The purpose of the research is to further explain the complex nature of the current development policy initiative of human rights-based approach to development cooperation (HRBA). The questions, such as, why were the human rights incorporated into the Western development aid strategies and what do they stand for, are addressed. Moreover, the aim is to examine the development aid policy's possible beneficial effects on the Mozambican Muslim community.

In the late 1980’s, the former economic development cooperation policies underwent a shift towards development strategies of political conditionality. From that time onwards, development has been conceived as incorporating elements of “social and political dimensions of poverty reduction”, aside from solely focusing on economic variables. Presently, the development aid policies that were originally implemented under poverty reduction strategies have yet evolved and the new wave of including a softer approach to development policies can be further reinterpreted as the human rights-based policies to development (HRBA). Within the chapters of this research, policies by the entities of European Union, World Bank and UNDP describe the concept of HRBA in a different setting of words and with differing development objectives. However, the HRBA policies by the development agencies, albeit varied, base the normativity of the concept on the “universality claim” of human rights and its legitimacy on the human rights laws.

The research sets to point out, how the language employed by the development agencies for the policies of HRBA to development is vague and no clear-cut definition is offered to its name. The wide-ranging underpinnings on human rights and development, in addition to the concepts introduced by the development cooperation agencies, are by no means analogous and of corresponding thinking. Moreover, while conducting the research it became apparent that since human rights are based on ethical and moral values, they are rather contingent and contextual than universal and absolute. Thus, the policies of HRBA may only deliver so much of its claimed promise. This notion, especially, was examined through a closer exploration of human rights and development arguments within the framework of the Islamic community in Mozambique.

**Avainsanat-Nyckelord-Keywords**
- Human Rights
- Development Cooperation
- Islam
- Mozambique
- Muslims
- education

**Tiivistelmiä-Referat-Abstract**
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