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# Buen vivir and international development cooperation

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## Résumé

The debate about growth and development that has been taking place during the last decades has clearly highlighted a number of flaws and contradictions which the theory, as well as the practice of International Development Cooperation, failed until now to address in a convincing and effective way. The Buen Vivir (“good life”) Latin America’s new concept for collective well being, as emerging during recent years, is a blend of rather diverse elements: a concept of ethno-development rooted in the experience of the indigenous peoples; a relational understanding of the ways the different societies would enter into a process of transformation; a form of humanistic socialism guiding a concept of local development. These elements have been translated into a variety of debates, ranging from institutional/constitutional arrangements, to the formulation of development related public policies, to the mobilisation of global social movements; the outcomes of these reflections have raised much interest, particularly as traditional concepts and tools do not seem to identify viable solutions for addressing current world crisis. The Buen Vivir can offer a contribution to the reframing of the way the ‘well being’ is conceived within current development setting. Yet, its philosophy and cosmovision refer to a substantially alternative understanding of the associated life and of the relation between human and nature, that finds little connection to the most established theories. In the conclusions, we will try to show that some of the issues highlighted by the Buen Vivir may also demonstrate relevance for the International Development Cooperation, although perhaps urging for a more radical transformation that that acceptable by most of the actors playing a role in this field.

**Mots-Clés:** Buen Vivir, development policy, International Cooperation

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