



Social Change  
and  
Development  
in Africa  
Working Group

A stylized map of the African continent is positioned on the right side of the slide. It is composed of numerous overlapping triangles in various shades of blue, ranging from light to dark, creating a mosaic effect. The map is set against a dark blue background.

*Fall 2017 Symposium*

Conveners:  
Megan Cogburn, Cady Gonzalez, Marit Ostebo, Riley Ravary

# Revisiting Partnership for Development in Africa

25 September 2017  
University of Florida, Gainesville

## Symposium Theme

The symposium presents a multidisciplinary exploration of partnership in contemporary development initiatives in Africa. The concept of partnership emerged as an organizing principle for international development cooperation in the 1980s in an effort to move away from paternalistic and colonial legacies that characterized many early health and development interventions. Partnership as a normative ideal, discourse, and practice has, however, been debated and scrutinized. Studies of development “partnerships” reveal tensions among stakeholders about its meaning, about how it should be operationalized and whether it truly represents an alternative to previous paternalistic approaches to international development. Despite these challenges partnership has remained a key principle in international development and continues to be prioritized as both a key objective and approach to the realization of development in the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, as new development actors and transnational corporations have entered the development scene alternative forms of partnerships also have emerged, seen among others in the proliferation of public-private partnerships. How have these new aid-configurations shaped ideas and practices of partnerships for development in Africa? How do differently situated actors in the aid network perceive, experience, operationalize, navigate and negotiate their various partnerships? How does the global narrative on partnerships and aid architecture affect Africa?

# Symposium Schedule

- 9:00 – 9:15 **Welcome and Symposium Introduction**  
Brenda Chalfin, Director UF Center for African Studies  
Marit Ostebo, SCAD Working Group Faculty Sponsor
- 9:15 – 9:45 **Jon Harald Sande Lie, *Reproducing Aid Asymmetries Through Partnership***
- 9:45 – 10:15 **Stephen Kosack, *Attempting Partnership: Donors, Researchers, CSOs, and Citizens in the Transparency for Development Project***
- 10:15 – 10:45 **Reehana Raza, *Plurality of Voices in the Development Debate: Financing and Partnerships in the Think-tank and Research Community***
- 11:15 – 12:45 **Plenary Panel Discussion**  
**Chair: Renata Serra**  
**Felicien Masanga, “Take it or lose it: the problem of power imbalance in the partnership between international NGOs and local organizations in Eastern DRC”**  
**Sandra Russo, “Has the partnership approach in development done anything to empower local partners, especially African women?”**  
**Agnes Leslie, “China-Africa partnership: How Africa can benefit from China's agenda”**  
**Mark Musumba, “Reassessing the role of smallholder farmers in public-private partnership in Sub-Saharan Africa”**
- 12:45 – 1:00 **Closing Remarks**
- 1:00 – 1:30 **Light Refreshments**

# Abstracts

## **Jon Harald Sande Lie, *Reproducing aid asymmetries through partnership***

Why and how does the policy of partnership persist despite the practices it aims to direct seem to undermine the girding tenets of partnership? The concept of ‘partnership’ emerged as a way to alter inherent asymmetries in the aid relation between donor and recipient institution, seeking to turn top-heavy, donor driven approaches into more bottom-up and inclusive ones. Yet, after almost two decades where partnership has been the central organizing principle of aid, the power relation between donor and recipient institutions remains largely unaltered. Drawing on an ethnographic study of the World Bank–Uganda partnership, I demonstrate how the liberal tenets of partnership has been accompanied with a new set of indirect and tacit governance mechanisms that enable the donor institution to retain control. As such, the partnership discourse allows for an indirect form of governance (here conceived of as developmentality, akin to Foucault’s notion of governmentality) conditioned on the donor’s ability to make its own policies those of the recipient. This involved processes of responsabilization through which the aid recipient becomes accountable first and foremost to its donors for the choice and implementation of its own policies, thus – and more overarching – raising concern not only over post-colonial state formation processes but also issues of sovereignty.

## **Stephen Kosack, *Attempting Partnership: Donors, Researchers, CSOs, and Citizens in the Transparency for Development Project***

This presentation focuses on how partnership is operationalized and what it means to “try to take it seriously.” I discuss the role of transparency and participation in the consequences of development partnerships through six design principles of partnership building: 1) co-design; 2) a focus on health, not health services; 3) seeking relevance for a range of local problems; 4) allowing the communities to ‘drive’; 5) seeking to empower, not prescribe; and 6) keeping outside resources to a minimum. Applying these design principles from my most recent comparative project, Transparency for Development (T4D), I ask: do transparency and accountability programs improve health and, if so, how.

## **Reehana Raza, *Plurality of Voices in the Development Debate: Financing and Partnerships in the Think-tank and Research Community***

Think tanks in Africa transitioned through four distinct periods of funding acquisition: pre-independence funding provided by the colonial nation state, financial support from universities and intellectuals in the 1970s, financing from foreign experts in the 1980s and support from civil society organizations beginning in the 1990s. This presentation underscores the power that financial investment yields via funding stipulations and lobbying. Using the partnership-financing relationships in the Think Tank Initiative and the African Capacity Building Foundation, Raza concedes that new approaches to how we think about and design funding for development projects is necessary to sustain think tank initiatives.

.....

## **Felicien Masanga, *Take it or lose it: the problem of power imbalance in the partnership between international NGOs and local organizations in Eastern DRC***

reflects on how partnerships have impacted his home country, Democratic Republic of Congo.

## **Sandra Russo, *What does partnership mean when talking about gender?***

focuses on the relationship between gender and economics in partnerships of international aid.

## **Agnes Leslie, *China-Africa Partnership: How Africa can Benefit from China's Agenda***

problematizes the partnerships and strategies China has employed across Africa, while showing how Africa can benefit.

## **Mark Musumba, *Reassessing the role of smallholder farmers in public-private partnership in Sub-Saharan Africa***

poses the question “how can partnerships increase risk for research participants when it comes to data ownership, consent and the private sector?”

# Participant Biography

## Jon Harald Sande Lie

---



**Jon Harald Sande Lie** is a senior research fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), with a PhD in social anthropology from the University of Bergen. Based on ethnographic research (mainly in Ethiopia and Uganda), his research explores the context specific renderings of international development aid and humanitarian action, thus bringing to the fore connections between the global and the local, politics and power, and policy and practice. In 2015 he published a monography with Berghahn Books titled *Developmentality. An Ethnography of the World Bank–Uganda Partnership*.

---

## Stephen Kosack

---



**Stephen Kosack** is an associate professor at Evans School of Public Policy and Governance at University of Washington and a senior research fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School. Kosack's most recent book titled *The Education of Nations: How the Political Organization of the Poor, Not Democracy, Led Governments to Invest in Mass Education* (OUP, 2012) and other publications focus on understanding and explaining distributive policymaking in developing countries. Currently, Kosack is helping to lead a multi-stage, multi-country evaluation of whether, how, and in what contexts transparency and accountability (T/A) interventions improve health care and health outcomes.

---

## Reehana Raza



**Reehana Raza** is a senior research associate at the Center on International Development and Governance at the Urban Institute. Raza is also a founding member, first director and continued associate research fellow at Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS), an economic think-tank in Pakistan which focuses on targeting economic issues that strengthen the democratic foundations in Pakistan. Trained as an economist with research interests in institutions, political economy, human development and service delivery, she has extensive experience working and consulting for bilateral agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, USAID, UNDP and DFID.



**Agnes Leslie** is Senior Lecturer and outreach director in the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida. Her publications include: Editor, "China -Africa Relations: Political and Economic Engagement and Media Relations", vol. 3-4, *Africa Studies Quarterly* (2016); *Social Movements and Democracy in Africa: The Impact of Women's Rights* in Botswana (Routledge) and senior editor for the Encyclopedia of African History and Culture: A Learning Source Book. She has been conducting research as a Fulbright scholar in Zambia from 2015-2017.



**Mark Musumba** is a research associate in the Institute of Sustainable Food Systems at University of Florida. Receiving a PhD in agricultural economics from Texas A&M, his work has examined the linkages between agricultural production, environment, and livelihoods within agricultural systems in Africa. Currently, he is working on the sustainable intensification indicator assessment framework – which provides guidance in selecting and applying indicators to ensure a holistic unbiased assessment of technologies and project impacts.



**Felicien Masanga Maisha** is a PhD student in the Department of Anthropology and Center for African Studies at the University of Florida. Before attending UF, he collaborated as a nurse, social worker and research assistant with Congolese and international NGOs including UNICEF, USAID, Save the Children and others. Originally from the DRC, his research focuses on women's health in Congolese public discourse and how children and youth have been impacted by armed conflicts.



**Sandra Russo** is Director of the Office for Global Research Engagement in the International Center at the University of Florida, with a PhD in Agronomy from UF. She works primarily in Africa and the Middle East on gender, agriculture, water, and capacity development.



**Renata Serra** is Senior Lecturer in the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida. A development economist, she has carried out extensive research and international consultancy on agricultural development policies, political economy, gender and child labor issues, especially in the context of Mali and other Francophone West African countries.