



*Sushil Raj, arriving in Nepal
on a field mission, 2007.*

What is IPED?

It stands for the International Political Economy and Development Program at Fordham University, New York City: a program that trains graduate students in the advanced interdisciplinary analysis of global economic relations and international development issues. Graduates work in the diverse fields of research, policy planning, economic analysis, public administration and general management.

Current Issues in Development is a student-run newsletter of Fordham's IPED Program. It aims to share with prospective students and friends in the academic, non-profit, government and corporate community IPED analysis and experience in economic and humanitarian development.

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Sushil Raj, Class of 2000: Human Rights Officer, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Sushil Raj has devoted himself to human rights issues since graduation, initially as a Grants Administrator at Ford Foundation's Human Rights program, which lead to positions in the United Nation's (UN) Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal. Because of his stellar work in Nepal, Sushil was invited to join the South Asia desk at the UN's Geneva headquarters, where he was responsible for Nepal, Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Over the past 22 months, Sushil has been involved as a Desk Officer for Sudan, supporting the human rights components of peacekeeping missions, as well as the Special Rapporteur on the country's human rights situation. Besides field visits to the country, he also coordinates projects with colleagues on the ground to strength-

en the human rights capacity of the state in Darfur. "I am hoping that the prospects and dividends of peace will outweigh the many challenges facing Sudan, namely, widespread criminality, banditry, weak institutions and rule of law, sporadic fighting in Darfur along with difficulty to access many parts of the region due to security constraints."

When asked to share on the most challenging aspect of his work, Sushil reveals that it is working in a highly complex and unpredictable environment. "Meaningful impact requires long term investment and planning which is difficult in emergencies and crises." Through his career progression and field engagements, Sushil believes that change rests at the national level and international actors are, at best, facilitators to any process but cannot

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The Impact of Foreign Aid on Growth in Botswana



USAID-supported microenterprise programs have assisted women in producing various food products for sale to improve their household income.

and governance. Botswana has also received a high amount of foreign aid relative to GDP, but has seen a decline as the country moved from a low-income country to a middle-income country. The positive impact of aid on the per capita growth rate of Real GDP in Botswana supports my hypothesis that aid enhances growth in “good” policy environments. ■

By Shane Duggan

Amongst the many theories explaining GDP growth, several studies have confirmed that aid tends to have a positive material impact on growth in “good” policy environments. In theory, stronger central governments with stable, development-oriented policies will be able to direct aid to the areas that need it most within their economy.

I will isolate the issue of policy or good governance by researching aid and growth data from one country, Botswana. Botswana is a unique country for a few reasons. It used to receive a significant amount of foreign aid relative to GDP and has seen a dramatic decrease in aid relative to GDP as it achieved the status of a middle-income country. In addition, Botswana is currently the world’s leading diamond producer. The government of Botswana has promoted the liberalization of the mining industry, creating an upsurge in foreign direct investment. This opening of markets has transformed the foreign capital inflow from aid to private investment.

My model is as follows:

$$dGDP = b_0 + b_1FDI_{gdp} + b_2Aid_{gdp} + b_3TOFT + u$$

where $dGDP$ is defined as being the per capita growth rate of Real GDP. FDI_{gdp} is total foreign direct investment relative to Real GDP. Aid_{gdp} is aid relative to Real GDP. Theoretically, as aid relative to GDP increases, GDP growth will increase in an environment with “good” policy and governance. $TOFT$ is the terms of trade defined as Net Exports relative to Net Imports.

Using data from 1975-2007, my findings show that aid has had a significant impact on GDP growth in Botswana. Botswana has a history of multi-party, free and fair elections as well as liberal policies toward trade — in other words, an exemplary model of “good” policy

Sushil Raj

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replace domestic institutions or movements of change. After nearly ten years working on human rights issues across various countries, he plans to move into political mediation and hopes to be able to work on conflicts in his country, India. Sushil shares that IPED has helped him develop strong analytical skills, critical thinking and writing abilities and the importance of empirical validity. In addition, it is important to be skilled in policy, political analysis and diplomacy in dealing with the government. His advice to all aspiring to a career in development; “Aim high, dream big, be sincere, and don’t give up. It is important to balance idealism with pragmatism in this line of work but not lose sight of either.” ■

Arrupe Fellowships

Designed to attract into the IPED Program highly qualified applicants who have a strong interest in pursuing a career with a non-profit international relief and development organization, the Arrupe Fellowship consists of a tuition scholarship, a generous living stipend, and an additional stipend for an overseas summer field placement in either Latin America or Africa. The application deadline is early January for the following Fall Semester. For further information, go to www.fordham.edu/iped and follow the link to “Financial Aid.”



10-year-old Zama is one of 1,500 girls in South Africa involved in a HIV/AIDS mentoring program sponsored by USAID.

Educational Attainment and HIV/AIDS Prevalence: A Cross-Country Study

By *Oliver Hughes*

A 2008 UNAIDS report estimated that 33.4 million people worldwide were living with HIV or AIDS. This epidemic has been the subject of extensive studies, including investigation into the impacts of various forces such as economic growth, governmental health expenditures and education towards reducing prevalence rates. Its prominent status within the Millennium Development Goals also reflects the assumed correlation between an increase in educational attainment of a population and a reduction in the prevalence of AIDS.

A basic recommendation for combating HIV/AIDS seems to be the promotion of education in

countries where schooling rates are low, and HIV infection rates high. To examine this relationship on a cross-country basis, my estimated equation takes the following form:

$$HIV_i = b_0 + b_1(\ln GNI_i) + b_2(\ln HEX_i) + b_3(dEDU_i) + b_4(D_i) + b_5(A_i) + u_i$$

where HIV_i denotes prevalence of HIV as a percentage of the adult population (age 15-49) in country i , $\ln GNI_i$ is the logarithm of GNI per capita in international (PPP) dollars in 2003, $\ln HEX_i$ is the logarithm of the country's health expenditure per person in international (PPP) dollars in 2003, $dEDU_i$ represents the percentage change in mean years of education of the population (age

15+) between 1995 and 2000, and D_i and A_i are the dummy variables for developed countries and African countries respectively.

Using data from 50 countries, including eight that are developed, eight from Central or South America, and nineteen from Sub-Saharan Africa, my findings show that for a 1% increase in average years' schooling for an adult population over the period 1995-2000, we could expect a 0.14 - 0.19% decrease in the HIV prevalence in 2007. In sum, an increase in educational attainment can improve the impact of HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns on populations, therefore reducing the likelihood

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Faculty Notes from Dr. Melissa Labonte

The crystallizing moment in Dr. Labonte's decision to pursue a career in the field of development was the opportunity to witness a landmark vote in the United Nations Security Council during the Somalia crisis. This became the first major humanitarian interventions of the post cold-war era. Since then, researching conflict transition settings to just peace, what is required to achieve that and how local voices can be a vital part of it sums up Dr. Labonte's dedication and interest in peacebuilding and humanitarian affairs.

In May, Dr. Labonte will be conducting a fieldwork as part of her research that began in 2007 — to analyze peacebuilding partnerships and community-driven development involving local Chiefdom actors and international nongovernmental organizations in Sierra Leone. On areas of improvement in the development field, Dr. Labonte reveals that “more donor education and longer budget cycles would make transition efforts from humanitarianism to peacebuilding and peacebuilding to development more appropriate and effective.” In addition, greater coordination and accountability amongst different agencies is of critical importance



Dr. Melissa Labonte is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Fordham University. Her IPED course, “Conflict Resolution in the 21st century” is offered in the Fall.

in achieving synergies and more effective results.

For Dr. Labonte, deriving a nexus between just peace and development drives her passion in the field. “What really interests me is asking

questions about how more just peace can evolve out of conditions of profound violence and how just peace takes root in society through things like peacebuilding or humanitarian operations. For peace to be just it has to be authentic, for it to be authentic, it has to be in the perception of local communities, something positive that they want to be stakeholders in.” Participatory peacebuilding, ultimately leading to sustainable and durable outcomes that bring a higher quality of life for local communities is a key area of interest for Dr. Labonte. ■

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of transmission of the disease. Although only the African country determinant is found to be statistically significant amongst these independent variables, I would still expect further studies using broad, cross-country panel regressions

capturing both spatial and temporal effects to support the general thesis discussed: that greater levels of educational attainment should result over time in a reduction of the prevalence rate of the disease within a population. ■

