If someone comes in with 100 million, it’s hard to say "no".
HOW TO RECLAIM THE AID NARRATIVE AND IT’S POWER FOR THE ISSUE OF JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY

KAMPALA INITIATIVE   COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY WITHIN AND BEYOND AID #BEYONDAID #KAMPALAINITIATIVE   www.medicusmundi.org/kampalainitiative
RAVI RAM, PEOPLE’S HEALTH MOVEMENT

WELCOME

• The webinar will be recorded
• All participants are muted except for the discussion
• Follow us and tweet about it #BeyondAid #KampalaInitiative @mmi_updates @PHMglobal

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THE KAMPALA INITIATIVE

Overall objectives of the Kampala initiative

- To establish a **democratic civil society space and structure (alliance, community) of independent, critical-thinking activists and organizations across Southern and Northern boundaries.**

- Within this space (alliance, community), the **critique of aid** leads to formulating, promoting, disseminating and seeking political traction for a **new, broadly shared civil society narrative on cooperation and solidarity within and beyond aid.**

- To identify a set of sub-topics/themes and related **critical, concrete and catalytic cases (entry points for interventions)** within the aid paradigm or for advancing solidarity and cooperation beyond aid.)
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THE KAMPALA INITIATIVE

Launch of the Initiative

• Series of four webinars, 29 October to 8 November 2019
• Kampala workshop on “How to advance cooperation and solidarity within and beyond aid?”, 15-16 November 2019
• Followed by review and planning session
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THE KAMPALA INITIATIVE

Initial group

- African Centre for Global Health and Social Transformation (ACHEST)
- Center for Health Human Rights & Development (CEHURD)
- Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network (EPN)
- Foundation for Integrated Rural Development (FIRD)
- Health Poverty Action
- Medicus Mundi International Network (MMI)
- People’s Health Movement (PHM)
- Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)

This list will be completed after the Kampala workshop and a review and planning session in mid-November. If the initiative is (hopefully) sustained, workshop and webinar participants and other organizations will then be invited to join in.

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### THE WEBINARS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Featured Case</th>
<th>Related Themes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 29 Oct 2019</td>
<td>Investing any hope in “Global Public Investment”? A critical look at a new initiative for “more and better aid”.</td>
<td>Is aid stabilizing an unfair global trade regime? Or how to avoid this?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 1 Nov 2019</td>
<td>Creating space for civil society engagement in the Global Financing Facility GFF: Experiences from Malawi, Kenya, Uganda</td>
<td>Aid and its actors distorting or supporting national health policies, systems, processes?</td>
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<td>Tuesday 5 Nov 2019</td>
<td>Can normative instruments help to “do aid better”?</td>
<td>Representation and voice(s) of civil society in global fora and processes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 8 Nov 2019</td>
<td>How to reclaim the aid narrative and its power for the issue of justice and solidarity.</td>
<td>How to achieve global solidarity within and beyond aid?</td>
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### OUTLINE OF TODAY’S WEBINAR

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<tr>
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<td>Welcome and introduction</td>
<td>Ravi Ram</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Min</td>
<td>Introducing the narrative of aid, its problems for global solidarity and a proposed alternative</td>
<td>Tess Woolfenden</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Min</td>
<td>Southern perspectives on the narrative of aid Analysis of a World Bank press release</td>
<td>Spéro Hector Ackey</td>
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<td>30 Min</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What does global solidarity mean to you?</td>
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<td>5 Min</td>
<td>Conclusions: Positioning the case in the broader themes of the Kampala Initiative</td>
<td>Alise Abadie</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Min</td>
<td>Outlook and closure</td>
<td>Ravi Ram</td>
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The narrative of aid, it’s problems for global solidarity and proposed alternatives

As an introduction: Video “39 Cents” – watch it here

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A CHILD DIES EVERY 10 SECONDS AS A RESULT OF MALNUTRITION

Text £3. Feed a child. Save a life.

Three million children die every year as a result of malnutrition. But don’t think about this huge number. Think about one child – and then text £3 to help feed them.

In the next 10 seconds you could save a child’s life.

TEXT FEED TO 83080 TO GIVE £3 — enough to buy two months’ of nutritional food supplement.

From protecting children against malnutrtion to ensuring poor communities receive the vital services we take for granted, your gift will help fund our work to eradicate poverty.

MATCHING YOUR DONATION

The UK Government will match the first £10 million of public donations.

£25 COULD PROVIDE A MONTH’S SUPPLY OF LIFE-SAVING PEANUT PASTE TO A MALNOURISHED CHILD.

DON’T DELAY, DONATE dec.org.uk

EAST AFRICA CRISIS
CHALLENGING REALITIES OF “AID”  FOUR TOPICS – FOUR CASES
FOURTH PUBLIC WEBINAR 8 NOVEMBER 2019

FOR EVERY CHILD IN DANGER
unicef UNITED KINGDOM

PLEASE GIVE £3 A MONTH

TEXT PIERRE5 TO 70002
or call 0800 055 7246
or visit savethechildren.org.uk

FOR EVERY CHILD IN DANGER
unicef UNITED KINGDOM
Aid narrative undermines global solidarity

1. Creates false north/south divide that recreates colonially rooted power dynamics
2. Distracts us from demanding action on the root causes of poverty
3. Contributes to reduced public solidarity
Why narratives?

How we communicate and talk about issues has real life consequences

Alternatives to the narrative of aid

Making “aid” seem more positive: The Narrative Project

INDEPENDENCE: Development programs help people in the world’s poorest places become independent and stand on their own two feet.

SHARED VALUES: People born in the world’s poorest places deserve the chance to achieve their full potential, because every human life is valuable.

PARTNERSHIP: Development programs work because people from across countries and communities join forces to share knowledge, resources and responsibility.

PROGRESS: Development programs work. We’ve beaten smallpox, nearly defeated polio and helped millions of people get education and training.

https://www.narrativeproject.org/#ourstory
Alternatives to the narrative of aid

Making aid beneficial to global north citizens

"British leadership in development is not just about our values, and doing what it right, it is also about making the world a better place for all of us."

The Department for International Development leads the UK’s work to end extreme poverty… Our work is building a safer, healthier, more prosperous world for people in developing countries and in the UK too.

Global Public Investment should be an obligation. It expects a return, but not a financial one: social and environmental impact for our global common good.
Alternatives to the narrative of aid

Communicating for global justice and solidarity

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR COMMUNICATING GLOBAL JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY

An alternative to the language of development, aid and charity

Health Poverty Action Communication Toolkit
### PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNICATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask why you are communicating</th>
<th>Be clear about the causes of the problem</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be clear about the purpose of our communications. What do we want people to think, feel or do when they read our communications?</td>
<td>Make it clear why a problem exists using language that is easy to understand, don’t assume that people know what we are talking about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show that change is possible</td>
<td>Paint a picture of the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlight previous successful changes to make future ones seem more likely. Tell a story that supports the role people have in creating change.</td>
<td>In order to inspire and motivate people, give them something to work towards. It can be simple, but we need a vision, otherwise we are only defining ourselves by what we are not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand what’s missing</td>
<td>Characters matter!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often what we leave out of a message is just as important as what we put in. Leaving something out can change the way a problem is viewed.</td>
<td>Build solidarity and highlight the similarities between different groups. Avoid portraying anyone as a helpless victim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisations shouldn’t be lone heroes</td>
<td>Promote helpful beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s about collective action. Instead of making our organisations out to be lone heroes, talk about how we have worked with others in partnership. We are standing with people, not helping them up.</td>
<td>Think about the beliefs the language we use brings to mind. Are these beliefs helpful to us and the wider cause?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid the traps!</td>
<td>Make our message motivating and true to our values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be careful not to fall into common pitfalls when you’re communicating. Don’t repeat the opposition’s claims even when arguing against them. Don’t use euphemistic language or jargon. Make it clear what you are talking about – it is not “austerity” it is “damaging cuts to public services”</td>
<td>People care about justice and fairness. That should be a core element of our communications. There may be other benefits to the work we do, but don’t rely on them as they change the focus and power of our argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember...</td>
<td>Practice makes perfect better...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a learning process, we may not always get the message perfect, but it is important to be mindful of the language we are using and the consequences of using it.</td>
<td>Reflect on what you want to communicate before you start writing. Build in some time to reflect on what you have written before completing a message. Connect with others in your organisation and beyond to discuss communication and framing issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
06 CHARACTERS MATTER!

Build solidarity and highlight the similarities between different groups. Avoid portraying anyone as a helpless victim.

“Othering” means using language that distances another group from ourselves. It can be subtle (emphasising slight differences in culture or behaviour) to overtly offensive (describing groups as waves or swarms).

Whenever we create messages, we need to try to be as inclusive as possible. Highlight the similarities between us and others to build global solidarity, or at the very least, work hard to avoid highlighting the differences that creates an “us” and “them” dynamic.

Although it is key that we highlight the problems we are facing, we must not portray those we are working with as helpless victims. This serves to reinforce an unhelpful world view about how and why poverty exists.

It is also unhelpful to talk about heroes and villains (see Sections 2 and 7).

IN PRACTICE

Avoid othering
For example, say “people seeking refuge” rather than “refugees”, and instead of “poor people” or “sick people”, say “people living in poverty” or “people denied access to money or healthcare”.

Highlight systemic problems
See more information on this in Section 2.

Avoid victimising
Talk about people making change, and avoid phrases that lack context and present individuals as vulnerable. Good examples of victimising come from mainstream charity adverts that ask us to “donate now to help save lives”, often accompanied by an image of an individual living in poverty without any context. Instead, we can show images of people actively making change with text like “stand with activists in Kenya as they work to tackle the causes of poverty in their own communities”.

Talk about solidarity
Talk about standing in solidarity with those working to tackle the root causes of poverty—not “helping” people or “giving” people a better way of life. For example, “we stand in solidarity with those working to improve health and challenge the causes of poverty”.

Have people tell their own story and include the voices of those affected
Say “making sure the voices of those most affected are heard” not “giving people a voice”—they already have a voice, include quotes, stories and videos of those affected, providing a platform for their messages.

SHOW: What images should we use?

Show images of people creating change—marching, protesting, building stuff and proactively taking care of their own lives.

Avoid showing people as helpless victims (individuals shown out of context on blank background with threat inducing black and red design), lone heroes (this can be people or organisations) or villains. All of these characterisations make it more difficult for us to think that people or things can change.

Avoid othering by consciously thinking about how the image portrays difference. Exoticism (style or traits considered characteristic of a distant foreign country) can lead to othering and fetishisation, just as classic poverty porn does.

EXERCISE: Putting it into practice

Get some press releases, adverts, fundraising appeals and news clippings by your organisation and others.

Concentrating on a single sentence or headline, answer these questions:
1. Who are the actors in the frame? (these might be people or objects).
2. Who has the power?
3. Is anyone being portrayed as different or lesser?

Now reframe the headline or sentence:

What changes could you make to the actors in the frame and the roles they are given?

Experiment by giving the actors different roles.

Which works best in terms of being helpful to your cause?
Southern perspectives of the aid narrative: Analysis of a World Bank press release

Benin: World Bank Provides $100 Million to Reduce Flood Risks and Strengthen Urban Resilience in the Capital City Cotonou

WASHINGTON, May 23, 2019 – The World Bank Board of Executive Directors today approved an International Development Association (IDA)* credit of $100 million to support the government of Benin's efforts to reduce flood risks in selected areas of Cotonou and strengthen urban resilience management and capacity at the city level.

The Stormwater Management and Urban Resilience Project aims to improve the living conditions of citizens of Cotonou, the economic capital of Benin, by reducing their flood risks, their vulnerability and risk of poverty by protecting against loss of assets. It will also help improve management of municipal resources, infrastructure, and flood-prone areas. The project will construct 28.07 km of drains and storm gutters, 7.27 km of gabions/reo mattresses, and three retention ponds for a total storage capacity of 300,000 cubic meters.
Southern perspectives of the aid narrative: Analysis of a World Bank press release

BENIN: WORLD BANK PROVIDES $100 MILLION TO REDUCE FLOOD RISKS AND STRENGTHEN URBAN RESILIENCE IN THE CAPITAL CITY COTONOU

SPÉRO HECTOR AC KEY, PHM BENIN
Nowadays the notion of poverty is old-fashioned and biased. Linguistically, the terms used to convey the notion of aid is most of the time inappropriate and has a bad connotation.

As Jason Hickel states: « Poverty is not a natural condition. It is a state of plunder. It is delusional to believe that charity and aid are meaningful solutions to this kind of problem. »

We would like in this short presentation make a quick analysis on an article’s newspaper entitled: « Benin: World Bank Provides $100 Million to Reduce Flood Risks and Strengthen Urban Resilience in the Capital City Cotonou”. »

This, which want to be a study case to pull out key points which support old-fashioned aid narrative and suggest the change for a new paradigm.
In the first paragraph, the press release shows World Bank as a saviour which is mitigating poverty: «The Stormwater Management and Urban Resilience Project aims to improve the living conditions of citizens of Cotonou, the economic capital of Benin, by reducing their flood risks, their vulnerability and risk of poverty by protecting against loss of assets.»

“The project will construct 28.07 km of drains and storm gutters, 7.27 km of gabions/reno mattresses, and three retention ponds for a total storage volume of 431,698 m3 will be rehabilitated to reduce impacts of cyclical floods and the occurrence of vector-borne (malaria) and water-borne diseases for over 168,000 beneficiaries.” This section does state clearly how the said aid will go exactly to the beneficiaries. Here appears the “accountability notion”.

How matters in the context aid narrative due to the imbalance power in partnership or relationship with Global North-Global South.
The World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA), established in 1960, helps the world’s poorest countries by providing grants and low to zero-interest loans for projects and programs that boost economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve poor people’s lives. IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world’s 75 poorest countries, 39 of which are in Africa. Resources from IDA bring positive change to the 1.5 billion people who live in IDA countries. Since 1960, IDA has supported development work in 113 countries. Annual commitments have averaged about $18 billion over the last three years, with about 54 percent going to Africa.

In a nutshell, propaganda for IDA and WB.

The press release did not deal with recipients or beneficiaries. How the grant could improve in living conditions. None is said about that!
There is a need to review the notion of poverty.

How?

There is an urgent need in reimagining the notion of aid and of poverty and its subsequent underpinnings and/or implications. To whom does it go to? Does the grassroots population are really the beneficiaries and how does the governments in their policies and practices go about aid with the donors;

Press and Media must change paradigms in information collection and treatment which will be rather by the side of the community people than putting executive aid agencies in a very good picture.
Southern perspectives of aid narrative should be reimagined from a historical background which promotes a win-win partnership where natural resources (ore and minerals) are not stolen and given back to us as charity. But rather create a crucible for a fair trade where we no longer have the deterioration of the terms of trade and everything originating from post-colonialism.

Thanks for your attention
Spéro Hector ACKEY
MA in Applied Linguistics
QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION

TESS WOOLFENDEN, HEALTH POVERTY ACTION

The narrative of aid, its problems for global solidarity and proposed alternatives

SPERO HECTOR ACKEY, PHM BENIN

Southern perspectives of the aid narrative: analysis of a World Bank press release
DISCUSSION

What does global solidarity mean to you?

Do we need to move away from the narrative of aid in order to realise global solidarity?

What could alternatives to the aid narrative look like?

Let us go for a democratic conversation: Share your comments, and listen (and react) to others. No “questions to the experts”.

Raise your hand to speak, you will be called and unmuted.

And feel free to use chat and Q&A, too.
CONCLUSIONS

Positioning the case in the overall themes of the Kampala Initiative

Is aid stabilizing an unfair global trade regime? Or how to avoid this?

Aid and its actors distorting or supporting national health policies, systems, processes?

Representation and voice(s) of civil society in global fora, partnerships and processes?

How to achieve global solidarity within and beyond aid?

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OUTLOOK

• Kampala Workshop 15-16 November
  Cooperation and solidarity within and beyond aid

• How to remain engaged in the Kampala Initiative

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KAMPALA INITIATIVE  COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY WITHIN AND BEYOND AID
CHALLENGING REALITIES OF “AID”  FOUR TOPICS – FOUR CASES – FOUR WEBINARS

THANK YOU! AND STAY IN TOUCH!

If someone comes in with 100 million, it’s hard to say "no".

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