



## Introduction

# Ethics and Economics: Main topic Justice and injustice in development

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In June 2018 the International Development Association (IDEA) hosted their eleventh international conference together with the Groupe de Recherche en Économie Théorique et Appliquée (GREThA) in the beautiful city of Bordeaux, France. The congress was called “*A World United: Allies and Ethical Action in International Ethical Development*”.

The conference brought together a considerable number of scholars from different corners of the world creating a platform to debate current issues and events in development. This year’s conference theme was “*A World United: Allies in Development*”. It focused on issues how to promote development via forming alliances, which is a pressing subject in today’s world. The conference theme was chosen with the hope of inspiring thoughtful conversations about the important relationships that can both frustrate and facilitate development. In a time in which nationalism, inequalities and anti-migration sentiments are on the rise in many countries, it more important than ever to keep the conversation going and look for new paths together, on an international level.

The International Development Ethics Association is uniquely suited for engaging in the discourse. It was founded 1984 as an international, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary group of philosophers, development and environmental theorists, and practitioners. In the light of reasonable ethical principles, IDEA is committed to bringing about improvements in development and environmental policies, institutions and projects.

Members of IDEA do not only focus on reflecting ethical development goals and strategies and connect them to relations between the “North” and “South”. Economic growth and the currently dominating neo-liberal ethics have failed to provide substantial human development. Quite to the contrary, it has often increased inequalities and precariousness. Scholars in IDEA are thus looking for alternatives rooted in ethical principles, which can be applied to the theory and practice of global, national, and local development. Many scholars in IDEA also devote their work to effect ethical development policies and practices. Since IDEA is an international network, its goal is also to promote solidarity, mutual support, and interchange among those development theorists and practitioners throughout the world who are seeking to implement ethically better development paradigms and strategies.

Given this premises, it comes as no surprise that many papers presented at the conference deal with the topic of justice and injustice, which is a foundational issue in development. The relationship of development policies to social justice is key theme for development ethics, and also a notoriously complex and difficult one. The current issue collects papers that deal with different aspects of justice and injustice in development that were presented at the IDEA conference. Thus, this special issue deals with foundational normative issues of development from diverse theoretical and conceptual perspectives including philosophical argument, empirical analysis of alliances within and across social categories and entities, examinations of policy, and the formulation of action strategies.

The first three papers address specific contexts in which injustices occur within development efforts. In her contribution, Christine Koggel addresses the deeply problematic issues of injustice of settler nations towards their indigenous population. Koggel discusses examples from the reports of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and of its National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Koggel to highlight her argument that that these reports bring the rich history of Indigenous collective interpretative resources and the networks of relationships shaped by them to light. These resources have hitherto been ignored or dismissed by employing the dominant collective interpretative resources of non-Indigenous Canadians. Koggel argues that we find foundational and structural injustices in settler nations, which are at bottom epistemic injustices, ones that have implications for accounts of agency, participation, and self-determination as they are affected by relationships of power. The latter get to determine who is allowed to participate or not, which is a vital and fundamental interest of social justice.

Epistemic justice is also a focal topic in Holly Longair's paper. Longair acknowledges that the concept of epistemic injustice has become very useful on an individual and institutional level, but that it leaves out an important dimension: epistemic frameworks. Drawing on examples of the Cuban health care system as a case study and the epistemic framework underlying it, Longair illustrates how prejudice can lead to the dismissal and marginalization of whole epistemic frameworks. She resumes that this leads to a significant form of epistemic injustice that needs to be further examined.

Steve Viner's contribution addresses injustices towards the poor in developing countries by discussing the justification often given for the establishment and continuing existence of sweatshops. Viner criticizes Benjamin Powell's alleged comprehensive moral defence of sweatshops. He argues that Powell's account fail fails to address its strongest moral opponent and is therefore far from comprehensive. By using several practical examples, he points out how that sweatshop employees are not being treated in accordance with the minimal moral treatment that they all deserve simply by being persons. In addition, Viner highlights the universal moral duty to set up institutions, policies and laws that help sweatshop employees get the minimal moral treatment that they deserve. As a result, Viner concludes that sweatshops should no longer be seen as the "first rung on the ladder out of extreme poverty." Rather, sweatshops keep the poor in poverty thereby pitying poor people against other poor people. The institution of sweatshops is deeply unjust as a result.

The remaining three papers deal with issues of justice and injustice on a more general, theoretical level. Jessica Payson raises the question how care ethics is equipped for dealing with structural vulnerabilities in development. She argues that care ethics faces a

fundamental challenge in addressing structural vulnerabilities. Her main argument is that one of its main strengths, namely the focus on alleviating individuals' material needs, generates a weakness. It can lead to disrespecting the voice of the concrete other. As a result, Payson concludes, a full application of care ethics as a response to structural vulnerabilities must moderate or at least complement its focus on material needs.

Mladjo Ivanovic examines another ethical theory that is used prominently in development. He explores the current problems surrounding humanitarian ethics from two perspectives. The first one argues that shortcomings of humanitarianism are symptoms of deeper social and political problems inextricably linked to the nature of humanitarian practices. The second critically assesses humanitarian compassion as the primary moral (and political) disposition of the 21st century. By pointing to inconsistencies and disclosing pathologies internal to the humanitarian system, Ivanovic shows the pitfalls that a reimagined humanitarianism needs to avoid. Based on his critical assessment, he makes a case for rethinking the objectives and nature of humanitarian assistance today in emphasising that humanitarianism should focus on restoring the autonomy of those affected by humanitarian crises and foster further development of their social environment, individual capabilities. An important part of this form of assistance lies in improving people's sustainability and resilience.

The final contribution of the issue deals with the topic of environmental justice and the concept of alliance. A focal topic is to whom or what human beings should have alliances to. Shashi Motilal's paper argues that ecological justice which is rooted in an ecocentric approach to nature can serve as the key to achieving integral human development. By distinguishing between relations at two distinct levels - one the relation among humans and another between the entire human community and other elements of the ecosystem – Motilal lines out that the latter is fundamental and the basis for justice between human beings.. The paper argues for a non-anthropocentric alliance between the human and the non-human realm in addition to the alliance among human communities to achieve the same purpose of ecological well-being and ecological justice.

The diversity and depth of the articles in this issue demonstrates the value of philosophical analysis in the context of justice and injustice. No doubt, development ethics is a complex and multidimensional matter, since it is an inter- and cross-disciplinary venture. Institutions, policies and attitudes need to go through critical scrutiny to examine the value and the problems that they create in development projects. Philosophers, ethicists, political, environmental and social scientists thus need to work closely together and be open for exchange with other disciplines. Only then, critical reasoning between and across disciplines will be fruitful. The IDEA conference of which the articles are a small, but important segment, has shown how such interdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue is possible and indeed necessary to meet the challenges in development that we face today.