

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# **‘Making Politics Practical II: Development Politics and the Changing Aid Environment’**

Joint PSA Development Politics Group/International Development Department (IDD),  
University of Birmingham Workshop

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013, University of Birmingham



In January 2007, the PSA Development Politics group and the International Development Department, University of Birmingham co-hosted a workshop on ‘Making Politics Practical’. That event explored how widespread changes within the aid environment, brought about in no small part thanks to the emphasis on governance, opened up space for political scientists to engage with policy makers on the politics of development.

Over five years later, we are reminded everywhere we turn about how central ‘getting politics right’ is for ensuring developmental success. This is particularly the case when it comes to the donor agenda on state-building and fragile states, but also in other areas, such as service delivery, local governance, security sector reform, aid effectiveness and so on. The rise of political analysis tools – discussed in many ways for the first time with an academic audience at the 2007 workshop – has burgeoned into a large industry, which is only now being critically examined by the academic community and where there is a considerable potential research agenda. Finally, in the UK the growing emphasis on evidence and value for money raises significant questions for the future of aid, and the academic community has a great deal to add to this.

The number of academics working in this area has exploded since 2007; however, political scientists continue to have a reputation – deserved or otherwise - for asking lots of questions, but hardly ever seeking solutions; for rarely moving beyond criticism into work that can actually help improve donor practice. This workshop - which will be held at the University of Birmingham and co-hosted between IDD and the PSA Development Politics Group - thus takes the 2007 event forward and explores the ‘(re)politicisation’ of development studies and the need for constructive, rather than merely critical, engagement with policy makers.

We welcome papers that further our understanding of the politics of development, whether this is within developing countries or the development community. Although we would like to keep this call for papers as open as possible, we have preference for papers that address one of the following: the politics of aid; political settlements within developing countries; political analysis/political economy analysis; new governance challenges; the politics of service delivery; state-building; and the challenges of delivering aid in fragile states.

We particularly welcome empirical papers/case studies, and we welcome paper proposals from both academics and practitioners.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words to be sent to Dr Heather Marquette ([h.a.marquette@bham.ac.uk](mailto:h.a.marquette@bham.ac.uk)) or Dr. Jewellord T. Nem Singh ([j.nemsingh@SHEFFIELD.AC.UK](mailto:j.nemsingh@SHEFFIELD.AC.UK)) by Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April. Further details available from <http://www.idd.bham.ac.uk> and **PSA WEBSITE**.

*The International Development Department is delighted to be hosting the DSA conference on the eve of its 50th anniversary in January 2014.*