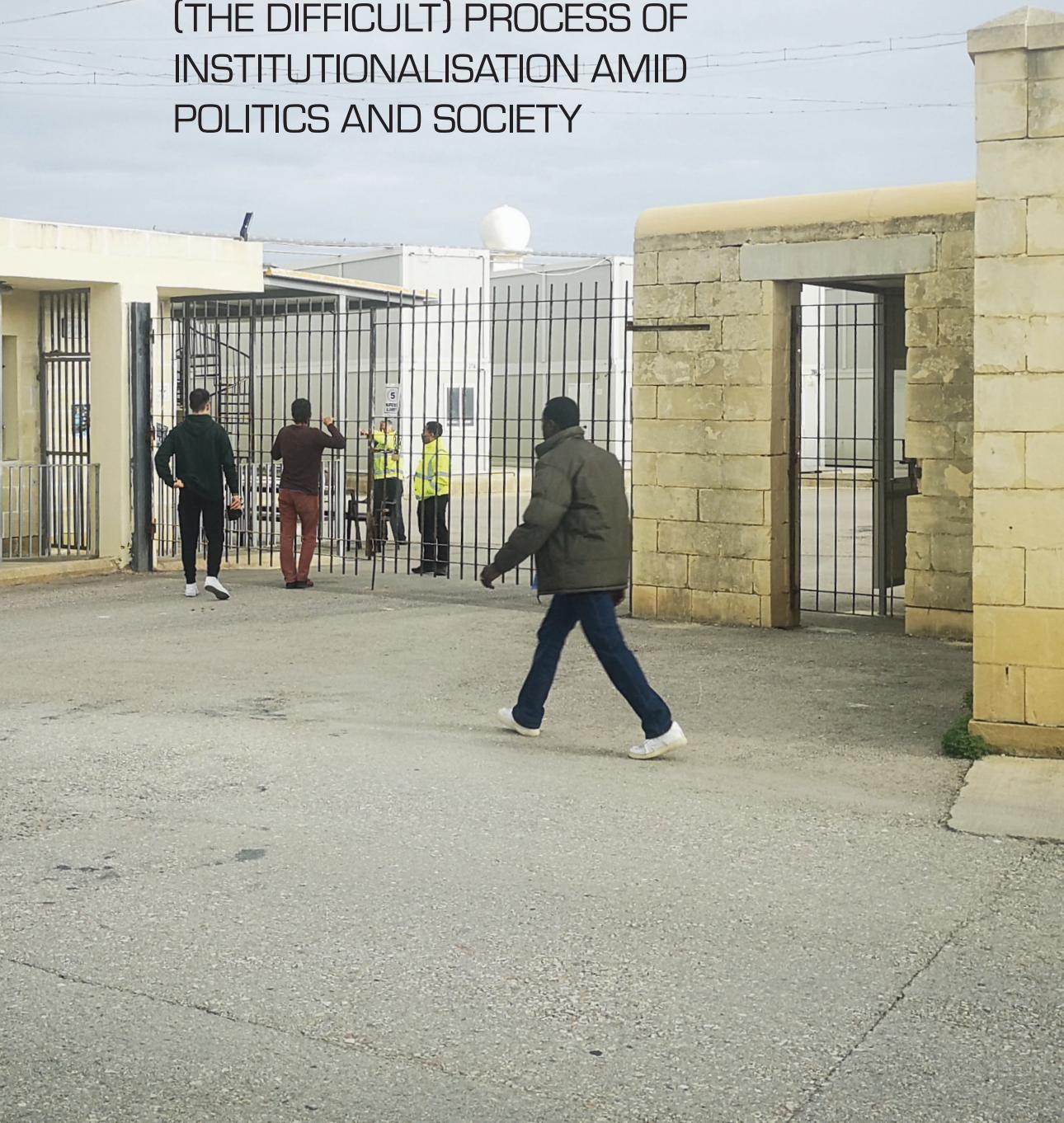


KATARZYNA ZALAS-KAMIŃSKA

POLISH AID

(THE DIFFICULT) PROCESS OF
INSTITUTIONALISATION AMID
POLITICS AND SOCIETY



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WYDAWNICTWO
KSIĘGARNIA
AKADEMICKA

KRAKÓW 2025

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Cover design
Lesław Ślawiński

On the cover
Refugee camp, Malta 2023 (photo by Jerzy Kamiński)

ISBN 978-83-8368-352-2 (druk)
ISBN 978-83-8368-353-9 (pdf))
<https://doi.org/10.12797/9788383683539>

The publication was supported by the University of Wrocław's fund for the scientific research and commercialization of its results, as well as by the Faculty of Social Science of the University of Wrocław

Księgarnia Akademicka Publishing
ul. św. Anny 6, 31-008 Krakow
tel.: 12 421-13-87; 12 431-27-43
e-mail: publishing@akademicka.pl <https://akademicka.pl>

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INTRODUCTION

The growing challenges of the contemporary world, the evolving dynamics of relations between donors and aid recipients, and the increasing disappointment with the outcomes of development cooperation, including the approaching deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are intensifying the debate on the need for changes in the architecture of global aid. It lacks effective coordination, data sources on the actual amount and extent of support provided. Navigating the aid system is becoming increasingly difficult, not only for experts or politicians, but also for societies.¹ There is a growing sense of political confusion and a lack of public understanding regarding ongoing aid efforts. A large number of development actors are coming up with new regulations, new concepts and are looking for more and more new institutional solutions for their activities. The question of an aid community, of cooperation within the framework of jointly developed rules and values, is relegated to the background. What prevails instead is a state of aid-related chaos and competing visions of how assistance should be delivered, including a worrying trend of implementing support solely to advance the individual interests of specific donors.

Both the debate on new institutional structures or the reorganisation of existing ones, and the heterogeneity and diversity of aid approaches, indicate that the global development cooperation system is facing a “diversification of the institutional landscape.” Attention is being drawn to the need to strengthen the Western model, which promotes not only specific interests but also values, as elements that condition the wealthier part of the world’s contribution to shaping its future.² There is broad consensus that, otherwise, there will be an increase in the duplication of efforts, competition, and fragmentation in aid activities,³ which will lead to public disillusionment with the value of aid and the principles of development cooperation, as well as a decline in the importance of the Western countries in the global aid architecture.

¹ *Polska współpraca rozwojowa 2010. Raport*, Grupa Zagranica, Warsaw 2011, p. 32.

² *New Strategic Agenda 2019-2024*, European Council, Brussels 2019, p. 6.

³ R. Kurpiewska-Korbut, *Donatorzy pomocy rozwojowej*, [in:] Ł. Fyderek et al., *Wprowadzenie do problematyki pomocy rozwojowej*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Krakow 2010, p. 124.

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Poland, as a member of these processes and discussions, represents an interesting research case, not yet analysed from the perspective of sociological institutionalism. In 2023, it will have been 20 years since Poland adopted its first strategic document on development cooperation, as well as 10 years since joining the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (*DAC – Development Assistance Committee, OECD – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*). In May 2024, two decades will have passed since it joined the European Union (this expansion had a significant impact on EU development policy).

Since the beginning of these processes (or even a little earlier, given the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000), the importance of Poland's entry into the structure of the international development cooperation system has been emphasised, with its adoption of specific rules and strategies developed by pre-existing and more experienced aid institutions, as well as its joining a specific "club" of aid institutions promoting specific values and behaviours related to the culture of assistance. All these express of the aid identity of the countries located in the affluent part of the world, which the institution of Polish Aid also has the opportunity to co-create.

At the same time, while building a national development aid system, Poland – based on international commitments accepted, but also according to its own concepts – creates its own rules and principles, as well as its own catalogue of aid symbols and values. It imposes certain practices on its domestic socio-political environment, which primarily include: representatives of governmental administration units, non-governmental organisations, the Solidarity Fund PL (FSM), the Development Cooperation Programme Board (DCPB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), higher education institutions, the private sector, local government units, the Polish parliament, however, in fact, these are imposed – to some extent – on all Polish citizens. The environment – similar to Poland in relation to international institutions – can, in turn, shape the institution of aid within its own principles and value systems. These processes continue to gain significance with the undisputed increase in social power in the fight against the threats of the modern world concerning all its citizens, regardless of the wealth of their country of origin.

The main research goal of the work is to present a twenty-year process of building and functioning of Polish Aid, with particular consideration of its impact on the institutional environment, and to verify the significance of its socio-political environment for the development of aid institutions.

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The research thesis of the paper reads: Despite the two-decade evolution of the Polish Aid institution, including the establishment of its principles and vision and outlining values related to the culture of assistance, its impact on the institutional environment is limited, and the significance of its socio-political environment for the development of the institution remains low.

In order to analyse the research problem and prove the thesis, the following research questions needed to be answered:⁴

- How did the evolution process of the Polish Aid institution unfold over 20 years, what factors determined it, what entities constituted its social and political environment, and what significance did their emergence have for the development of the institution?
- What vision, principles, rules, and strategies has the institution Polish Aid created? How did it influence its socio-political environment and the actions it took through them? Does it adapt to institutional requirements?
- What values and culture of helping are promoted by the Polish Aid institution? How does it influence its socio-political environment in this respect?
- How does the socio-political environment shape the Polish Aid institution? What is its potential in the process of co-creating its principles and values?
- Do the institution of Polish Aid can proceed with its rules and values in international institutions? If so, how? What is the role of its environment in this process? Do these rules and values collectively contribute to the spread of aid practices and principles in the international community, including recipient countries?
- Did the institution of Polish Aid, together with its socio-political environment, develop comparative advantages⁵ and aid practices over the course of 20 years that could enable Poland to participate in shaping the international and/or global aid architecture?

⁴ Due to a large number of research questions resulting from the long period under analysis and the wide range of development cooperation topics, the introduction to each chapter further revisited the most important ones.

⁵ In relation to Polish Aid, comparative advantages are understood as features that distinguish Poland from other donors, being competitive with them; they should result from Polish experiences, knowledge, and skills available to Poland entities involved in development cooperation activities, and their implementation is intended to contribute to greater recognition of Poland and its distinction (specialisation) in the international development cooperation system. See: *Wieloletni program współpracy rozwojowej na lata 2012-2015. Solidarność, demokracja, rozwój* [hereinafter: *Multiannual Programme 2012-2015*], Ministry of Foreign

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- What lessons for the process of changing the institutions of Polish Aid, including Poland's aid identity, come from the reaction of Polish society to the war in Ukraine, and can Poland offer any EU-based, or even global, courses of action in this regard?
- What role does the Polish Aid institution play in promoting global values and norms? Through what activities does it support global values and global models of a helping culture? Is the Polish Aid institution's environment willing to participate in the development of global standards and interested in their transfer in the national and international environment?
- How is the discourse on development cooperation and the state of research on the institution of Polish Aid conducted? What is the share of the institution itself in this process, and what is the share of its socio-political environment?

The positioning of the Polish Aid institution in the context of its socio-political environment (including the possibility of mutual influence between them) required a theoretical perspective, namely an analysis of the problem perceived through the prism of sociological institutionalism, assuming the functioning of institutions as an element of certain cultural practices.

The adopted assumptions required the use of a variety of research methods and techniques appropriate for research in the field of social sciences.

For the analysis of tasks, rules and strategies proposed by the Polish Aid institution, based on a number of official documents concerning Poland's international commitments (legal acts, agreements, declarations) in the field of development cooperation, as well as national multi-annual programmes, the *Development Cooperation Act* or annual plans, it was necessary to apply an institutional-legal method. On the other hand, the decision-making method allowed for conducting a study on the decision-making process of the Polish Aid institution regarding the involvement of its socio-political environment in carrying out its tasks and the contribution of the Polish Aid institution's environment to the strategic documents processed by it (laws, multi-annual programmes). The application of the system analysis method made it possible to characterise the institution of Polish Aid in its socio-political environment, indicating the linkages occurring between them during cooperation, as well as their effects on the development of Polish development cooperation as a whole. Applied within the framework of the behavioural technique, observation

Affairs, Warsaw 2012, p. 16; *Wieloletni program współpracy rozwojowej na lata 2016-2020* [hereinafter: *Multiannual Programme 2016-2020*], Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw 2016, p. 6.

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of the behaviours of entities representing the Polish Aid institution and its institutional environment was key to understanding the values and symbols associated with the Polish culture of helping. To demonstrate the previous research and expertise regarding Polish development cooperation, including the results of conducted studies and their significance for the development of the Polish Aid institution, the technique of literature analysis and critique was used. Content and statistical data analysis techniques were also used in the work, thus constituting a significant contribution to the research problem under consideration. Participatory observation was also valuable to it: the author's membership in the Development Cooperation Programme Board at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during its third term (2020-2024) as a representative of the academic community provided an opportunity not only to collect research data but also to observe the functioning of the Polish Aid institution and, to some extent, its institutional environment 'from within.' Although the author's objective research behaviour could be considered challenging in the context of her membership in the Board, it is worth noting that her participation was linked to her academic background, and her selection by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in an open recruitment was a result of her previous scientific research achievements. Furthermore, she did not belong to entities participating in competitions organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the higher education institution employing the author did not participate in educational programmes implemented within the framework of Polish Aid, and she herself did not belong to any non-governmental organisation, political party, or any other organisation eligible to participate in the implementation of tasks within the scope of Polish Aid). At the same time, it is worth emphasizing that this monograph is the first book in Poland written from the perspective of a member of the Development Cooperation Programme Board representing the academic community.

Special research opportunities have also opened up for the author through cooperation with Grupa Zagranica, an umbrella organisation bringing together Polish non-governmental organisations working in development cooperation, and extensive expert-scientific activity, including participation in seminars, expert meetings, conferences,⁶ discussions held with representatives of various

⁶ The author actively participated with speeches on aid issues at the ECPR General Conference (2020), 25th Annual Conference of Central European, among others. Political Science Association (2021), PTSM conventions (2019, 2021), the Congress of Political Science in Wrocław (2022), the conference on para-diplomacy and the challenges of Polish foreign policy (2023) or the workshop "EU International Development Cooperation post-2020" at the

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entities involved in Polish Aid, other researchers interested in this topic and students from the University of Wrocław.⁷ Previous publications by the author, both scientific and expert, were helpful, including those concerning the reporting of Polish Official Development Assistance (ODA), the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in development aid, public campaigns on development aid, the direction of Polish foreign policy and public diplomacy, Polish aid activities in Iraq and Afghanistan and humanitarian aid in the context of the war in Ukraine.

The structure of the publication is chronological and problem-based, stemming from the research objective adopted. It consists of five chapters, preceded by a terminological and definitional introduction. This indicates, firstly, the multi-threaded nature of the development aid issue and practically endless possibilities for exploring related topics, secondly – how many research difficulties are already caused by the definition of development aid itself, as evidenced by the lack of consensus on this matter.

In the first chapter, theoretical-methodological considerations on the institution of assistance were discussed, including the current state of research on development cooperation perceived from the perspective of sociological institutional thinking. The definition of an institution and the concept of an aid institution are presented, together with the tool used to examine it. This chapter also includes a description of the principles, strategies, motives, and values identified in international development cooperation institutions, providing the background for considerations on the Polish case.

University of Birmingham (2020), the webinar “Public diplomacy’s new civil actors: NGOs, women-mediators’ networks and diasporas” (2022) organised by DSA Ireland, as well as in the debate titled “Aid Off Target? The Condition of Polish Development Cooperation” (2022) organised by the Grupa Zagranica.

⁷ For several years, the author has been teaching the course “Diplomats in Development Assistance” in the field of European diplomacy (Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wrocław), conducted classes related to development cooperation in postgraduate studies in public and cultural diplomacy, organized by the Jagiellonian University (2020/2021 edition). The experiences resulting from Polish Aid were also the subject of classes offered to foreign students during trips as part of the Erasmus+ programme (University of Klaipeda, Charles III University in Madrid). The author also accepted an invitation to give lectures to young people, for example at XV High School in Wrocław (2022), or as part of the Lower Silesian Science Festival (2021, 2022).

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The aim of the second chapter was to analyse the shape achieved by the Polish Aid institution in the years 2004-2020, with the choice of this period being dictated by Poland's accession to the EU (and entry into the structures of EU development aid) and the completion of the implementation of the second multi-annual development cooperation plan (2016-2020). It refers to decision-making processes within the institution, including proposed visions, principles, rules, and strategies that take into account the priorities of activities carried out within bilateral and multilateral aid as well as institutional solutions. The chapter also provides an overview of the level of interest in the subject of Polish development cooperation in academic research and expert analyses, and the results of an analysis of the expert-scientific discourse on the institution of Polish Aid (in which the author participated).

Chapter three focuses on the functioning of the Polish Aid institution within a specific socio-political environment – including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), FSM, members of parliament, and the private sector. The institution engages in various types of relationships with these actors, which involves mutual influence as well as the sharing (or lack thereof) of particular values and a specific culture of aid. The results of the research gave rise to interesting conclusions regarding Polish characteristics and specialisations, as well as the readiness to co-create global norms and principles, and to promote common global values. At the same time, they showed, taking into account mainly the degree of involvement of certain actors and the degree of knowledge of the Polish public about development cooperation, how much is still to be achieved in this respect.

Chapter four shows the conclusions from the analysis of the assumptions of the new programme perspective covering the years 2021-2030, including new/old visions, principles, rules, and strategies of the Polish Aid institution, as well as the outlined values and culture of helping. It also presents the results of a study on the implementation of programme objectives during the first three years of the programme's operation. This section demonstrated what extent the socio-political environment adapted to new requirements, whether and how there was an exchange of practices and ideas between entities at different levels of the Polish development cooperation organisation, and to what extent events in the institutional environment influenced this (war in Ukraine, COVID-19 pandemic). Conclusions were also drawn regarding the catalogue of common supportive values and a culture of helping, which – at least to some extent – can contribute to the co-creation of global norms and potentially instill them in the international environment.

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A study of the lessons learnt from twenty years of the institution of Polish Aid in the context of its further development after 2024 is the main objective of chapter five. They concern both the principles of the institution and the aid values it promotes, in both cases taking into account the importance of the institutional environment and the changes coming to Polish development cooperation with the change of government in Poland (late 2023). The chapter also includes a proposal for further research on the institution of aid in the model proposed based on the results of the conducted analyses and on the theoretical and methodological assumptions proposed in the first chapter.

The work on this publication coincided with another expert and research initiative concerning Polish Aid, in which the author of this book had the opportunity to participate. In October 2023, the Solidarity Fund PL (FSM) invited her to participate in the work of an expert group on the future of the Polish development cooperation system and the role of FSM within it. As a result of the work that is to be completed in the second half of 2024, there will be recommendations and publication. Anyone involved / interested in development aid realises how extensive this issue is and how difficult it is to present on-topic considerations in the form of recommendations regarding rule-making within one institution. This requires knowledge from a variety of fields, looking at Polish Aid through the prism of economics, politics, but also society. This is why such high hopes are attached to the outcome of the mentioned expert group's work.

Conceptual and terminological framework

Defining development aid is quite problematic, as this concept – although explained by many authors and institutions, and also repeatedly redefined – still remains the subject of discussions aiming to create its definition. In publications on the subject of aid, one can find quite considerable terminological diversity, and among the terms considered appear: *development assistance / development aid, development cooperation, foreign aid, humanitarian aid, international aid, military aid*, as well as *fighting poverty or economic cooperation*.⁸

⁸ In Anglo-Saxon countries, it functions as foreign aid, which includes not only development aid but also military aid and humanitarian aid. The latter involves short-term action taken in response to sudden crisis situations, which – at least at the definitional level – distinguishes it from development aid (which is treated as long-term actions aimed at promoting long-

The definition of development aid includes “assistance provided by states and international organisations in the form of financial, material, or advisory support for less developed countries.” The aim of development assistance is to reduce poverty, promote sustainable development, support democratic reforms and the rule of law, respect human rights, develop civil society, support economic growth, prevent conflicts and promote global security, with the definition in this formula being considered quite broad.⁹ Some researchers emphasise the importance of aid in achieving economic development (William Easterly), for others its essence is the preferential conditions under which it is provided (Carol Lancaster) and its capture of all resources, including physical goods, know-how, grants, loans (Roger C. Riddell).¹⁰ In this publication, development assistance is understood as a preferential transfer of resources (both tangible and intangible) from the donor to recipients, directly serving the development of the latter, and indirectly the achievement of political, economic, and social goals of the former, i.e. as a transfer bringing benefits to both parties.¹¹ It can, and should, lead to partnerships for the common pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals, which means that, beyond the goals and interests of the donor and the needs

term change). However, the realities of operations show how the boundaries between these concepts blur, which also contributes to terminological discussion. As D. Kopiński emphasises, development aid can be seen as a subcategory of foreign aid, which is a broader concept that goes beyond the classical understanding of development support (e.g. military expenditures). On the other hand, what distinguishes it from economic aid will be the inclusion of elements in the latter category that do not qualify as ODA (e.g. export promotion). See: D. Kopiński, *Pomoc rozwojowa. Teoria i praktyka*, Difin, Warsaw 2011, p. 14; P. Kugiel, *Polska pomaga – zmiana i kontynuacja w polskiej współpracy rozwojowej od odzyskania niepodległości do współczesności*, “Sprawy Międzynarodowe” T. 71, 2018, No. 3, PISM, p. 102.

⁹ C. Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2007, pp. 9-12.

¹⁰ A.A. Rabczun, *Brytyjska pomoc rozwojowa w latach 2000-2015*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Polskiego Towarzystwa Ekonomicznego w Zielonej Górze” 2019, No. 11, p. 57; P. Deszczyński, *Koncepcyjne podstawy pomocy rozwojowej*, Publishing House of the Poznan University of Economics, Poznan 2011, p. 80; W. Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden*, transl. E. Łyszkowska, Scientific Publishing House PWN, Warsaw 2008, p. 1; C. Lancaster, *Why Foreign Aid? Setting the Stage*, [in:] idem, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, Chicago University Press, Chicago–London 2006, p. 490; R.C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2008, p. 17.

¹¹ J. Overton, W.E. Murray, *Aid and Development*, Routledge, London 2021, p. 5.

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and capacities of the recipient, what counts is the global responsibility for jointly tackling the challenges of the modern world.¹² It is a specific area of activity, being an activity defined as a form of foreign social assistance.

The best known definition, ‘reserved’ for states and the one most often used, as well as causing much controversy, is Official Development Assistance (ODA), developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (DAC OECD) in 1969. It consists of technical cooperation as well as grants and loans primarily aimed at promoting economic development and welfare. These activities are undertaken by the governmental sector and are provided on preferential/concessional terms (the loan must include a minimum grant element of 25%). ODA serves various functions, it is intended to contribute to the fight against poverty, strengthen the institutional capacities of the recipient state, influencing the development of their social capital, contributing to economic progress as well as infrastructure development. ODA is part of development assistance, constituting a government domain. Next to ODA, the following terms are in use: OA (*official assistance*) – for assistance related to public transfers to promote socio-economic development in countries other than low-income ones, and DA (*democracy assistance*) – for assistance covering democratisation and transformation.

There are two main channels of aid distribution: multilateral aid and bilateral aid, although bilateral aid delivered through multilateral channels is also gaining popularity (aid with a focus, referred to as the bilateralisation of multilateral aid)¹³, as well as trilateral aid. Multilateral aid is implemented from the budgets of international institutions, to which the donor contributes specified funds (to the EU budget, United Nations [UN] budget, World Bank), and these funds are distributed according to the policy of the respective institution. Bilateral aid provides direct support from the donor to a specific recipient, mainly being a priority country (although this is not a rule). Since the mid-1990s, aid has been directed primarily through the bilateral channel, with the ratio of bilateral to multilateral assistance amounting to 70 to 30.¹⁴ However, it is projected that this proportion may change due to the growing number of global challenges and the

¹² G.N. Pauselli, *Foreign Aid's Motivations: Theoretical Arguments and Empirical Evidence*, [in:] *Aid Power and Politics*, ed. by I. Olivié, A. Pérez, Routledge, London 2020, pp. 34-46.

¹³ M. Zajaczkowski, *Bilateralizacja wielostronnej pomocy rozwojowej*, “Ekonomia XXI Wieku” 2019, No. 2, pp. 42-57.

¹⁴ R. Kurpiewska-Korbut, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

increasing presence and significance of non-state actors. The gradual end of the “state monopoly” in development assistance is expected to become a broader trend – applicable also to Poland. It is worth noting, however, that from the very beginning of the Polish Aid programme, Poland has channelled the majority of its support through multilateral mechanisms, as will be further discussed in the following sections.

Bilateral assistance comes in the form of development projects or programmes in technical, humanitarian, food, financial activities (concessional loans, tied¹⁵ and untied aid, bilateral debt relief initiatives).¹⁶ It can also be provided in the form of volunteering, mainly through the unpaid participation of citizens of developed countries in aid projects carried out in recipient countries.

Development aid is treated as an instrument of foreign policy or its subcategory, which was particularly evident (again, similarly to the Cold War confrontation between the East and the West) after the attacks on September 11, 2001, and gained even greater significance after the Russian assault on Ukraine. With the development of aid activities, efforts to improve them, and above all, changes in the approach to the relationship between the donor and the recipient towards the idea of partnership, the concept of development cooperation / co-operation for development has evolved.

This term is understood very broadly. Development cooperation is seen as a process involving various entities with their own motives, interests, goals and strategies.¹⁷ In the opinion of researchers, the term is imprecise, hence not preferred in scientific research. However, it is becoming increasingly common in the narratives of some countries and international organisations, prompting scholarly reflection as well. Some researchers assume that the term of “development cooperation” is used when aid activity ceases to be unilateral, i.e. the recipient state is actively involved in the aid process.¹⁸ As the element of the recipient’s

¹⁵ Tied aid is a type of assistance where the support received by the recipient is intended to be used for the purchase of goods and services from the donor country. See *Types of Development Assistance*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gov.pl, <https://www.gov.pl/web/polskapomoc/typy-pomocy-rozwojowej> – 10 V 2024.

¹⁶ P. Deszczyński, *Konceptualne podstawy pomocy rozwojowej*, pp. 98-145.

¹⁷ J. Degnbol-Martinussen, P. Engberg-Pedersen, *Aid: Understanding International Development Cooperation*, Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke – Danish Association for International Cooperation, London 2003, p. 1.

¹⁸ M. Mirkowska-Ostatek, *Oficjalna Pomoc Rozwojowa jako czynnik eliminujący skale ubóstwa w państwach trzeciego świata*, [in:] *Polityka rozwojowa. Rola organizacji międzynarodowych*

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SUMMARY

POLISH AID

(THE DIFFICULT) PROCESS OF INSTITUTIONALISATION AMID POLITICS AND SOCIETY

This book concerns twenty years of institutionalising the cooperation for development in Poland and the impact it was exposed to by its social and economic environment, namely international institutions and organisations, Polish public authorities, NGOs, private business, members of Polish parliament, and Polish citizens. The topic was analysed by using (i) a detailed description of the policies, strategies, motives and values identified in the institutions of international cooperation for development Poland is a member of; (ii) a verification of the state of expert and research discourse about the Polish Aid; (iii) an investigation into the status achieved by the Polish Aid as an institution between 2004 and 2020 with its operation in a defined social and political environment and its development progression in the new programme horizon for the years 2021-2030, based on more catalogues of policies and values co-developed by institutions, with consideration of the changing international landscape.

This book provides a diagnosis of the condition the institution of Polish Aid is in; despite twenty years of its evolution and its definition of policies, strategies, vision, and outlines of values relevant to the culture of aid, the impact of the Polish Aid on institutions is limited, with a low significance of its social and political environment to the fostering of institutions. The book features an analysis of reforms necessary for the Polish Aid, given the changes the international landscape is pending that include the balance of power in the environment of cooperation for development, the increasing need for humanitarian operations, and the plans for Poland's role in the rebuilding of post-war Ukraine. The book is a voice in the perpetually niche expert and research discussion on the Polish

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Aid, the role of the Polish Aid to Poland's international relations as a member of the 'Club of Wealthiest Western Donors', and the significance of the Polish Aid to a wider understanding of the global challenges and sustainable growth by citizens.

The book contributes to the research into the Polish Aid from the perspective of sociological thought focused on institutions. The concept of the institution for aid is presented along with a tool feasible for studying the subject of the concept, referring not only to the firm policies and strategies established by the institution, but also to the values and behaviours relevant to the culture of aid. The mutually fostered relations considered in such context, along with the influences between the institution and its environment, point to a certain potential for building an aid-focused identity that would be capable to popularise common global policies and values.

Chapter three of the book concerns the operation of the Polish Aid in its social and political environment (which include NGOs, Fundacja Solidarności Miedzynarodowej (Solidarity Fund PL), members of parliament, and the private sector) with which the Polish Aid has various relations.

Chapter four provides conclusions for the analysis of the new programme horizon for the years 2021-2030, including the confrontation of previous and up-to-date visions, policies, rules, and strategies of the Polish Aid, complemented by an overview of the values it outlines and the culture of aid. Results are provided from the research on the implementation of the program in its first three years. It is demonstrated to what extent the social and political environment conformed to the new programme requirements, whether—and how—practices and ideas were exchanged on different tiers of the Polish cooperation for development, and to what extent they were driven by the events (like the war in Ukraine and the Covid pandemic) occurring in the environment of the Polish Aid. Conclusions were provided that concern the catalogue of common values and culture of aid that, at least to some extent, could stimulate a collaborative development of global aid standards and their international transfer.

A study of the conclusions for the future development of the Polish Aid post 2024, derived from the twenty years of operation, is the main objective of chapter five. The conclusions apply both to the policies of the Polish Aid and the values of aid it popularises, with consideration of the significance of the Polish Aid environment and changes in the Polish cooperation for development that ensued after the new Polish government was elected (by the end of 2023). The chapter provides a proposal for future research into the institution for aid, using

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a proposition of the model based on the results of the investigation discussed, as well as on the basis of the theoretical and methodological guidelines proposed in chapter one.

Keywords: Polish Aid, development cooperation, sociological institutionalism

The publication covers the twenty-year process of institutionalisation of Polish development cooperation and the importance of its socio-political environment for this process: international institutions and organisations, public administration bodies, the non-governmental sector, private enterprises, representatives of the Polish parliament, and citizens themselves, not only those involved in development aid activities.

It presents a diagnosis of the state of the institution based on research, as well as an analysis of the reforms necessary for it in the context of changes taking place in the international environment, including those concerning the balance of power in the development cooperation environment, the growing need for humanitarian activities, and Poland's plan to participate in the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.

The aim of the book is to contribute to the development of research on the institution of aid from the perspective not only of the hard rules and strategies it outlines, but also of the values and behaviours associated with the culture of aid and co-created by its institutional environment. The publication also serves as a voice in the still niche scientific and expert discussion on Polish Aid, its essence for Poland's international relations as a member of the "club of the richest Western donors," and its importance for a greater understanding of global challenges and sustainable development by citizens.



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ISBN 978-83-8368-352-2



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