



Third Tracking Development Conference 11-15 May 2010, Putrajaya, Malaysia

The Tracking Development project compares four countries in Southeast Asia (SEA) with four in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in order to explain why the former region has developed rapidly in the past half century, and the latter has not. In particular, the question is whether the contrast can be explained by specific policy choices.

The Third Tracking Development Conference was organized by the Tracking Development project team and the [Asia-Europe Institute](#) of the University of Malaya.¹

The conference consisted of an open day for a wider audience, followed by three days of working sessions for all members of the Tracking Development project team together with a number of special guests: Peter van Lieshout (member of the Netherlands' Scientific Council for Government Policy), Arie Kuyvenhoven (economist, Wageningen University, Netherlands), Moses Ikiara (Executive Director, Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis), David Ongolo (economist, Dutch Embassy, Nairobi) and Tim Kelsall (former editor of the journal *African Affairs*). The conference was concluded by an outing to Malacca and a visit to Seri Tanjung, which has twice been chosen as 'Malaysia's most beautiful village'.

Open day

The open day started with a presentation by David Henley on the main themes of Tracking Development, followed by a panel discussion on Kenya led by Jan Kees van Donge.²

In the afternoon, the keynote speech was delivered by Tun Musa Hitam, former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia and chairman of the Federal Land Development Authority. Following this speech, the conference participants were welcomed by Paul Bekkers, the Dutch ambassador to Malaysia. The open day was concluded with a presentation by Sulaiman Mahbob, chairman of the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority.



¹ For a list of participants, see appendix.

² For a summary of the panel discussion see Ton Dietz: Tracking Development: Summary of some major points during the panel sessions of the first (public) day of the third conference (in Putrajaya, Malaysia; May 10, 2010). Forthcoming.

Working Sessions

During the Second Tracking Development Conference in Dar-Es-Salaam in 2009, the discussion in the working groups focused on a theory which had been formulated within the project: that the three fundamental policy preconditions for sustained growth and poverty reduction are (1) adequate macroeconomic management; (2) economic freedom for peasant farmers and small entrepreneurs; and (3) pro-poor, pro-rural public spending. The team discussed whether and when each of these three pre-conditions were met in the eight countries of SEA and SSA covered by the project since 1960.³

The 2010 conference considered three deeper principles which arguably underlie both the choice of these policies, and their successful implementation, in Southeast Asia:

(1) The principle of **outreach**, or: 'quantity, not quality'. In successful developmental states, the primary criterion by which policies and interventions are selected is the number of people to whom they provide direct material benefit.

(2) The principle of **urgency**, or: 'priorities, not plans'. At least at the beginning of the development process, successful strategies do not involve meticulous long-term planning based on what is desirable in the future. They involve establishing clear priorities based on what is undesirable in the present.



(3) The principle of **expediency**, or: 'results, not rules'. In successful developmental states, legal principles, administrative procedures, political rights, and ideological precepts all take second place to the goal of improving the material living conditions of as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. Achieving that goal may involve tolerating corruption, bending rules, and infringing rights.⁴

The conference participants also developed a road map for the publication of an edited volume in the autumn of 2011, and discussed the themes they will be working on in the last year of the project.

At the end of the conference, the project's Steering Committee announced the results of the Tracking Development Falsification Award. Nine entries had been received, none of which managed convincingly to falsify the hypothesis regarding the three preconditions for sustained growth. The Committee nevertheless decided to award a proportion of the prize money to each of the two most challenging and thought-provoking entries, which

³ For more information see table in appendix and Jan Kees van Donge, David Henley, and Peter Lewis: Tracking Development in Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa: the primacy of policy.

⁴ For more information, see David Henley: Three principles of successful development strategy: outreach, urgency, expediency.

were written respectively by Felice Noelle Rodriguez and Anis Chowdhury, and by Bethuel Kinuthia.

Appendix

List of Participants

Un Kheang	TD In-Country Coordinator, Cambodia
Joseph Fernando	TD In-Country Coordinator, Malaysia
Riwanto Tirtosudarmo	TD In-Country Coordinator, Indonesia
Hamidin Abd. Hamid	TD In-Country Coordinator, Malaysia
Nghiem Lien Huong	TD In-Country Coordinator, Vietnam
David Uchenna	TD In-Country Coordinator, Nigeria
Enweremadu	
Othieno Nyanjom	TD In-Country Coordinator, Kenya
Damian M. Gabagambi	TD In-Country Coordinator, Tanzania
Lawrence Bategeka	TD In-Country Coordinator, Uganda
H.C.F. ten Brummelhuis	TD In-Country Coordinator, Nigeria
David Henley	TD Regional Coordinator for Southeast Asia and Country Coordinator, Indonesia and Malaysia
A.H.M. Leliveld	TD Country Coordinator, Uganda
J.K. van Donge	TD Regional Coordinator for Africa and Country Coordinator, Tanzania
A. Akinyoade	TD Country Coordinator, Nigeria
Un Leang	TD PhD researcher, Cambodia
Ahmad Helmy Fuady	TD PhD researcher, Indonesia
Bethuel Kinyanjui Kinuthia	TD PhD researcher, Kenya
Blandina Kilama	TD PhD researcher, Tanzania
Ursula Oberst	TD Project Officer
Bernard Berendsen	former Netherlands ambassador to Tanzania
Ton Dietz	Director, African Studies Centre; TD Country Coordinator, Kenya
Henk Schulte Nordholt	Head of Research, KITLV
Roel van der Veen	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tim Kelsall	former editor of <i>African Affairs</i>
David Ongolo	economist, Netherlands embassy, Nairobi
Arie Kuyvenhoven	emeritus professor, Wageningen University
Peter van Lieshout	member, WRR (Scientific Council for Government Policy)



The conference participants in Seri Tanjung

*Three preconditions for sustained growth:
dates from which present in eight countries since 1950*

	Macroeconomic stability: low inflation, little currency overvaluation	Pro-poor public spending on peasant agriculture and rural infrastructure	Economic freedom for peasant farmers and small entrepreneurs	Transition to sustained growth (date at which all three conditions met)
SE Asia				
Indonesia	1967	1967	1967	1967
Malaysia	[pre-1950]	1958	[pre-1950]	1958
Cambodia	1986	1998	1989	[1998?]
Vietnam	1986	1989	1989	1989
SS Africa				
Nigeria	1997	-	1986	-
Kenya	[pre-1950]	-	1995	-
Uganda	1989	-	1989	-
Tanzania	1995	1967-1982	1985	-

Ursula Oberst, 15 June 2010