

Joint Seminar presented by
RegNet/Department of International Relations/Peace Research
Network

Accountability in state building interventions



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Abstract

Questions surrounding the effectiveness and legitimacy of state building interventions are forming a growing global research agenda. Apart from a small number of transitional administrations, most state building interventions take the form of extensive longer-term state building partnerships between external actors and governments – they are ‘cooperative state building interventions’. This partnership model has been criticised for its lack of transparency in terms of power relations and responsibilities, with claims that the partnership model is a deliberate attempt to escape accountability for aid policies. However, the question of how accountability can be constituted in these cooperative state building interventions remains under-investigated.

Cooperative state building interventions are neither actual institutions of global governance nor ordinary development assistance programs, complicating the question how accountability can be constituted in such interventions. Accountability mechanisms in these interventions cannot simply draw on existing accountability models in global governance institutions, and their constitution as comprehensive long-term partnerships with governments calls for more than conventional aid monitoring and evaluation to constitute accountability. In addition, the concept of accountability is itself contested. This paper investigates these complexities and suggests that the question how accountability should be constituted in cooperative state building interventions involves the negotiation of a number of dilemmas.

Profile

Iris Wielders (BA/MA International Relations, University of Amsterdam; MA International Humanitarian Assistance, University of Groningen) is a PhD Candidate at the Department of International Relations at the Australian National University. Her PhD project investigates accountability dilemmas in international cooperative state building interventions. She has worked in conflict prevention and peace building in Solomon Islands, Fiji and the Pacific region more broadly.

She combines her PhD studies with work in conflict sensitive development; linkages between land and conflict; peace building; and modalities of aid and intervention in conflict affected/fragile states.



Date: 23/6/09

Time: 12:30-1:30 pm

Location: Lecture Theatre 1.04 Coombs Extension Building #8