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Gulnaz Isabekova

The relationships between stakeholders engaged in development assistance: towards an analytical framework

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ABSTRACT

This working paper combines and systematizes general and specific approaches to studying aid relationships to better understand the relationships between stakeholders engaged in development assistance. Using the actor-centred institutionalism as an epistemological foundation, it emphasizes the role of actors and institutions. In terms of actors, this paper focuses on relationships between providers of development assistance (donor-donor), providers and countries receiving aid (donor-recipient state), and relationships of donors and recipient states with civil society organizations (donor/recipient state – CSOs). In terms of institutions, it elaborates on the role of underlying issues in development aid, such as power dynamics (including aid-dependence and capacity), aid volatility, and its (non) flexibility. The paper introduces ‘interaction’ as a generic term encompassing various forms of aid relationships and defines the following ideal types of interaction between the actors: non-coordination, coordination, unequal and equal types of cooperation. Based on practical examples, this working paper illustrates the complexity of aid structure and the multiplicity of actors engaged in development assistance. The paper problematizes the use of aggregated approaches to actors in understanding their relationships with each other.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Beitrag kombiniert und systematisiert verschiedene Ansätze zur Erfassung von Akteursbeziehungen in der Entwicklungshilfe. Basierend auf dem akteurszentrierten Institutionalismus als epistemologische Grundlage zur Beschreibung der Rolle von Akteuren und Institutionen analysiert der Beitrag die Beziehungen zwischen Erbringern von Entwicklungshilfe (Geber – Geber), Erbringern und Empfängern (Geber – Nehmer), und die Beziehungen von Gebern und Nehmern mit zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisationen (Geber/Nehmer – NGO). In Bezug auf Institutionen wird die Rolle von Machtdynamiken (sowie Abhängigkeiten und Kapazitäten), Volatilität und (Nicht-)Flexibilität im Bereich der Entwicklungshilfe diskutiert. Der Beitrag führt Interaktion als Begriff ein, um die verschiedenen Formen der Hilfsbeziehungen zu erfassen, und definiert die folgenden idealtypischen Interaktionen zwischen Akteuren: Nicht-Koordination, Koordination, ungleiche sowie gleiche Form der Kooperation. Anhand von empirischen Beispielen zeigt der Beitrag die Komplexität von Hilfsstrukturen und Akteurskonstellationen in der Entwicklungshilfe auf und problematisiert damit die Probleme für das Verständnis der Akteursbeziehungen, die sich aus einer aggregierten Perspektive ergeben.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Various international instruments have been adopted to regulate the relationships between the providers (donors¹) and recipients of development assistance. Initially focusing on donor countries (e.g., OECD Development Assistance Committee as a platform for donors), the instruments have further incorporated relationships between donors and recipients (the Contonou Agreement (2000); the Rome Declaration on Harmonization (2003a); the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action (2005/2008)) and 'non-state actors' (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011)). Overall, the instruments stress 'coordination', 'cooperation' and 'partnership' between the actors involved in development assistance.

Along with the introduction of the above-mentioned terms, academic literature has analysed different forms of relationships and the issues relevant to them. Some studies have examined coordination (cf. Aldasoro et al. 2010; Bigsten and Tengstam 2015; Burguignon and Platteau 2015); others cooperation (Dengbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2005; Torsvik 2005; Zimmermann and Smith 2011) or partnerships (Orem et al. 2013; del Biondo 2015). Some research has focused on understanding aid relationships (Eyben 2006; Hinton and Groves 2004) or interactions (Lamothe 2010; Villanger 2003). However, the literature is rather fragmented as the studies either focus on selected forms or the general notion of relationships between the actors. There is a need to combine and systematize these approaches to better understand 'aid relationships' and their relevance to development assistance.

This working paper intends to problematize the terms introduced by international instruments through emphasizing the condi-

tions relevant to the relationships between various actors. For this purpose, this paper synergizes the abovementioned narrow and general approaches in the literature to demonstrate the 'overall picture' of relationships in development assistance. Specifically, this paper addresses the following questions: What kind of relationships do different actors have? What factors are relevant to aid relationships?

The inclusion of multiple actors is critical to aid. Andrews (2013) suggests that a concentration on 'lone champions' instead of the 'broader engagement' of relevant actors leads to the failure of reforms promoted by the development programmes (pp. 193–194). He argues that the engagement of multiple actors is essential for compliance with the suggested reforms in the local context as well as the commitment of local stakeholders to these reforms (Andrews 2013, pp. 96–98; 203). Acknowledging the multiplicity of the actors involved in development assistance, this study suggests distinguishing between three levels of aid relationships based on the actors involved. This approach is based on Handley's (2009) elaboration of the three levels applicable to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), namely, donor-donor, donor-recipient and increased recipient initiative over aid (Handley 2009, p. 3). In contrast to Handley (2009), this working paper places CSOs at the third level of interaction. There is an increased emphasis on CSOs (cf. Craig 2007), and by including them as the third actor in development assistance, this supports the assumption that CSOs are not just aid recipients, but also active participants in development aid. The category of CSOs in the interaction table is defined in relation to donors and the state since the CSOs may receive support from both actors (see table 1, p. 2).

The actors' involvement in development assistance is essential. However, with whom to engage and how remains unclear. The mere inclusion of actors without addressing the potential issues related to hierarchy, com-

1 Referring to countries and agencies providing developing aid

patibility and mutual understanding does not guarantee the expected outcome. This research intends to open what is happening inside the 'black-box' (Swedlund 2017, p. 12), by discussing the underlying issues in each of these three levels of aid relationships.

Table 1.
The levels of aid relationships

Donor	donor
Donor	recipient state
Donors and/or recipient state	civil society organizations

Source: Author's adaptation and elaboration of Handley (2009)

The first section elaborates on actor-centred institutionalism, which is used to illustrate why interactions between donors, donors with the state, donors and the recipient state with civil society organizations matter for aid. It is noteworthy that actor-centred institutionalism is used to elaborate on the epistemological basis of the analytical framework presented here. The game-theoretic operationalization will not be employed as it drastically reduces the number of actors involved, while the aim of this working paper is to elaborate on the complex actor constellations in development aid. However, the analytical approach of actor-centred institutionalism in its original form as well as in its adaptation to development aid in this working paper is open to different operationalizations. The case study approach, e.g., as developed by Rohlfing (2012), or policy network analyses, e.g., as promoted by Marin and Mayntz (1991), are obvious choices for data analysis in this context. Thus, this working paper is restricted to the presentation of an analytical framework and does not address the question of related research designs.

Instead, the following sub-sections focus on the analytical elements of the overall framework for aid relationships and discuss the role of actors and institutions in aid relationships. In terms of institutions, this study highlights the following conditions: power dynamics, including aid-dependence and

capacity; aid volatility and its (non) flexibility. The relevance of these conditions is illustrated in the example of bilateral donor agencies², including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the German Corporation for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ), the German Development Bank (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – KfW), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and others.

The subsequent section introduces 'interaction', used as a generic term, encompassing a variety of relationships between the stakeholders, including, but not limited to joint (cooperation) and parallel (coordination) realization of development assistance. This section defines various forms of interactions and discusses the role of actors and institutions in each of them. The concluding section summarizes the findings and suggests directions for further research in this area.

2. THEORETICAL BASIS

Why do relationships matter for development assistance? This study uses the actor-centred institutionalism as an epistemological foundation for the relevance of interaction between donors, donors with the state, donors and the recipient state with civil society organizations for development aid. The actor-centred institutionalism views public policy as the outcome of collective, rather than individual action (Scharpf 1997, p. 11). This highlights the role of interactions, actors and institutions in policies. The approach sees social phenomena as the 'outcome of interactions' among the actors that are formed by relevant institutional conditions (Scharpf 1997, p. 1). Institutions form interactions between actors that in their turn shape policies,

2 Meaning agencies providing bilateral aid or the assistance from one government to another.

or in this research: the outcomes of development assistance.

The following sections elaborate on actors and institutions. Interaction is addressed in a separate section.

2.1 Actors

In terms of actors, the actor-centred institutionalism enables the aggregation of individuals to relevant organizations but suggests that understanding both individual and organizational levels and their interconnection are important. The approach acknowledges that policy decisions are taken by individuals, but highlights that these individuals represent certain entities and act on behalf of them (Scharpf 1997, p. 12). Therefore, these individuals are 'much less free in their actions than autonomous institutions,' which allows a certain level of abstraction from a *micro* individual to a *meso* perspective of the entities they represent (Scharpf 1997, p. 12). Thus, the activities of individuals representing donor organizations, state institutions or civil society organizations are shaped by functions, authorities and duties they have as part of their positions in these organizations. Simultaneously, these individuals are also influenced by their personal interests, understanding and motivations. The impact of self-interest is specifically relevant to leadership positions, where individuals have less organizational constraints (Scharpf 1997, p. 62). However, even with these positions, the individuals are censored by their positions, reasserted by relevant organizations or actors.

The individuals representing 'donors' and 'recipients' cannot be understood only in reference to their personal preferences but in combination with their positions and the goals of the organizations they represent. This interconnection of two levels is vivid in the actors' preferences. According to Scharpf (Scharpf 1997, p. 62), there are four components of preferences, namely 'self-interests', 'normative role orientations', 'identity' and 'interaction orientations' (pp. 64-84).

The first two components are related to the actors' personal interests and their position in the organization. Assuming that (i) at the individual level, the actor might be interested in better career prospects (promotion, increased authorities), and accessing technical (including training, knowledge-sharing) and financial resources (salary increase, bonuses); (ii) at the organizational level, the actor's interests could relate to increasing the influence of the organization, its visibility, the outcome of development assistance, extended networking, accessing additional resources, etc.

It is noteworthy that actors have limited or 'bounded' rationality in maximizing their personal as well as organizational interests. 'Bounded rationality' means that the actors are constrained in their 'information-processing' abilities by risks, uncertainty, a limited awareness of other options and the 'complexity' of the setting³, resulting in an inability to choose 'the best course of action' (Simon 1972, pp. 162-164). Individuals and organizations representing donors and recipients (states and civil society organizations (CSOs)) operate in conditions of uncertainty since they are insecure about each other's actions and the amount as well as the duration of development assistance (see 'aid volatility' discussed below). Furthermore, the complexity of development assistance, related to a multiplicity of actors, interests and the areas involved may result in the incompleteness of information available to actors.

Moreover, rationality is not the only factor driving actors. Decision-makers are limited by the range of programmes that are likely to be 'acceptable and legitimate' for constituencies and decision-makers themselves

3 Simon (1972) explains the inability to select 'the best course of action' by 'complexity in the cost function' or 'other environmental constraints'. 'Complexity' in this working paper refers to constraints in the decision-making process and development assistance, because the analysis of cost or demand functions is not relevant in this context.

(Campbell 2004, p. 96). Thus, the public perception of HIV/AIDS and its transmission, for instance, may influence the decision-makers and their readiness to sustain the related development aid interventions.

The third component of preferences is 'self-identity'. It frames the actors' selection of relevant personal interests and expectations from their organizational positions (Scharpf 1997, p. 62). In other words, the 'self-identity' is used by actors to navigate between these two. Scharpf (Scharpf 1997, p. 62) suggests that 'to be effective', this identity needs to 'be relatively stable over time' (pp. 65-66), which might be problematic due to aid volatility or uncertainty, demanding the actors' timely adjustment to 'new' realities of unexpected aid flows (see the section on aid volatility).

Besides, individual perceptions of what is 'important' are also relevant to the decisions of officials to support one programme or another. The actors' 'mental image of the world' (Scharpf 1997, p. 62) frames their perception of and reaction to the ongoing processes. In addition to framing, this 'subjectivity' also situates the actors' preferences in favour of certain activities and decisions, or what Scharpf defined as 'subjective preferences' (Scharpf 1997, p. 62). The obvious example could be the individual actors' perceptions of gender equality and women's empowerment, frequently promoted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members⁴. Theoretically, individual preferences are 'supposed to be neutralized by employment contracts' (Coleman 1974; Mayntz 1986 in Scharpf 1997, p. 54). Nevertheless, as this may not always be the case, the analytical framework presented here admits the relative or 'bounded' rationality of the actors involved in development assistance.

Lastly, the preferences are influenced by actors' interdependence. Scharpf (1997) suggests that the choices of actors 'with specific capabilities' and 'specific percep-

tions' are interdependent (p.69). The actors' choices are not only guided by personal perceptions, but also by a 'relational' aspect of the actors to each other (Scharpf 1997, p.84), which emphasizes actors' responsiveness to ongoing processes and others' reactions to these processes. It is noteworthy that the 'relational' aspect can be 'objective' and 'subjective'; while the former influences the rewards, the latter 'discriminates' between the actors with the rewards remaining unchanged (Scharpf 1997, p. 62). Hence, the preferences are set in response to 'objective' gains and/or 'subjective' concerns. Overall, a combination of personal interests, organizational positions (with relevant interests and expectations), 'identity', interdependence of multiple actors and their choices as well as the 'relational' definition of preferences between the actors provides a comprehensive basis for analysing the actors. The analytical framework presented in this working paper describes the types of interactions together with the actors' motivations for selecting and following the selected type of interaction, as well as the benefits and challenges they have. Providing an overview of different types of interactions formed between the actors, this working paper, due to feasibility concerns, does not provide a detailed analysis of actors and their preferences in each type of interaction.

2.2 Institutions

The awareness of institutions or institutional settings is essential to understanding the actors and interactions between them. As I will elaborate more in the following, I define institutions as general background conditions where the actors operate. According to Campbell, institutions 'consist of formal and informal rules, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, and systems of meaning that define the context within which individuals, corporations, labour unions, nation-states, and other organizations operate and interact with each other' (Campbell 2004, p. 1).

4 For the share of 'gender equality focus' in DAC members' development assistance, cf. OECD 2019a.

This context represents in Rohlfing's (2012) term the 'scope conditions' that enable or disable interactions between the actors and outcomes of development aid interventions. Although these conditions or institutions refer to a number of phenomena, in the context of development aid, some factors are regularly of specific relevance. The first factor is the inequality between the 'donor' and the 'recipient' due to power dynamics. Common to development assistance in general, this inequality nevertheless varies across cases. Aid-dependence and the capacity of the recipient are vital to understanding these variations. Furthermore, the actors dealing with development assistance face the problems of aid volatility (uncertainty) and its (non) flexibility. Similar to inequality, these phenomena are common to development aid, although donor policies on these issues vary, which will also be illustrated in the example of various agencies providing aid.

Actor-centred institutionalism suggests that an awareness of the institutional setting enables an understanding of the actors, their choices and alternatives (Scharpf 1997, p. 41). Understanding the abovementioned factors is essential for identifying interactions between the actors. The following sections discuss each of them, namely, power dynamics including aid dependence and the recipient's capacity, aid volatility and aid flexibility.

2.2.1 POWER DYNAMICS

The analysis of relationships between donors and recipients inevitably leads to the discussion of power. This study defines power as the actors' ability to pursue their interests⁵. In the following sections I introduce three understandings of power in development aid, inequality between the actors, along with their interdependence and evolving nature of power.

5 This working paper does not go into detailed discussion of the definition of power, its forms, observability etc. For more details on this topic see Hyden 2008; Crawford 2003.

First, Eyben (2008) differentiates between three approaches to power in development aid. According to her, power is understood in relation to the difference in the powers that the actors have, power distribution as a historical legacy and a 'process that enables and constraints action' (Eyben 2008, pp. 36-37). Providing financial, in-kind and other resources, making decisions on their allocation, donors clearly enjoy more power than recipients. This is also reflected in the accountability of the recipients before the donors, but not in reverse. Donors hold the recipients not fulfilling their obligations responsible by cutting the amount of aid. There are cases of development aid used by donors as 'sanctions' against the recipients (see Feyissa 2011, p. 801). On the other hand, the recipients do not hold donors responsible for breaking their promises, because of the fear of not receiving the assistance (Eyben 2008, p. 16). Thus, accountability works only one way, from recipients to donors (Renzi 2006, p. 5), and differences in powers and resources result in 'gift-giving' and 'gift-obligation dynamics' (Hinton and Groves 2004, p. 12; Pasteur and Scott-Villiers 2006, p. 96), defining the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved. These dynamics have been formed and practised for years, which brings us to the second understanding of power as a historical legacy. Unequal settings between the global 'north' and the 'south' laid down the basis for development assistance. The meaning of 'development' traces back to the colonization period, when the initial ideas of what 'development' is and who defines it were established. This is reflected in, for instance, the underdevelopment of recipients and donor obligations to bring progress into these countries (cf. Schafer et al. 2009). 'Development' defined by donors was imposed on the recipients. However, with the inclusion of broader groups of actors into development assistance, the emphasis changed from 'best practice' imported from outside towards 'local solutions'. Still, different roles in development assistance remained, which

brings us to the notion of power as the process. Development aid *per se* is inequality (Robb 2004, p. 21), because it assigns certain roles to aid providers and the recipients. Aid serves as the source of power for donors (Hinton and Groves 2004, pp. 10-12) through which recipients are accountable before them (cf. Shutt 2006, p. 154). Following this approach, inequalities between the actors are unlikely to be changed because development aid defines or even pre-assigns the roles, responsibilities and opportunities of each actor.

Simultaneously, the inequalities in the powers of or between the actors are not constant. There is an evolving or changing nature of power at different stages of the assistance. Even with exercising more power during the allocation process, donors nevertheless have limited influence over aid outcomes. Providing finances (in some cases also ideas), donors are important during the reform initiation, but their role decreases at the implementation stages (Andrews 2013, pp. 209-210). In contrast, the role and power of the recipient (state, CSOs) increase. The non-achievement of expected results could be justified by domestic politics, the pressure of constituencies or reform opponents (Swedlund 2017, pp. 73-74). Although non-achievement of the outcomes could result in aid suspension, this is not always the case (Swedlund 2017, pp. 95-96). Recipients depend on donor assistance, but after receiving it, they weigh the 'pros' and 'cons' of suggested changes and decide accordingly. The recipients are not 'passive,' but discuss the terms and conditions of development aid to maximize 'their welfare in the face of budgetary constraints' (Feyissa 2011, p. 789; Lamothe 2010, p. 5; Swedlund 2017, pp. 68-69). Recipients may change their behaviour if the incentives and benefits offered by donors are higher than the costs of required changes (Lamothe 2010, p. 19). If not, recipients retain the status quo. Thus, the reforms anticipated and promoted by

development aid take place if the recipient has sufficient incentives for them.

In addition to inequalities and the evolving nature of power, aid relationships between donors and recipients are characterized by interdependence. Actors are mutually dependent because the recipients need the donors' financial resources, and the donors need the recipients' support to show the 'success' of their activities (Shutt 2006, p. 154; Swedlund 2017, pp. 75-76). Development aid involves more actors than direct providers and the recipients of the assistance. These are parliaments, governments, constituencies, local municipalities, etc. Both donors and recipients are accountable for the aid they spend. Although the level of accountability varies depending on the role of the public and the political system of the country, it nevertheless ensures the interdependence of donors and recipients on each other. Both actors are interested in maximizing the output of the assistance, and therefore are interested in interacting with each other. Donors and recipients influence each other's behaviour by offering incentives (Lamothe 2010, p. 16). For donors, these incentives are the access to financial, technical and other support; in return, the recipients promise the realization of the suggested changes. Thus, incentives work both ways.

Three interpretations of power in development assistance suggest inherent inequalities between donors and recipients, but the evolving nature of power and the actors' interdependence stress the changeability of inequalities and a mutual interest in interacting with each other. These are general characteristics of power dynamics that further vary across cases. The variations can be related to the recipient's aid-dependence and capacity⁶.

6 There are many other factors, such as ownership (defined as 'the control of recipients over the process and outcome of aid negotiations' (Whitfield and Fraser 2010, pp. 342-343). Whitfield and Fraser (2010, pp. 348-349) additionally suggested that the economic and political conditions of

2.2.1.1 Aid-dependence

The first factor relevant to the differences in actors' powers is aid-dependence. A country (or also in this framework, a CSO) is aid-dependent when it cannot 'achieve objective X in the absence of aid for the foreseeable future' (Lensink and White 1999, p. 13). Assuming that the country or the CSO is interested in conducting specific reforms⁷, aid-dependence means that the recipient cannot implement the reforms without the donor. Obviously, financial and institutional constraints may prevent the recipient countries or CSOs from implementing the desired reforms or policies independently. However, we need to distinguish between the necessity for 'additional' support from the 'sole' reliance on it. The recipient country or a CSO looking for donor support in addition to its own resources is not aid-dependent; however, the one fully relying on the assistance is aid-dependent.

There are different measurements of aid dependence, but this study suggests the sector-specific definition. Glennie and Prizzon (2012) propose a quantitative indicator of dependence, calculated by the ratio of aid to the gross national income of the recipient country. For CSOs, this could refer to the ratio of 'external' funding to the resources of the organization. These types of indicators are useful for the general ranking of recipient countries/organizations, but they are not helpful for understanding the power dynamics within specific sectors, e.g., healthcare. Generally, a country's dependence on aid is not equal to its sectoral dependence. The state may receive a large amount of aid,

but not to healthcare. The sectoral division of the assistance provides a more accurate picture, but even in this case, the numbers might be misleading. In the Kyrgyz Republic, for instance, the share of 'external' health expenditure was approximately 7% of current health expenditure in 2015 (The World Bank 2019). One may assume that the country is relatively 'independent' from aid, because public (state) and private (patients) contributions to healthcare are much higher than those from donors. However, a majority of the second line drugs, for instance, used to treat drug-resistant forms of tuberculosis, are provided by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's grant to fight tuberculosis (2014, p. 13). Thus, although relatively independent at the sectoral level, the country is dependent on external assistance in terms of accessing the medicines for the treatment of drug-resistant TB. Therefore, the analytical framework presented here suggests that a more specific sector or sub-sectoral focus provides a better understanding of the recipients' aid dependence.

Why does aid dependence matter in interaction? Aid dependence decreases the bargaining capacity of the recipient by weakening its position in negotiations. The aid-dependent recipient is more likely to accept donor conditions without discussing them. Both dependent countries and organizations are more likely to adopt externally imposed reforms while fighting for their 'survival' (Andrews 2013, pp. 69-70). In addition, the aid-dependence of the recipient influences the behaviour of donors. Less dependence of the recipient governments (as well as CSOs) on development aid suggests an increased commitment of donors to their promises (Swedlund 2017, p. 127). When the recipient is not dependent on the assistance, donors potentially compete with each other to establish aid relationships with the recipient, while the latter can choose between different 'providers'. Consequently, the donors are more likely to fulfil their commitments. It should be acknowledged that competition between do-

the recipient countries are likely to influence the weight of the recipient in the negotiation process. By focusing on the above-mentioned two, I do not present them as all-inclusive, but rather as one of the major factors influencing power dynamics.

7 For simplification purposes, this working paper assumes that the actors are interested in achieving their organizational goals, e.g. because of commitment or because non-achievement of stated targets could be an indicator of underperformance.

nors may decrease the recipient's dependence on one or a few donors, but it will not reduce the recipients' dependence on aid in the relevant sector.

2.2.1.2 Capacity

The second factor explaining the differences in power dynamics is capacity. Broadly defined as 'the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully,' (OECD 2011b, p. 2) the capacity in a narrow sense refers to the individual, organizational and systems' abilities/'competencies' to implement their functions (see European Centre for Development Policy Management 2008, p. 2). Based on these definitions, this working paper operationalizes the capacity as a recipient's ability to perform its functions and administer its activities. Referring to capacity, the focus is on the availability of human resources. Human resources are essential to negotiations, implementation, and the evaluation of development assistance. The limited capacity, reflected in the insufficient number of staff members and their qualification issues, causes communication problems with donors. Swedlund (2017), in her interviews with donor representatives in Sub-Saharan Africa, highlights the staff shortages and computer literacy problems of the recipient countries (pp. 92–93). Limited capacity is related to and caused by a 'brain-drain' from public institutions. Qualified staff members are often recruited by donors offering better remuneration and advancement policies (Toornstra and Martin 2013, pp. 101–102; Swedlund 2017, pp. 92–93). Similar issues with staff retention are noticed in the case of CSOs (cf. Frontera 2007), although there are differences within this group. The level of staff rotation in community-based organizations (CBOs) where members work on a voluntary basis might be higher than in a non-governmental organization (NGO) which pays its employees and provides additional non-financial incentives, such as training and travel.

The capacity of the recipient matters at all stages of development assistance. The presence of qualified and trained staff is essential to negotiations, because it means that the recipient is capable of setting the priorities and 'bargain' aid conditions. Qualified personnel are also the key to the implementation and evaluation of development assistance. Donors repeatedly acknowledged the importance of capacity by prioritizing its development as the 'special topic' of the DAC peer-reviews (OECD 2012a, p. 5).

Overall, aid-dependence and capacity are essential to understanding the differences in power dynamics because they characterize the recipient's ability to define and pursue its goals. Variations in these two 'scope conditions' are also helpful for understanding the types of interactions formed between the actors. However, in addition to these two, there are at least two other factors relevant to aid relationships, namely, aid volatility and its (non) flexibility.

2.2.2 AID VOLATILITY

Aid relationships take place in conditions of uncertainty⁸ related to aid appropriation procedures and the relatively short duration of development programmes. Aid volatility varies depending on aid modalities, with budget support being more predictable than project-based assistance. There is a general acknowledgement of the need to reduce volatility by increasing the predictability of the assistance (Fielding and Mavrotas 2008, p. 481; Menocal and Mulley 2006, p. 2). Nevertheless, donors have different aid appropriation procedures and opportunities for making commitments before the partners. Bilateral aid from OECD countries often depends on the annual appropriations voted by the parliament on the basis of a government proposal. Making firm commitments beyond this period is problematic, although relevant regulations differ across donors. Among the United States of America (US) agencies, PEP-

8 In this context a synonym to volatility.

FAR makes multi-year commitments, but US-AID mainly relies on annual appropriations, meaning that its commitments beyond this period are 'subject to availability of funds' (OECD 2011, p. 68). In contrast to the US, Germany performs better in increasing the predictability of its assistance. There is an annual budgeting procedure, but the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) can make multi-year commitments to partner countries, and for the budget support (OECD 2015, p. 63). Germany performs better than the DAC average by informing partner countries two to three years beforehand about its commitments (OECD 2010, p. 78). However, Switzerland performs even better. Similar to the other two countries, Switzerland has the procedure of annual parliamentary approval, but its aid agencies can make four- to five-year commitments, and in the case of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), this extends to ten years (OECD 2009, p. 48; OECD 2013, p. 69). This multi-year predictability is a strong feature of the Swiss Development Cooperation (OECD 2013, p. 69). Thus, despite the presence of an annual appropriation procedure, the three donor countries vary in their abilities to make commitments before the recipient. This indicates different levels of volatility for the assistance provided by these countries.

The uncertainty of development aid matters because it negatively influences the parties' commitments to the reforms suggested by development assistance (Swedlund 2017, pp. 31–33; 87–88). There are cases of unawareness of partners (both recipient and donor) about the assistance 'before it arrives' (see OECD 2016, p. 98) in relation to US aid, which may come with prescriptions on geographic, sectoral and other allocations (see OECD 2011, p. 42). Funds, driven by Congressional earmarks, the Presidential and other Executive Branch directives, may define areas that have not been previously targeted by the recipient or donors. The necessity to adjust to changes may become a

priority for the recipient over fulfilment of the objectives stated earlier. Uncertainty matters to the relationships of both donors and recipients as it provides incentives or disincentives for actors to follow their commitments.

2.2.3 AID FLEXIBILITY

Another factor relevant to interaction is aid flexibility. The flexibility of donors has been emphasized in relation to the ability to adjust to local priorities and context (cf. Hirschhorn et al., p. 4). This working paper relates flexibility to the authority (i.e., decision-making power) held by the field offices of donor organizations. Strict regulations from the parliament or the government, as indicated in the previous section, negatively impact the flexibility of the assistance, by assigning it to certain purposes. Thus, assistance is driven by the goals defined by the 'central' authorities of donor agencies, but not the interaction of these organizations with the recipients on the ground. The high level of authority delegated to the 'field' offices of donor organizations is essential to their flexibility, because it also means that the decisions are made by personnel aware of the context and having direct contact with the recipient. Overall, the level of authority delegated to the field offices or decentralization varies across donors. The USAID field offices have increased authority, but the Congressional earmarking may prevent using it (OECD 2003, I-77). For German agencies, decentralization was repeatedly highlighted in recommendations on the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005). This included increasing the authority of development cooperation officers in the field to manage, not just coordinate the assistance (OECD 2006, p. 17), and providing more authority to the field offices to increase the flexibility of programme implementation (OECD 2015, p. 56). Both US and German aid agencies work towards increasing the authority of their field offices. The Swiss aid agencies enjoy a relatively high level of autonomy in comparison to the other two donors. The Swiss Coopera-

tion Offices report directly to headquarters, conduct policy dialogues with recipient governments, other donors, manage local staff and budget, with the country directors having some flexibility to allocate funds according to the recipient's priorities (OECD 2005, p. 74). Overall, the decentralization of donors and the range of authority delegated to their field offices is important to interaction, because it ensures the flexibility or ability of the field offices to decide on aid and adjust it to local conditions. A highly centralized donor structure means that the aid is driven by decision-making institutions or the headquarters of donor agencies. Field offices, in this case, act as 'implementers' of the assistance and respectively enjoy lower credentials in their negotiations with recipients.

To summarize, aid relationships do not take place independently. The sections above presented four factors relevant to relationships between the actors. The first section described power dynamics between donors and recipients, their inequality, changing nature and the interdependence of actors on each other. To differentiate the power dynamics across cases, the analytical framework presented here uses aid-dependence and capacity. Handley (2009, p. 14) suggested a 'negative correlation' between capacity and aid-dependence. Similarly, this working paper argues that a higher dependence implies a lower capacity of the recipient and vice versa. However, it also suggests that dependence increases unequal power dynamics, while capacity lowers them. The sections additionally described and argued for the relevance of aid volatility and flexibility. Table 2, p. 10, summarizes the factors relevant to development assistance by assigning them to the relevant actors.

Analysing the relevance of the above-mentioned factors, it might also be useful to differentiate their impact at individual and organizational levels. Because of feasibility concerns, this working paper takes an aggregated perspective on the relevance of these factors.

Table 2.

Factors relevant to relationships with reference to actors

Recipient	Donor
Aid-dependence (within power dynamics)	Aid-volatility
Capacity (within power dynamics)	Aid-flexibility

Source: author's own compilation

This section elaborated on general institutional factors relevant to actors and their relationships. The following sections introduce the term interaction to discuss the types of aid-relationships and specific conditions under which each type of interaction is formed.

2.3 Interaction

The analytical framework presented here uses the term 'interaction' to differentiate various aid-relationships. As a generic term, it encompasses the variety of relationships between the stakeholders, including, but not limited to the joint (cooperation) and parallel (coordination) realization of development assistance. Interaction evolves over time. Thus, actors may have different types of interactions with each other within the same development assistance.

There are several means of interaction, including meetings, phone calls, emails, etc. (Uduji 2016, pp. 74-75). The frequency of interaction varies depending on the level of actors involved and the necessity for it (see Swedlund 2017, pp. 63-64). Thus, meetings involving high-level state officials or donor representatives are less frequent than the ones including the actors directly involved in the implementation of the development assistance. In addition to hierarchy, the differences in frequency also relate to necessity. The actors implementing aid may need more frequent interaction to resolve relevant technical issues related to the project. Thus, there are no guidelines or rules on the frequency of interaction, as it remains case specific.

2.3.1 TYPES AND LEVELS OF INTERACTION

This study defines three levels of interaction among the stakeholders, namely, donor-donor, donor-recipient state, donor and/or recipient state with CSOs (see Table 1, p. 2). Table 3, p. 11, presents ‘ideal’ types of interactions at donor-donor, donor-recipient state, and donor / recipient state with CSOs.

The types presented in Table 3 are ‘ideal’, because in practice, the actors may have a combination of different types of interactions and aid-relationships may evolve from one type to another. The sub-sections below introduce each type of interaction and explain the reasons behind their formation, as well as interests and (dis)incentives the actors have for pursuing each of them.

2.3.1.1 Non-coordination

Non-coordination may range from the non-interaction of actors with each other to the non-compliance of one actor with the priorities of another. Among donors, this means no exchange of information, resulting in an unawareness of each other and a subsequent duplication of activities. For donors

with the recipient state, non-coordination may refer to donor(s) pursuing activities without exchanging information with the state, or without complying with its priorities. Regarding the donors and the recipient state with CSOs, non-coordination is expressed by the non-involvement of the latter in development assistance.

The relevant characteristic of non-coordination is the lack of interest among donors and recipients in interaction, possibly due to the non-compliance of development assistance with the (personal) preferences of individuals representing the recipients and donors. In this way, non-coordination could be the outcome of a conflict between the actors’ ‘self-interests’ and expectations from their organizational positions. The professionalization of individuals implies that they act within the constraints of the organizations they represent. The actors’ interests certainly go beyond the development assistance. The individual perceptions of policies or areas ‘worth’ prioritizing as well as personal career aspirations may influence the actor’s decision to interact with others. Since the coordination of activities is time and resource

Table 3.
‘Ideal’ types of interaction between the actors*

Interaction		Donor-donor	Donor-recipient state	Donor or the (recipient) state – recipient CSOs**
Non-coordination		Project duplication and no information exchange	Non-coordination with state priorities, and no information exchange	Non-involvement of CSOs
Coordination		Parallel implementation with information exchange		
Cooperation	Unequal	Unequal cooperation one donor dominating the relationship	Donor-driven cooperation e.g., Conditional loans State-driven cooperation e.g., Aid mainstreaming	‘Utilitarian’ approach CSOs as ‘passive’ recipients
	Equal	Partnership comparatively equal donors	Partnership based on principles of equality of donors and the state	

Notes: * This study does not differentiate ranges within each type of interaction. Thus for various degrees of cooperation and coordination, see, e.g., Woods (2011). ** The author suggests similar types of interaction between donors and CSOs, and the state with CSOs because of power inequalities in both cases. The (recipient) state may not be providing aid, but it regulates the social, security, economy etc. and in some cases even the facilities and bureaucratic processes relevant to CSO activities. For this reason, the author suggests that the state-CSO and donor-CSO have similar power inequalities.

Source: The categories in the table are defined by the author based on the review of literature on cooperation, coordination of foreign aid, and the community-based approach to development aid.

consuming (see the following section on coordination), non-coordination could be more promising to actors in the short-term perspective, as this does not require time and an additional workload in contrast to coordination or cooperation.

Non-coordination takes place in cases of inequality between donors and recipients. The recipient is too aid-dependent to raise the issue of non-coordination or has no capacity to require/implement the donors' compliance with its requirements. Donors, in their turn, are disincentivized by the time and resources needed for coordination to initiate this voluntarily. Potential incentives for donors to coordinate with each other could relate to increasing their influence over the recipient. However, as the recipient is aid-dependent, each donor may already have leverage over it and see no reason for coordinating with each other.

In general, non-coordination is likely to take place during a political crisis or humanitarian disaster, when the recipient state is highly dependent on the assistance and has no capacity to request or implement donor coordination. One of the examples could be the case of humanitarian assistance during the Haitian earthquake. The Haitian president stated that the government 'has not seen one cent of that money that has been raised for Haiti,' and the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF or the Doctors without Borders) indicated that the international coordination of effort was 'not existing or not sufficient' (Woods 2011, pp. 2-3). Another example of non-coordination in natural disasters is the three-time vaccination of a girl in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, in 2005 (see Chandy and Kharas 2011, pp. 741–742). The Indonesian Health Ministry together with the United Nations Children's Fund and other organizations developed a large measles immunization campaign, with the aim to vaccinate over 1.3 million children in the districts affected by tsunami (UNICEF 2005). During the campaign healthcare doctors noticed an unusual case of measles in a lit-

tle girl, which was later explained with her three-time vaccination by three different organizations (Carbajosa 2005). In addition to natural disasters, non-coordination may take place during internal conflicts when donors work with government, oppositional forces or both, with programmes running 'in parallel to government priorities' and coordination efforts (Barnes 1998, pp. 11–15). Non-coordination in political crisis and natural disasters also relates to time pressure faced by donors and recipients. Thus, a multiplicity of actors with different organizational/personal interests and various perspectives on the outcome along with time constraints may contribute to non-coordination.

2.3.1.2 Coordination

Coordination at donor-donor, donor-state, donor/state with CSOs is expressed by the parallel implementation of activities with an information exchange. In short, all three actors pursue their activities without involving each other. Coordination, similar to cooperation (see the following section on cooperation) at different levels, has been emphasized in a number of international documents, such as the Cotonou Agreement (2000), the Rome Declaration on Harmonization (2003), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008). The coordination between actors means that there is an agreement on priorities. Actors pursue their activities parallel to each other but in a coordinated manner to achieve certain objectives. This agreement requires the recipient's capacity and/or the donors' willingness to engage in coordination. The recipient's capacity is essential (Uduji 2016, p. 10), since the recipient should be able to request, and most importantly, ensure donor coordination and compliance with its priorities. However, coordination could also be the outcome of donor initiative. For instance, the Joint Country Partnership Strategy (JCPS) in Tajikistan was established by donors, with the government of Tajikistan expressing its interest at later stages; and there is still un-

certainty whether JCPS is a state-donor or a donor-donor coordination unit (Linn 2009, p. 9). The reasoning behind the coordination taking place as a result of the donors' initiative could be (in addition to altruistic motives) the donors' interest in increasing their influence over the recipient. Thus, the recipient may still be aid-dependent, as in the case of non-coordination, but the influence of the individual donor may not be sufficient or as high as in the case of coordination.

Ideally, coordination provides a 'win-win' situation for all actors involved. The recipient obtains access to financial and other resources to implement the policies that are considered to be relevant. Coordination also decreases the recipient's administrative costs. This may help to avoid situations like Vietnam, where it was reported that seven hundred eighty-two donor missions requested 'time and attention' from the recipient government (Lawson 2013, p. 5). Although coordination requires the time and resources to agree on goals and activities, this nevertheless decreases 'transaction costs' in such situations. The recipient deals with multiple donors at once instead of negotiating with them on an individual basis. Donors decrease their costs in the long-term perspective (Annen and Moers 2016, p. 16). Through coordination, donors gain more leverage over the recipient, which might be hard to achieve individually without considerable spending. Additionally, via coordination, donors reduce the potential duplication of their activities, 'cross-purposes' or activities neutralizing each other, and avoid a decreased scale of activities because of their fragmentation (Lawson 2013, p. 4). In the long-term, both donors and recipients benefit from coordination.

Simultaneously, there are a number of disincentives for donors to coordinate with each other or with the recipient. These are taking responsibility for coordination, the political agenda of each donor and the diversity in approaches to aid provision (see Lawson 2013, pp. 16-22; Olivé and Pérez 2015, p. 59; Uduji 2016, p. 76). Donor-driven coordination requires donors to take

financial and other relevant responsibilities over organizing meetings, negotiations, etc. This also requires the flexibility of the assistance to adjust to the priorities of other donors or the recipient. This is problematic for the assistance driven by a pre-defined political agenda (cf. Lawson 2013, p. 20). Donors may also have different approaches to development assistance and its distribution, which may also challenge the coordination of their efforts. In this way, coordination is challenged by both personal interests (additional workload) and organizational positions (adjusting approaches and principles).

Another challenge to coordination is the lack of the third party 'imposing' it. Donors face peer pressure but no other incentives to improve aid quality (Renzi 2006, p. 2). However, it should be acknowledged that peer pressure may still incentivize donors to change their aid systems. DAC peer-reviews, for example, provide recommendations and suggestions to donors on aid improvement. Despite their non-compulsory character, the reviews contributed to reforming the aid structure in donor countries. After continued suggestions on decreasing tied aid⁹, the US, for instance, increased the percentage of untied aid from 32% to 62.5% (See OECD 2016, p. 70). Similarly, Switzerland and Germany launched reforms to decrease inefficiencies of their aid systems (See OECD 2009, p. 16; OECD 2010, p. 63). The potential reasoning for donors to implement DAC recommendations could be the 'image' of the donor. Donors follow their statements because they care about their image. Increased pressure on showing the 'effectiveness' of the assistance (Lamothe 2010, p. 16) along with the concern about 'image' potentially incentivizes donors to follow the peer-review recommendations. It should be noted, however, that despite the changes, none of the above-mentioned donors fully complied with the indicators stated in the Paris Declaration on

9 Tied aid has the condition under which development aid should use goods and services from the country providing assistance (OECD 2019b).

Aid Effectiveness (See OECD 2011, p. 63; OECD 2010, p. 73; OECD 2009, p. 72). Thus, peer-reviews may be an incentive, but the range of changes nevertheless remains up to each donor.

Nevertheless, the main challenge to coordination between donors and donors with the recipient state is the bureaucratic structure or complexity of the donors' aid structure as well as the multiplicity of the actors involved. Twenty-one government agencies are engaged in the development aid of the United States, with the largest, USAID, providing 60% of total assistance (OECD 2016, pp. 49; 58). In Germany, along with the division between the technical (GIZ) and the financial assistance (KfW), various NGOs, political foundations and church-based organizations are involved in development assistance (OECD 2015, p. 53). The Swiss development cooperation also consists of a number of actors, such as the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (including SDC); the Federal Department of Economic Affairs (including the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs - SECO); Federal Department of Justice and Police (including the Federal Office for migration), the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports; the Federal Department for Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication (including here the Federal Office for Environment), Cantons and municipalities (OECD 2009, p. 25). This multiplicity of actors causes coordination issues within the aid structure of all three donors. These are issues with the coordination of activities, operational approaches, problems with finding a common vision, reporting procedures, etc. (OECD 2011, p. 36; OECD 2010, pp. 78-79; OECD 2009, p. 92). Thus, before coordinating with other donors or the recipient, donor organizations face considerable coordination problems within their aid structure. Moreover, similar to donors, the recipients include a number of institutions, such as different ministries, funds and state agencies along with non-state actors such as CSOs. The multiplicity of institu-

tions on both the donor and recipient sides cause coordination problems.

One needs to go beyond the aggregated notion of 'donors' and 'recipients', and understand the actors involved in the assistance, their motives and challenges. As previously discussed in the section on non-coordination, interaction takes place if it meets the actors' individual and organizational interests, such as improved career perspectives or accessing additional resources. The actors involved in development aid are interested in maximizing their personal benefits beyond the development assistance. They may engage in coordination if it is required by their position or if it promises professional advancement. Although coordination may decrease the workload in the long-term, in the short-term it requires staff involvement and time for negotiations that may take up to several years (see Lawson 2013, p. 19). Facing a trade-off between long- and short-term benefits, the actors may favour the latter. Furthermore, the actors might also be driven by their perceptions of what is 'important' and engage in coordination or cooperation (discussed later) if it contributes to causes the actors pursue.

2.3.1.3 Cooperation

In this working paper, cooperation is defined as a joint realization of development aid. It suggests four phases of the assistance, namely, initiation, design, implementation and evaluation. These stages are not consecutive, since evaluation, for instance, can take place before, during or at the end of the assistance. However, differentiation into phases allows analysing the roles of actors throughout the assistance as well as the division of labour between them. Depending on the role of actors in each of these phases, this working paper distinguishes between 'unequal' and 'equal' types of cooperation. The former takes place when one of the actors dominates the interaction, while the latter means that actors are equally engaged in all four stages of the assistance and there

is equal division of labour between them. The following sub-sections describe the two types of cooperation at donor-donor, donor-recipient state, donor and recipient state with CSOs levels.

'Unequal' cooperation

First, between donors, 'unequal' cooperation means that one donor relies on the operational procedures of another, complies with the regulations, etc. The second donor plays the 'leading' role, potentially due to providing larger share of the assistance. Nevertheless, the leading position is not only based on finances but may also refer to responsibility over the outcomes. A relevant example of the 'lead' donor is the World Bank (WB), which, along with KfW and SDC, provides budget support to the Kyrgyz Republic for healthcare. The WB was selected as the lead donor among these three because of its large human resources for evaluation, auditing, etc. (Author interview 6/24/2016). Two other donors follow the WB's operational procedures on evaluation. According to Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2016), the emergence of the 'dominant' donor means that other donors are either 'less motivated' or 'much poorer' to compete (p. 2). For the WB in the Kyrgyz Republic, the choice was driven by capacity rather than finances. Although, given that both KfW and SDC provide project-based assistance to healthcare in addition to budget support, outsourcing is also more efficient than devoting additional funds for evaluation.

Second, in relationships between the donor and the recipient state, unequal cooperation takes two forms, namely, conditional loans, or cooperation driven by donors and their conditions, and aid mainstreaming or the aid driven by the recipient state and its priorities. Aid conditionality is primarily discussed in reference to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and WB Structural Adjustment Programmes, implemented in the 1980s and 1990s, with the requirement for

the recipient to fulfil a number of conditions¹⁰. But conditionality is not limited to macroeconomic measures. Political conditions have also been part of aid provision and sanctions (cf. Crawforda and Kacarska 2019). As Molenaers et al. (2015) argue, the aid invariably comes with 'some implicit or explicit political conditions' (p. 4). A vivid example of political conditionality in aid is the peace transition in Mozambique. Donors, providing assistance to the country, promised a 'large infusion of aid' in return for signing the General Peace Accord in Rome (1992) (Manning and Malbrough 2010, pp. 147-149; 164). The accord was signed by the government and oppositional RENAMO military group. This example illustrates policy change in exchange for aid, but there are also cases of post-conditionality, when aid recipients are only those with a 'good policy environment' (see The World Bank 1998).

Another form of unequal cooperation between the donor and the recipient is when aid is driven by the priorities of the latter, with donors adjusting their activities accordingly. This working paper defines this type of interaction as aid mainstreaming. The idea of the recipient state being the 'driver' of interaction complies with the notion of 'ownership'¹¹, emphasized in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008)¹². An example of aid mainstreaming is the sector budget support, according to which donors stream their funding via the budget of the recipient country. Budget support is the most likely aid modality where the 'ownership' takes place (Armon 2007, p. 653; Swedlund 2017, p. 15).

10 For more discussion on this topic, see Renzio and Mulley 2006; Cornia et al. 1987 and 1988; White and Dijkstra 2003; for discussions on the Washington Consensus cf. Gore 2000.

11 Ownership can be defined as 'the control of recipients over the process and outcome of aid negotiations' (Whitfield and Fraser 2010, pp. 342-343).

12 For more discussions on ownership, see Ohno and Ohno 2008; Menocal and Mulley 2006; Whitfield and Fraser 2010; Jerve et al. 2008.

However, its practical implementation varies. Donors have different approaches to the budget support. The US generally does not use this modality (see Lawson 2013), whereas the initially 'cautious attitude' of Germany and Switzerland (OECD 1998, p. 10; OECD 2005, p. 81) changed towards the usage of this modality along with project-based assistance. Furthermore, the aid mainstreaming may also take place without the budget support. A potential example is the Health Sector Strategic Master Plan (2006-2015) in Mongolia. Developed as the outcome of collaboration between the national and international actors (Ulikpan et al. 2014, pp. 1–7), the plan highlighted the country's healthcare priorities. With the demand from the Ministry of Health, donors complied with the national strategic plan. The Millennium Challenge Account, for instance, changed its programmatic focus from the construction of a tertiary care diagnostic and treatment center to targeting non-communicable diseases and injuries, in compliance with the strategy (Ulikpan et al. 2014, p. 7).

Third, for donor and state interactions with CSOs and communities, unequal cooperation refers to a 'utilitarian' approach. This approach was initially used to discuss community participation in development aid (Morgan 2001). The analytical framework presented here extends to explaining the interaction of CSOs with other actors. Following the 'utilitarian' perspective, communities (in this study CSOs) are engaged as 'passive means to reach the objectives of the programme' (Rasschaert et al. 2014, p. 7) 'more efficiently, effectively or cheaply' (Nelson and Wright 1995, p. 1). CSOs are merely seen as 'vehicles through which resources are dispersed' (Earle et al. 2004, p. 31). A 'utilitarian' approach to CSOs is not uncommon. Earle et al. (2004) discussed the World Bank community engagement driven by 'maximum efficiency and avoidance of elite capture' (p. 14). The United Nations Development Programme also acknowledged the problem of 'incentives and

procedures', contributing to the utilitarian approach among its staff members towards CSOs (UNDP 2001, pp. 5–6).

According to the 'utilitarian' perspective, CSOs are dependent on 'external' assistance due to a low capacity and structural barriers (Rasschaert et al. 2014). These include, for instance, illiteracy (Jana et al. 2004, p. 410), gender-related biases (World Health Organization 2008, p. 51), the political situation in the country and poverty (Fawcett et al. 1995, p. 680; Uphoff et al., 1998, p. 83 in Morgan 2001, p. 222). Because of these obstacles, CSOs are unable to equally participate throughout the development assistance and their role is limited to implementing the ideas or approaches of other actors. Both donors and the recipient state use CSOs to implement their programmes or policies and promote their own interests, but not those of the CSOs.

The potential reasons for donors and the recipient state to engage in unequal cooperation are accessing resources and increasing their influence. Conditional loans take place when the recipient is dependent on aid and has a low capacity. Thus, the recipient follows most, if not all donor requirements to gain access to resources. This corresponds with Andrews's (2013) suggestion that aid-dependent countries and organizations are more likely to adopt externally imposed reforms while fighting for their 'survival' (pp. 69–70). Consequently, aid mainstreaming takes place when the recipient does not depend on the assistance and has a sufficient capacity for autonomous action. Here, the recipient defines its own conditions for the assistance. In both cases, donors are interested in engaging in 'unequal' cooperation to increase their influence over the recipient (in addition to possibly altruistic motives), which means that individually, each donor has less or insufficient influence than it does in unequal cooperation. Furthermore, the engagement in aid mainstreaming, such as the sector budget support, provides donors with access to policy discussions with high-level

officials. Thus, donors may influence policy-making, which would be difficult to achieve with project-based assistance (see Lawson 2013, p. 17). The reasons for donors and the recipient states to engage in unequal cooperation with CSOs are similar, namely accessing additional resources and increasing outreach of activities. Donors involve CSOs to implement development assistance, including the provision of healthcare services. DAC members work with national and international NGOs to deliver social services, including health (OECD 2011a, pp. 14-22). CSOs provide access to 'free' labour (Earle et al. 2004) and contribute to the acceptance of reforms suggested by development assistance by the local population (cf. Restrepo 2000, p. 20; World Health Organization 2008, p. 8; Sarriot et al. 2004, p. 25; Scheirer 2005, p. 338; Aubel and Sambandure 1996; Kiwanuka et al. 2015; Walsh et al. 2012, p. 1). The training of communities is efficient, as this can be done at relatively cheap costs and in a short period of time (see Abbey et al. 2013, pp. 99-100; World Health Organization 2008, p. 66). There is evidence that the programmes implemented via community-based organizations (CBOs) continue longer than the ones via a recipient state (cf. Walsh et al. 2012, pp. 11-12; Restrepo 2000, p. 20). Similar to donors, the recipient state involves CSOs, primarily to delegate the responsibilities in social services. CBOs are engaged in disease prevention activities, health promotion, raising population awareness, primary healthcare provision, nutritional programmes (cf. Roussos and Fawcett, p. 371; Fawcett et al. 1995, p. 678; Amazigo et al. 2007, p. 2079; Raeburn et al. 2006, p. 88).

However, the involvement of NGOs is different from the CBOs. Although both organizations are meant to 'represent people,' NGOs have a higher level of professionalization, operate at local (village, city), national (country) and international levels and have relatively less connections to the local population. In contrast, CBOs have a rela-

tively strong connection to the local population and depend on its support. By targeting issues that are relevant, understandable, acceptable and important to the population as a whole, community organizations gain population support (see Alexander et al. 2003, p. 1475; Paine-Andrews et al. 2000, p. 249; Roussos and Fawcett, pp. 391-392; Mitchell and Shortell 2000, pp. 249-250) and obtain in-kind contributions from local people as well as an additional workforce (e.g., volunteers). Accordingly, NGOs often represent the interests of 'disadvantaged' or 'underrepresented' groups of populations, such as sexual minorities or persons with disabilities. For this reason, NGOs do not rely much on the acknowledgement of the general but the targeted population. Therefore, they are more flexible in raising 'sensitive' issues, such as protecting the rights of sex workers. CBOs may also raise these issues, but they still work on areas of concern for the majority of population, rather than specific groups. NGOs are often involved in promoting 'sensitive' issues or doing outreach to 'hard-to-reach' populations, such as e.g. sex workers. Since NGOs raise issues outside the 'priority' areas of the state and/or criticize it for not providing certain services or rights, the interaction between the recipient state and NGOs might be problematic.

For CSOs, development assistance promotes access to financial, in-kind and technical resources. In addition to project-specific activities, donors may offer capacity building training. The state, in turn, may not offer finances (although this depends on the state) but in-kind support. CSOs engage in 'unequal' cooperation in circumstances of high aid dependence and low capacity.

Accessing the resources and increasing the influence may comply with the actors' interests at personal (acknowledgment, promotion) and organizational (meeting the targets, project deliverables) levels. Overall, the 'unequal' cooperation is likely to be driven by 'objective' concerns of increasing the payoffs as a result of interaction.

'Equal' cooperation

Equal cooperation takes place when the actors involved in aid realization are equally engaged throughout the assistance (initiation, design, implementation and evaluation) and there is an equal division of labour between them.

Equal cooperation relates to the notion of partnerships. Partnerships were highlighted as the 'core' of the WB and IMF Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (Biondo 2015, pp. 10-11; Menocal and Mulley 2006, p. 2). Partnerships between donors and recipients based on 'reciprocal rights and obligations' were previously stressed in the Report of the Commission on International Development (Pearson et al. 1969, pp. 125-126). The reasoning behind its introduction was to promote the equal participation of donors and recipients. Partnerships are founded on equality, trust¹³ (Hyden 2008, p. 260), non-conditionality (Abrahamsen 2004, p. 1463) and shared responsibilities. According to the first, none of the parties dominate aid realization. Trust is ensured in partnerships with both recipients and donors fulfilling their commitments (Biondo 2015, pp. 11-12). In practice, this is often problematic, as both donors and recipients may break their promises in the face of pressure from their constituencies, parliaments, etc. The third characteristic of equal cooperation or partnerships is non-conditionality. The ideal form of partnership has no conditions (Abrahamsen 2004, p. 1463). This means that donors and recipients fulfil their responsibilities voluntarily. In practice, conditionality is inevitable. The analytical approach presented here as-

sumes that partnerships may have conditions as long as they are uniformly applicable to all parties. Shared responsibilities, the last element of partnerships, means that the labour is equally divided between the parties. In general, equal cooperation or partnership rarely takes place in practice, although there are some exceptions.

First, between donors, equal cooperation seldom occurs because of 'harmonization' issues. Power inequalities between donors are not similar to those in a donor-recipient relationship. Donors vary in their capacities, awareness of the recipient country's context, etc. However, receiving finances from countries (multilateral), public institutions (bilateral) or individuals (private foundations), donors are relatively independent from each other. For this reason, a major issue for cooperation between donors is harmonization. Following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), harmonization is defined as the process of establishing 'common arrangements', 'simplifying procedures' and increasing the 'complementarity' of the assistance by 'dividing the labour'¹⁴. Harmonization is essential to equal participation at all stages of development assistance, because it means that donors agree on joint activities ('common arrangements'), joint operational procedures to be used ('simplifying procedures') and share responsibilities ('dividing labour'). This is problematic for several reasons.

As previously discussed in the section on coordination, donors have different goals and perspectives that may prevent them from cooperation. Nevertheless, the most pressing issue for donors in equal cooperation is adopting joint procedures, essential to joint implementation and the evaluation of the

13 Austin and Seitanidi (2012) and Seitanidi and Crane (2009) discuss different stages of partnership formation, implementation and institutionalization. Kindornay (2014) and Abrahamsen (2004) additionally discuss different types of partnerships by levels as 'strong' and 'weak,' as well as by subjects, such as 'philanthropic,' 'transactional' etc. This working paper does not discuss types of partnerships, since the main aim is to see how partnerships take place between various actors.

14 The Paris Declaration does not give the exact definition of harmonization but lists responsibilities of donors and recipients in this regard. The above-mentioned definition is the compilation of donors' responsibilities word by word (See the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness 2005, p. 6).

assistance. Defining 'ideal' types of interaction, the approach presented here argues that equal participation means equality in all terms, including the use of operational procedures. It requires lengthy discussions and given the complex structure of donors and their adherence to their own rules, this might be problematic to implement in practice. The complexity of operational procedures discourages partnerships (see OECD 2016, p. 19; Sasaoka and Nishimura 2006, p. 68). Furthermore, domestic politics and the structure of the donor may prevent harmonization. Regarding the US, for instance, the issue of partnerships is also related to congressional earmarks on development aid (OECD 2011, pp. 70-71). The earmarks decrease flexibility by providing geographic and sectoral prescriptions to the assistance. For Germany, cooperation with other donors is challenged by coordination issues within the German-aid system and its fragmentation (OECD 2010, pp. 78-79). Thus, differences in goals, operational procedures, the influence of domestic politics and the structure of development assistance may prevent donors from cooperating with each other equally.

Nevertheless, there are cases of equal cooperation between donors. This takes place between similar donors of a medium or small size. Donors with 'similar policy preferences' tend to cooperate with each other, particularly in cases when they cannot compete with the rival donor on an individual basis (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2016, p. 2). Similarity may refer to goals, approaches to development aid (e.g., grassroots vs central) or a general vision (e.g., gender issues). There are a number of examples of cooperation between similar donors (cf. Sasaoka and Nishimura 2006) or partnerships based on shared interests (Lawson 2013, p. 23). In addition to similarities, 'equal' cooperation tends to take place between medium-sized donors. Similar size and capacities ensure non-domination by any of them. Cooperating with each other, these donors decrease their costs (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2016, p. 2). A poten-

tial example here is cooperation between the Norwegian and Swedish aid agencies in Ethiopia. Operating in healthcare and education, two donors agreed to divide the areas to decrease the administrative costs (Sasaoka and Nishimura 2006, p. 70). The Swedish agency took over healthcare, and the Norwegian agency took over education, but the countries shared information, reports and conducted joint audits (Sasaoka and Nishimura 2006, p.70). It is difficult to say to what extent two agencies 'harmonized' their procedures beyond mere division of labour to reduce the transaction costs; but similarity between donors contributed to cooperation.

Overall, smaller (also medium) donors tend to support cooperation and have less aid fragmentation¹⁵ (Sasaoka and Nishimura 2006, pp. 63-64; Annen and Moers 2016, p. 17). Having less resources, they are more interested in using these resources 'efficiently'. The interest in efficiency is evident in the case of Nordic or Scandinavian donors (Annen and Moers 2016, p. 17) that are mostly supportive of cooperation (Sasaoka and Nishimura 2006, pp. 63-64). Thus, despite the difficulties, 'equal' cooperation may take place in practice, and particularly between similar- and medium-sized donors.

Along with these incentives, there are a number of disincentives for donors to cooperate with each other. In addition to the costs of harmonization, these are reduced independence and the inability to tag their logo over the development assistance, which may be required as a part of accountability and transparency to home constituencies (Lawson 2013, p. 18). Furthermore, a joint realization of development aid additionally requires time for negotiations, even more than in the case of coordination. Time constraint is another major factor, particularly when donors have relatively limited time and a low staff number in the field.

15 Fragmentation is the amount and impact of aid decreased with its distribution into multiple sectors.

Unlike coordination, where short-term costs (additional workload) may take over the long-term gains (effectiveness, efficiency), equal cooperation raises issues at both personal and organizational levels. Additional workload and lengthy negotiations not promising personal benefits might be discouraging for the individual. But there are also considerable concerns at the organizational level (accountability to home constituencies, decreased independence), unless the equal cooperation brings 'objective' gains (reduced administrative costs) and/or complies with 'subjective' viewpoints (similarity in approaches). Although the latter could also be driven by 'objective' concerns, since the organizational similarity also means less time spent on negotiations and harmonization. Second, in the relationships of donors with the recipient state, equal cooperation similarly assumes the presence of equality, trust, non-conditionality and shared responsibilities between the parties. This is problematic due to power dynamics and the inherent inequality between the actors, discussed in the beginning of this working paper. The recipients might be reluctant to participate or criticize the donor because of the fear of donors cutting funding (Hinton 2004, p. 211). As the agenda is still set by donors (Nissanke 2008, p. 36), partnerships (or equal cooperation) might be seen as 'little more than rhetoric' (Abrahamsen 2004, pp. 1455-1456). Because of aid dependence and limited capacity, equal cooperation rarely takes place between recipient countries and their donors.

Similar to coordination, donors might be interested in equal cooperation if this promises more influence over the recipient state. Another incentive is overcoming the increased criticism of development aid and donors' activities. There is an increasing pressure on donor agencies to show that they 'make a difference' (Lamothe 2010, p.16), also reflected in a recognition of the failure of structural adjustment loans in the mid-1990s (Nissanke 2008, p. 23). Regard-

ing the recipient states, a major incentive for equal cooperation is to balance their relationships with donors and negotiate better terms and conditions of the assistance. Government officials are interested in increasing their terms in politics and gaining support of the coalitions (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2016, pp. 1-2), and development aid may provide visibility of their activities in front of the constituencies. Accounting for the priorities of the recipient state, equal cooperation is different from unequal because it occurs when both parties equally participate throughout the development assistance and none of the parties impose conditions on another. Incentives and disincentives at the individual level are similar to those described in the previous section on 'unequal' cooperation, namely, personal benefits in terms of career, or challenges such as increased time spent and workload. At the organizational level, the selection of equal cooperation could relate to the 'objective' concerns, such as closer engagement with the recipient country, if not be feasible otherwise, since the recipient is not aid-dependent. The 'subjective' concerns in their turn could point to the organizational or personal approaches of the actor or a combination of both ('self-identity') pointing to equality of relationships in development assistance.

Last, the relationship of donors and the recipient state with the CSOs' definition of equal cooperation in the analytical framework presented here is based on the 'empowerment' approach. Similar to the 'utilitarian' perspective, described in 'unequal' cooperation, this approach was initially suggested for community involvement (Morgan 2001, p. 223). This working paper extends it to cover CSOs. Empowerment is a 'process of gaining influence over conditions that matter to people' (Fawcett et al. 1995, p. 679). In development aid, it means that CSOs are able to express their concerns, set priorities, participate in negotiations and the decision-making process. They equally cooperate with other partners by participating through-

out the assistance. Following this approach, CSOs are seen as the source of initiative rather than 'passive' aid recipients (Rasschaert et al. 2014, p. 7; Morgan 2001, p. 223). However, there is an inherent inequality of donors, recipient states and CSOs because of the differences in resources and the structure of development assistance (see the section on power dynamics). The power dynamics further vary among CSOs. CBOs are relatively aid-dependent and require more capacity building activities. There is evidence that by the end of development projects, CBOs continued activities if they continued receiving funding from another donor, otherwise ceasing or decreasing their activities (Ahluwalia et al. 2010, pp. 40-41; Walsh et al. 2012, p. 6). The dependence of CBOs on donors is clearly illustrated by the statement of one CBO member in Central Asia: 'getting a grant is similar to receiving money from God' (Earle et al. 2004, p. 34). In contrast to CBOs, NGOs might also be aid-dependent but have a relatively higher capacity, although there is a variation between local, national and international NGOs. The organization with several branches across the country or in several countries has more human and financial resources than the one operating in a village or a town.

The interaction of CSOs with donors and the state depends on the priorities of the last two actors. Donor support to NGOs and CBOs varies (OECD 2011a). The US, for instance, traditionally emphasizes NGOs and largely relies on them in aid implementation (OECD 2003, 1-34; OECD 2011, p. 61). However, not all donors highlight CSOs in their activities. The percentage of German bilateral aid implemented to or by CSOs is lower than the DAC average (see OECD 2017, p. 201) and the country does not mention support to NGOs as part of its goals (OECD 2011a, p. 14). Similar to the US, Switzerland directs a considerable amount of its aid to or via CSOs, which is higher than the DAC average (OECD 2017, p. 273), although there are issues with pro-

curing mainly Swiss NGOs (OECD 2013). Thus, donors have different priorities and consequently establish different relationships with CSOs. Simultaneously, the extensive involvement of CSOs by the US or Switzerland does not automatically mean equal cooperation. Similar to donors, states have different priorities, and whether the engagement of CSOs in their activities represents equal cooperation remains questionable. 'Equal' engagement could, however, be related to 'subjective preferences', deriving from a personal or organizational stand towards the equality in development assistance.

3. CONCLUSION

A number of international instruments have been adopted to regulate the relationships between the providers ('donors') and recipients of development assistance. Overall, these instruments stressed 'coordination', 'cooperation' and 'partnership' between the actors involved in development aid. Along with the introduction of these terms, the relevant academic literature analysed different forms of relationships between donors and recipients. The analytical framework presented in this working paper intends to combine and synergize the literature to understand the meaning of relationships, its forms and relevant factors. It uses 'interaction' as a generic term and suggests a comprehensive framework with 'ideal' types of interaction for analysing relationships between donors, donors and recipient states along with donors and recipient states with civil society organizations. In alignment with actor-centred institutionalism, this analytical framework stresses that the selection of the form of interaction depends on the actors and institutions. In terms of actors, there is a considerable role of personal and organizational interests and constraints for pursuing each type of interaction. These are, for instance, differences in donors' approaches, presence/the lack of interest in interaction, willingness to take the

responsibility, complexity of the aid structure, time-constraints, peer-pressure, domestic politics, actors' similarities, etc. In terms of institutions, this analytical framework highlights four 'scope conditions' (in Rohlfing's 2012 term) relevant to interaction, namely, aid-dependence and capacity (as part of power dynamics), aid volatility and its (non) flexibility. Referring to 'ideal' types of interaction, this working paper described how these four conditions relate to each type on the examples of various donor agencies, recipient states and CSOs. But the types of interaction defined in this research are nevertheless 'ideal', since in practice, the actors may combine various forms and one form of interaction may evolve into another.

The analytical framework, presented in this working paper, has several limitations: First of all, emphasizing the importance of individual and organizational levels, along with their combination, this working paper still takes an aggregated perspective on the actors and institutions. There are some elaborations on the potential individual and organizational interests in each type of interaction, but the working paper does not elaborate on their combination and the role of 'identity' in interaction. The relevance of institutions also remained aggregated. A more detailed research on each type of interactions could address these issues by zooming into 'identity' formation and applicability of the four 'scope conditions' to individual and organizational dimensions. Second, this working paper does not elaborate on interdependence of multiple actors and their choices in each type of interaction. The follow-up research could address this, along with the 'objective' and 'subjective' considerations the actors have for pursuing each type of interaction. Third, this working paper does not illustrate how interaction may change throughout the assistance and whether 'scope conditions' change accordingly. However, a division into four stages of the assistance (initiation, design, implementation and evaluation) and analysing the role

of actors in each of them may serve this purpose. Lastly, arguing for the importance of relationships to the outcome of the development assistance, this working paper does not show how they matter, an issue which should definitely be addressed in the future.

Providing an overall picture of potential types of interaction between different actors in the development assistance, this working paper does not elaborate on the abovementioned areas. The following research, most likely a case study, with a detailed analysis of actors and institutions in the selected type of interaction could fill in these gaps.

Despite these limitations, the analytical framework, presented in this paper, provides a comprehensive overview and a basis for analysing the relationships between various actors. Although most examples used in this paper relate to healthcare, the framework is equally relevant to other areas, since the issues of inequality, capacity, aid volatility and flexibility are applicable to development aid in general.

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