanna Mang** is an environmental and development specialist. She serves as Board Member in leading environmental & development organisations.

Language: English

Limited number of participants! Please register:

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