Monitoring Movements in Development Aid: Recursive Partnerships and Infrastructures

Casper Bruun Jensen, Brit Ross Wanthereik

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In *Monitoring Movements in Development Aid*, Casper Jensen and Brit Winthereik consider the processes, social practices, and infrastructures that are emerging to monitor development aid, discussing both empirical phenomena and their methodological and analytical challenges. Jensen and Winthereik focus on efforts by aid organizations to make better use of information technology; they analyze a range of *development aid information infrastructures* created to increase accountability and effectiveness. They find that constructing these infrastructures is not simply a matter of designing and implementing technology but entails forging new platforms for action that are simultaneously imaginative and practical, conceptual and technical. After presenting an analytical platform that draws on science and technology studies and the anthropology of development, Jensen and Winthereik present an ethnography- based analysis of the mutually defining relationship between aid partnerships and infrastructures; the crucial role of users (both actual and envisioned) in aid information infrastructures; efforts to make aid information dynamic and accessible; existing monitoring activities of an environmental NGO; and national-level performance audits, which encompass concerns of both external control and organizational learning.Jensen and Wintereik argue that central to the emerging movement to monitor development aid is the blurring of means and ends: aid information infrastructures are both technological platforms for knowledge about aid and forms of aid and empowerment in their own right.

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