



NGOs AND GOOD PRACTICES: FROM THE NORMS TO THE FIELD...AND BACK

Master in Solidarity and Sustainable Transition
Faculty of Social Sciences, Economics and Law

Course information

Master Year 2 18 HOURS

Fall Semester 3 ECTS

Seminars

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Course description

Over the last twenty-five years, international solidarity has changed beyond recognition. The end of the Cold War opened wide humanitarian spaces for intervention in which both the military and NGOs rushed, only to find themselves confronted to the complexity of crowded war fields in which civilians are the main targets. Meanwhile in the 1990s, development agencies fought for diminishing funds in a political environment where 'democratization', 'governance' and 'sustainability' had become key words almost overnight. It took a decade for these actors (old and up-coming ones) to formulate tentative policy answers to such challenges as ethnic cleansing, the debt crises or accelerating environmental degradation. At the turning of the 2000s, the UN voting of the Millennium Development Goals seemed to turn the tide and to launch a new era of development. In the humanitarian world, large scale debates over Refugees, IDPx, civilian protection, intervention, international and transitional justice took place between states, UN Agencies and NGOs. A year later though, the 9/11 attacks introduced new constraints in the already complex development equation. As a result policies implemented since the beginning of the 21st century are still experimental. In a constantly changing environment, characterized in recent years by the emergence of the BRIC, the sub-prime financial crisis, and the consequences of the Arab Spring, I suggest they will remain so.

Whereas practices are uncertain, donor pressure has compelled actors to engage in a permanent reflection over their engagement. Critical studies of development and humanitarian programmes are constantly produced and published for the benefit of funding bodies and for the greater confusion of practitioners... and students. Concepts such as governance, partnership, transparency, accountability sustainability are now framing international engagement. As such these notions need to be well understood by any student wishing to work on humanitarian and/or development projects. As for students specializing in alternative social and economic systems (systems that emphasize the human dimensions of

exchanges), they must get a good grasp of the major changes currently taking place in NGOs as the rise of these structures and their innovations parallel the rise of social oriented business and often host its development.

This course will introduce the work of some international NGOs ('Non-Governmental Organizations'), sometimes also referred to as 'Charities' in the British world, the concept of "good practices" as well as the terms that underlie it. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the vocabulary that frames action, on identifying the origins of emerging concepts and on illustrating them. We will also examine the ways in which experiences are built into "lessons from the field" and then discussed/shared/used in policy discussions and in academia. We will do this for different facets of international solidarity: the joint worlds of humanitarianism, development and human rights.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- 1 Define current concepts and practices that dominate NGO practices (partnership, accountability, coping strategy, logical framework matrix, etc...)
- 2 Present, illustrate and discuss these issues in depth in English, both in oral and written forms.
- 3 Use online resources efficiently to keep up-to-date with changes in this field.

Bibliography

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Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real World of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003)

Terry Fiona, *Condemned to repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2002). Desai Vandana, Potter Robert (ed.), *The Companion to Development Studies*, (London: Hodder Education, 2009) Baylis John, Smith Steve, Owens Patricia (eds.) *The Globalisation of World Politics*, 4th edition (Oxford: OUP 2013). Graham Gordon, *Ethics and International Relations*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Blakwells Publishers, 2008)

Allen Tim and Thomas Alan (eds.) *Poverty and Development in the 21st century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

Fowler Alan and Malunga Chiku (ed.) *NGO Management, The Earthscan Companion*, (London, Earthscan Publishing, 2010), Introduction and part I.

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002), Introduction.

Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real World of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003) Chapter 1 'The Politics of NGOing'

Desai Vandana, Potter Robert (ed.), *The Companion to Development Studies*, (London: Hodder Education, 2009), especially part 10 'Governance and Development' (several articles on the role of NGOs).

Baylis John, Smith Steve, Owens Patricia (eds.) *The Globalisation of World Politics*, 5th edition (Oxford: OUP 2010), chapters 28 to 31.

Fowler Alan and Malunga Chiku (ed.) *NGO Management, The Earthscan Companion*, (London, Earthscan Publishing, 2010) part I. chapter II 'NGOs and development alternatives revisited'

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Part I: Visions, Values and Roles.

Graham Gordon, *Ethics and International Relations*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Blakwells Publishers, 2008) Chapters 5 and 7. Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real world of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003) Chapter 5 'Modelling Development: NGO Room for Manoeuvre.'

Terry Fiona, *Condemned to repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2002). Kenyon Lischer Sarah, *Dangerous Sanctuaries, Refugee Camps, Civil War and the dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005)

Mary B Anderson, "Humanitarian NGOs in Conflict Intervention," in Chester A., Hampson Fen Osler, Aall Pamela (eds) *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, (Washington, D.C.: US Institute for Peace, 2003) Zollis Andrew and Ann Marie Healy, *Resilience* (London: Headline Publishing Group 2012), especially Chapter 3 (on conservation vs development discourses)

On understanding the complexity of change in societies plagued by violence, I recommend John-Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), Chapter 6 'The Gift of Pessimism'. (in the FELS library)

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Part 3 Developing the organization: Managing Growth, Change and Structure and part 10 'Human Resources: Their management, Development and Leadership'.

Zolli Andrew and Ann Marie Healy, *Resilience* (London: Headline Publishing Group 2012), especially Chapter 8 'The translational leader'.

Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real world of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003) Chapters 7 and 8 'making sense of NGOs: in everyday Office Life' and 'NGO Leaders: A Social Analysis of 'Fairly Unusual Human Beings'.

Minear Larry, *The Humanitarian Enterprise, Dilemmas and Discoveries* (Blomfield: Kumarian Press Inc., 2002). Fisher Simon and al. *Working with Conflicts* (London: Zed Books, 2000) Especially Chapter 6 pp. 95-123.

Taylor James in Fowler Alan and Malunga Chiku (ed.) *NGO Management, The Earthscan Companion*, (London, Earthscan Publishing, 2010) Chapter 13 'The Phases of Organisational Development'

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Part 3 Developing the organization: Managing Growth, Change and Structure and part 10 'Human Resources: Their management, Development and Leadership'.

Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real world of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003) Chapters 7 and 8 'making sense of NGOs: in everyday Office Life' and 'NGO Leaders: A Social Analysis of 'Fairly Unusual Human Beings'.

Minear Larry, *The Humanitarian Enterprise, Dilemmas and Discoveries* (Blomfield: Kumarian Press Inc., 2002).

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Part 5 Organizing for Good Development Practice: Participation, Empowerment, Partnering and Capacity Building.

Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real world of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003) Chapter 9 'Funding Agencies and NGOs: Peeping behind Paper Realities'

Zollis Andrew and Ann Marie Healy, *Resilience* (London: Headline Publishing Group 2012), especially Chapter 8. 'Enhancing Southern Capacities, rhetoric and reality', *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 28, July 2007, www.fmreview.org Sustainable Livelihoods: Seeds of success? *Forced Migration Review* No 20, May 2004, www.fmreview.org

'Have NGOs made a difference? From Manchester to Birmingham with an elephant in the Room' Michael Edwards in Fowler Alan and Malunga Chiku (ed.) *NGO Management, The Earthscan Companion*, (London, Earthscan Publishing, 2010)

Hilhorst Dorothea, *The Real World of NGOs, Discourses, Discovery and Development*, (London: Zed Books, 2003) Chapter 6 'Whose Reality Count? Issues of NGO Accountability.'

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Parts 4 and 6 'Strengthening Governance and Accountability' and 'Measuring Achievement: Approaches and Methods.' Hofman Charles -Antoine, 'Measuring the Impact of Humanitarian Aid, a review of current practice', HPG Research Briefing Number 15, June 2004, www.odi.org.uk/papers/hpgbrief15.pdf (last consulted 28/09/09)

Explore the website of ALNAP www.alnap.org

Bunker Roy, TED Lecture, *Learning from a Barefoot Movement*, http://www.ted.com/talks/bunker_roy.html?embed=true (last consulted 25/08/13)

Fowler Alan and Malunga Chiku (ed.) *NGO Management, The Earthscan Companion*, (London, Earthscan Publishing, 2010), Part VIII managing for learning and knowledge, chapters 27 and 28.

Edwards Michael, Fowler Alan (ed.), *The Earthscan Reader on NGO management* (London: Earthscan Publication 2002). Part 7 'Becoming a learning organisation'

Minear Larry, *The Humanitarian Enterprise, Dilemmas and Discoveries* (Blomfield: Kumarian Press Inc., 2002). Chapter 9 "The Dynamics of institutional Change."

Virginia Haufler, 'Is there a role for Business in Conflict Management?' in Chester A., Hampson Fen Osler, Aall Pamela (eds) *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, (Washington, D.C.: US Institute for Peace, 2003).

For challenging readings on learning in the context of development, there are amazing texts in Rahnema Majid, *Bawtree*

Victoria (Eds.), *The Post Development Reader*, 6th ed. (London, Zed Book, 2006). And if you want to know more about radical postcolonial views, consider reading Sachs Wolfgang (ed.), *The Development Dictionary, A Guide to Knowledge asPower* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1992). Both items are in the FELS library.