



The Politics of Inclusive Development: interrogating the evidence.

Among those engaged in policy and planning of development, there is growing recognition that politics and institutions matter for inclusive development. However, the specific ways in which they shape possibilities, across different types and forms of development, and in different contexts, remains poorly understood. The importance of policy decisions was for example brought to the fore in the book *Asian Tigers, African Lions: Comparing the Development Performance of Southeast Asia and Africa* and the [synthesis report \*Developmental Regimes in Africa\*](#) that emphasizes the need to combine policy content with policy process and political settlement. Recently, the research institution [Effective States and Inclusive Development \(ESID\)](#) published “[The Politics of Inclusive Development](#)” edited by Sam Hickey, Kunal Sen and Badru Bukonya. It draws on a large number of studies provided by ESID’s multidisciplinary, multinational network of partners. The research helps to make the understanding of development more politically savvy, by developing the theoretical apparatus and knowledge base to support better informed development policy and practice. Below you can find a list with links to the chapters of the book that appeared elsewhere.

#### [Kunal Sen: The Political Determinants of Economic Growth](#)

Sen argues that political drivers of early stage growth accelerations are different from that of growth maintenance (Informal institutions help to start the growth and formal institutions are needed for the growth maintenance).

#### [Paul Mosley: The Politics of What Works for the Poor in Public Expenditure and Taxation](#)

The paper examines the questions of which fiscal (public expenditure and taxation) options work in terms of poverty reduction, and how they can be made implementable in practice. The point of departure is that although the poor, acting on their own, are politically weak, nonetheless there are ways in which they can make themselves essential to the elite, and this in combination with relevant policies and institutions has enabled poverty, in some countries and regions, to fall dramatically. Yet others have been excluded from this process.

#### [Claire Mcloughlin: The Politics of What Works in Service Delivery](#)

This paper examines the evidence on the forms of politics likely to promote inclusive social provisioning and enable, as opposed to constrain, improvements in service outcomes. It focuses on eight relatively

successful cases of delivery in a range of country contexts and sectors (roads, agriculture, health, education) where independent evaluations demonstrate improved outcomes.

**[Deval Desai and Michael Woolcock: The Politics and Process of Rule of Law Systems in Developmental States](#)**

Desai and Woolcock argue that the rule of law (ROL), although an “essentially contested concept”, can be understood pragmatically as a system that informs people of what to expect from others through durable and enforceable rules applying equally to all constituent members of a given juridical space. This literature review engages with “the politics of what works” with regard to ROL interventions in development, through an exploration of how these expectations and encompassing rules are shaped within and between groups, as political settlements broaden across political, economic and social dimensions.

**[Sohela Nazneen and Simeen Mahmud: The Gendered Politics of Securing Inclusive Development](#)**

Nazneen and Mahmud argue that political settlement frameworks are gender blind. This interrogates the nature of gendered political settlements through analyzing selected country cases studies of the gendered nature of political and policy-making processes and identifying the different contextual and structural factors that promote gender inclusive development policies and outcomes.

**[Arjan de Haan and Ward Warmerdam: The Politics of Aid Revisited: A Review of Evidence on State Capacity and Elite Commitment](#)**

Based on a systematic review of the impacts of aid on both state capacity for, and elite commitment to, sustainable development, this paper concludes that a better understanding of the impact of aid has the potential to directly inform practices of international development. This requires better empirical insight into how donors interact with formal and informal institutions in the countries where they work, particularly in aid-dependent countries.

**[Giles Mohan: China in Africa: Impacts and Prospects for Accountable Development](#)**

China is the major ‘new’ player in Africa and impacts on development and politics in numerous ways. The paper sets out an analytical framework which identifies the channels through which China engages with African development and the role the African state plays in mediating these interactions.

For further readings about new conceptual approaches and inclusive development you can read the article ‘[Thinking about the politics of inclusive development: towards a relational approach](#)’ by Sam Hickey.