

April 9, 2024

**Seminar in Development Economics:  
Agriculture, Finance and FinTechs in Developing Countries  
under Climate Crisis and Ukraine-War-Conditions**

**Summer Term 2024**

(Course No. 075 093)

**Course description**

The course is geared towards an intensive dialogue between theory and practice of development cooperation in the private enterprise sector. It stands for a balanced mix of

- macroeconomic perspectives of agriculture development, the financial sector and FinTechs under climate crisis and Ukraine-war-conditions and
- microeconomic views of investment/finance of agri-enterprise and the role of FinTechs.

Seminar education experiences cover team work papers, presentations as well as case studies (similar to Harvard Business School method) which foster basic skills of a professional career of students in development cooperation workplaces.

Objective: Students will get to know theoretical models as well as practitioner's problems and possible solutions (or dilemmas?) for agri-enterprises and finance institutions/FinTechs in developing countries in a crisis-shaken environment. The course will focus on current discussion topics related to private enterprise food production in the agri-sector as well as investment and finance risk assessment under a climate crisis and Ukraine war dramatically changing environment. With successful completion of this course, students will be able to assess development-projects and put them into macroeconomic perspective of poverty reduction.

Content: The 2-day-block-seminar will deal with selected topics regarding the relationship between poverty reduction, GDP growth and investment/finance in developing countries under highly volatile macro-environments.

**Enrolment**

Enrolment is open to Master students only (Faculty of Management and Economics as well as other RUB faculties). Students may obtain 5 (ECTS) credit points for the module. Enrolment in the seminar is limited to max. 16 students. To register for this course, students have to show up on the first session of the seminar

**Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 6.00-7.30 p.m., GD 03/218**

**Important note:** The introductory meeting will be in person on campus. For corresponding Moodle course registration please use the FSI Fachschaft password

Dr. Thomas Koch / Direktor Strategische Projekte  
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c/o Faculty of Management and Economics  
Chair of International Economics  
Prof. Dr. Matthias Busse

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listing (“Passwortverteiler”): <https://www.fsi-wiwi.de/tools/passwortverteiler/>. Do not contact the lecturer for the password! There will be no pre-enrolment.

After (!) you have been accepted for this course, **you** will have to enroll in FlexNow. Please note that the registration (as well as de-registration) for this seminar in FlexNow is open from May 13 to June 14, 2024, only! Please observe the information on the official homepage. Changes and updates will be announced on the website of the examination office. If you have trouble signing in to FlexNow, please contact the examination office directly (e.g. by email with a screenshot).

### **Prerequisites**

Some prior coursework in development economics and/or finance is recommended. Basic knowledge of German “Entwicklungszusammenarbeit” (Development Cooperation + Policy) is expected.

### **Block seminar times**

Consulting / teaching support on paper logical structure, etc.  
**Thursday, May 7, 2024; 5.00 – 8.00 p.m. (online)**

### Tutorial on scientific methods

The tutorial is not mandatory but rather recommended for those students who have not written a seminar paper before. Details will be announced in mid-April during or shortly after the first session of the course.

### Seminar schedule

**Friday, June 21, 2024; 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., GD 03/158**  
**Saturday, June 22, 2024; 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., GD 03/218**

More information on additional organisational matters will be provided at a later stage.

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### **Seminar Topics:**

1. SDGs and Agri-Investment – Is the Agri-sector “significant” for Developing Countries and SDG? (individual country cases can be selected, e.g. Vietnam)
2. “Food crisis revisited under Covid 19 and Russian/Ukraine war”? Agri-Commodities-Prices – Demand and Supply Determinants, FAO-global Index Trend Analysis and Consequences in Developing Countries (e.g. Brazil vs. Nigeria)
3. Food Crisis and the “Land Grabbing”-Debate – Are Agri-Enterprises “neo-colonial land grabbers” or “responsible investors”? (individual case studies can be selected, e.g. South Sudan vs. Kenya)
4. Climate Crisis – its Consequences on Agriculture and Poverty (individual country cases can be selected, e.g. Bangladesh)
5. Agri-Finance and Financial Institutions – Risk and Risk Mitigation Case Study: an Agri-Bank LAAD - Latin American Agribusiness Development Corporation (individual project finance cases can be selected, e.g. Nicaragua)
6. Venture Capital- and Venture Philanthropy-Funds – are these Instruments to improve Access to Finance for Small and Medium Enterprises?
7. FinTechs I – the Digital Payment and Remittances Market in Developing Countries (individual business model case M-Pesa / Kenya)
8. FinTechs II – Are Digital Microloans disrupting the Banking Sector of Developing Countries? (individual country case Kenya on digital-microloans pros/cons)

### **General Discussion for all participants:**

Which bottleneck of development is more relevant – the agri- or the finance-sector?

### **Seminar papers and presentations**

Students are expected to form groups of two. Each group will be responsible for writing a joint paper (max. 12 pages in length; including tables and figures), 2.5 cm margins top/bottom/left/right, 1.5 line spacing, Times New Roman 12 point font). An introduction to scientific research methods and information on further requirements will be available in Moodle.

In addition, a short executive summary of about 200 words (key question, methodology and main results) should be included (max 1 page; not included in the max. 12 pages length of the paper).

Papers are due one week before the block seminar presentation – **Friday, June 14, 2024**. Please submit the paper electronically via e-mail to the following e-mail address: [thomas.koch@deginvest.de](mailto:thomas.koch@deginvest.de)

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### **Seminar presentations**

English presentations should have a maximum (!) length of 30 min focusing on the results of the seminar paper. Since we meet outside and cannot use electronic devices (e.g., a beamer), the speakers may use a flip chart (and handouts, if appropriate). Paper and pens will be provided. Students should be able to answer questions during the presentation (Please prepare a well-structured presentation that is interesting and educational for your audience!).

### **Discussions**

Each student will be assigned to another topic (not his/her paper) which s/he should briefly (5 min) discuss after the presentation. The discussion should be a critical reflection of the paper and presentation (content, structure, unclear points) and come up with two or three questions to start a discussion. It is expected that all other students have briefly gone through the papers of the other participants before the seminar, so that a good discussion can take place.

### **Grading**

Seminar paper (50%), presentation of the paper (35%) and discussion (15%); additional bonus points can be achieved by oral participation in the seminar (10%). All seminar papers and the presentations will be in English.

### **Contact person for the seminar topics:**

Dr. Thomas Koch – Director Strategic Projects / DEG  
e-mail: [thomas.koch@deginvest.de](mailto:thomas.koch@deginvest.de)

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## Literature

The papers below should guide participants towards conducting their research and writing their seminar papers. It is expected, however, that students search for additional literature.

General Reading:

- IFC - International Finance Corporation (1999): Project Finance in Developing Countries – Lessons of Experience number 7; in particular chapter 3 and 4.
1. **SDGs and Agri-Investment – Is the Agri-Sector “significant” for Developing Countries and SDGs? (individual country cases to be selected)**
    - United Nations (2023): The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022 — [SDG Indicators \(un.org\)](https://un.org/sdgs)
    - Economist (2015): Development: The 169 commandments, March 28, 2015 <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21647286-proposed-sustainable-development-goals-would-be-worse-useless-169-commandments>
  2. **“Food crisis revisited under Russian/Ukraine war”?: Agro-Commodities-Prices – Demand and Supply Determinants, Index Trend Analysis and Consequences in Developing Countries**
    - FAO Food Price Index (2000-2022). <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>
    - Michal Borychowski/Andrzej Czyzewski (2015): Determinants of prices increase of agricultural commodities in a global context; Journal Management 2015, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 152-167 (on file with seminar guide) <https://www.degruyter.com/downloadpdf/j/manment.2015.19.issue-2/manment-2015-0020/manment-2015-0020.pdf>
    - FAO (2022): Briefing on Impact of Covid 19 and the War in Ukraine on the Outlook for Food Security and Nutrition [Technical Briefing to FAO Members on the impact of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine on the outlook for food Security and nutrition](https://www.fao.org/publications/technical-briefing-to-fao-members-on-the-impact-of-covid-19-and-the-war-in-ukraine-on-the-outlook-for-food-security-and-nutrition)
  3. **Food Crisis and the “Land Grabbing”-Debate – Are Agri-Enterprises “neo-colonial land grabbers” or “responsible investors”?**
    - Klaus Deininger and Derek Byerlee / Worldbank (2011): Rising Global Interest in Farmland – can it yield sustainable and equitable benefits? [Open Knowledge Repository \(worldbank.org\)](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/document/12070/12070)
    - Koch, Thomas (2011). Kontroverse land grabbing: Private Agrarinvestitionen – wem nützen sie? In: Eins Dossier 5-2011, page 6-8 [https://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/fileadmin/mediapool/2\\_Downloads/Fachinformationen/Sonstiges/ws-Dossier\\_5-2011-land-ist-leben.pdf](https://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/fileadmin/mediapool/2_Downloads/Fachinformationen/Sonstiges/ws-Dossier_5-2011-land-ist-leben.pdf)



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**8. FinTechs II – Digital Disruption in the Banking Sector of Developing Countries? – case studies of selected countries**

- Eilin Francis/Joshua Blumenstock / Jonathan Robinson (2017): Digital Credit in Emerging Markets – A Snapshot of the Current Landscape and Open Research Questions  
[http://www.digitalcreditobservatory.org/uploads/8/2/2/7/82274768/dco\\_land\\_scape\\_analysis.pdf](http://www.digitalcreditobservatory.org/uploads/8/2/2/7/82274768/dco_land_scape_analysis.pdf)
- Microsave (2017): Where Credit is Due – customer experience of Digital Credit in Kenya (a critical view)  
[http://www.microsave.net/files/pdf/Where\\_Credit\\_Is\\_Due\\_Customer\\_Experience\\_of\\_Digital\\_Credit\\_In\\_Kenya.pdf](http://www.microsave.net/files/pdf/Where_Credit_Is_Due_Customer_Experience_of_Digital_Credit_In_Kenya.pdf)