Foreign aid and investment may boost technocratic improvements in African countries, but can also support the practices of authoritarian governments and development project implementation that involve human rights abuses.

This conference by NYU Development Research Institute, the Bard College Human Rights Project, and the Rift Valley Institute will explore the consequences of rights violations for long-term development. It will discuss research findings and feature dissenting voices that do not often receive a hearing in international development forums.

If you’ve already registered, we look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Register Now
I can't make it

Conference Agenda:

8:30am: Registration and Coffee
9:00am: Yaw Nyarko, NYU, Introduction
9:05am: Helen Epstein, Bard College and NYU, "Human Rights Problems in International Development Programs," Overview of
Conference Aims

Session 1: Moderator - Yaw Nyarko, NYU


9:45am: Frehiwot Samuele, "Not What They Wanted to Hear: A Supreme Court Judge Investigates Post-Election Violence in Ethiopia"

10:15am: Q&A with David Pred and Frehiwot Samuele

10:30am: Coffee Break

Session 2: Moderator - Helen Epstein, Bard College and NYU

10:45am: Soleyana Shimeles Gebremichael, Zone 9 Blogging Group, Ethiopia, "The Cost of Exercising Rights and Bringing Alternative Narration, The Case of Zone 9 Bloggers"

11:15am: Stefan Dercon, University of Oxford, "Barking Hyenas, Roaring Lions and Predatory Tigerfish: Aid in Troublesome Places"

11:45am: Q&A with Soleyana Shimeles Gebremichael and Stefan Dercon

12:00pm: Lunch

Session 3: Moderator - William Easterly, NYU

1:30pm: Jean Ensminger, California Institute of Technology, "Aid Fraud: A Kenyan Case Study"

2:00pm: Godber Tumushabe, Great Lakes Institute for Strategic Studies, "The Tragedy of Aid in Quasi-Democracies: Case Study of the Peace, Reconciliation and Development Program in Northern Uganda"

2:30pm: Q&A with Jean Ensminger and Godber Tumushabe

2:45pm: Coffee Break

Session 4: Moderator - John Ryle, Rift Valley Institute

3:00pm: Mareike Schomerus, London School of Economics and Political Science, "The Betrayal of 'South Sudan': Could Development Work without Imagining the State?"

3:30pm: Hugh Roberts, "South Sudan: A Dream Deferred"

4:00pm: Q&A with Mareike Schomerus and Hugh Roberts

Funding is generously provided by the John Templeton Foundation. Breakfast and lunch will be served.