NGOs, Foreign Aid and Development  
PbAf 541  
Autumn 2015

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Parrington 225  
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Wednesdays 9:30-12:20  
MGH 234

This course explores some of the major issues faced by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working on development issues worldwide. The course will consider issues faced by a wide range of NGOs, including both large northern-based international NGOs as well as smaller northern and indigenous NGOs in all regions of the world. We will examine organizational forms, NGO-state relationships, inter-organizational relationships, and the relationship of NGOs to beneficiaries. We will then look at the growing role NGOs are playing in advocacy, corporate social responsibility and transnational alliances and social movements. The course concludes with an examination of the implications of a rights-based approach to development for NGOs.

The course will use a mixture of readings, lectures, seminar-style discussions and cases. There are three assignments during the quarter, described at the end of the syllabus

Course Syllabus and Organization

The on-line syllabus on Canvas will list the readings for each week and post those that are available through the library. Students are responsible for checking the syllabus each week to verify the readings and the schedule for the following week; readings may vary slightly from what is on the original syllabus depending on class discussions. By Friday of each week I will also post study questions on the site each to help you organize your reading for the following week. The course website is at https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/992107. Sometimes these study questions will form the basis for small group work in class.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course participants will have gained:

- An appreciation of the ethical challenges inherent in development; the means to engage respectfully with others in the practice of development; and a strategy and tools for responding to the ethical challenges inherent in development practice.
- Opportunities for critical reflection and examination of their own normative values, and how these values might be pursued and practice in international development work.
- Understanding of the major intellectual perspectives from political science, sociology, and economics on the study of NGOs.
- A balanced perspective on the potential and limits of NGOs as agents of development
- Understanding of the major management and policy challenges facing NGOs
• Understanding of the current and future challenges facing NGOs

CLASS OUTLINE AND READINGS

September 30 NGOs in Development

Group simulation: Development in Dhanka


“The Missionary Position: NGOs and Development in Africa.” Mimeo. Published version can be found in International Affairs, 78 (3) pp. 447-692.


October 7 NGOs & Aid: Normative and Critical Perspectives

Case: In the Shadow of the City, Harvard Business School Case.

Robert Chambers, Whose Reality Counts? Chapter 3, "Professional Realities“ and Chapter 4, Chapters 4 “The Transfer of Reality”

Peter Singer, “The Obligation to Assist”, www.lifeyoucansave.org


October 14  Foreign Aid, States and NGOs

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October 21  International NGOs

Case: Action Aid International: Globalizing Governance, Localizing Accountability


October 28  Local Institutions and ‘Community-Driven Development’


November 4  Tools of Participation

World Bank Participation Sourcebook


John Gaventa, “Crossing the Great Divide: Building Links and Learning between NGOs and Community-based Organizations in the North and South, Chapter 16 in The Earthscan NGO Reader.

November 11: Social Movements, NGOs and Social Change


November 18  NGOs and Competition: The Marketplace for Development


**December 2 Private Actors in Development: NGOs and Firms**

**Case:** Unilever in India, *Hindustan Lever’s Project Shakti--Marketing FMCG to the Rural Consumer* Harvard Business School case.


“The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid.” CK Prahalad and Stuart Huart. (This article summarizes the original Bottom of the Pyramid Argument).

The NGO Scramble (review from earlier this quarter).

**December 9 The Implications of Rights Based Approaches to Development for NGOs**

**Case:** Constituency Building in CARE Bangladesh HIV/AIDS Intervention Programs


ASSIGNMENTS
The class has three assignments, described below. All assignments are intended to be no more than 3 single spaced pages in length. More detailed information on each assignment will be provided in class.

Assignment One – 20% of grade – Due October 1
Based on our class discussion and the cases we have discussed on accountability, select an organization, a country, or an issue facing NGOs that deals with some dimension of accountability. Analyze the accountability issues involved, based on the frameworks we have used in class, and develop some strategies to enhance NGO accountability and effectiveness. If you do not have an organization in mind, you may write your memo on one of the cases we discussed.

Assignment Two – 20% of grade – Due November 1
For this assignment, you will be asked to select either an advocacy campaign, a social movement, or a transnational network of interest to you. Analyze the way it is organized, its strategies, and its accomplishments, using the relevant class readings as a framework.

Assignment Three– 20% of Grade, Due December 12
In this assignment, you are asked to assess the development strategy of a particular NGO in light of our readings on right-based approaches to development. This can be an NGO you know about, or the NGO you wrote about in assignment two, or one of the NGOs that was discussed in the class cases. How far has this NGO gone in incorporating rights-based approaches? Should the organization attempt to be more rights-based? What are the implications of doing so for the organization’s structure and strategy?

Weekly Response Memo and Questions – 20% of Grade
Each week you will be responsible for uploading a one page response “memo.” The memo should contain your reactions to the readings – ideas they stimulated, questions you have, etc. The memo should list at least 1 question you would be interested in discussing in class.

Participation – 20% of Grade
Participation includes

1) Showing up
2) Being an active participant in class discussions
3) Being an active participant in small group work
4) Taking an active role in small group presentations to the class
5) Contributing additional resources such as websites, links to applied resources, or additional reading.
6) Sharing information you discover in your assignments with the class.