

Politicization of Humanitarian NGOs: A Comparison Study of Oxfam and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

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Abstract : The combination of the expanding population of aid agencies and the act of politicization in humanitarian intervention blurred the distinction between what humanitarianism accept as universal human rights in theory and their practices in humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian organizations were now venturing into the formerly taboo territory of politics that place individuals at risk, for examples, cooperating and coordinating with the intervening states, considering moments of destruction as opportunities for political change and even taking on functions that had once been the exclusive preserve of government. Hence, aid agencies were becoming involved in matters of local or even international politics. This study focuses on the comparison between Oxfam and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) or Doctor without Borders different attitudes against political influences in humanitarian aid. It aims to untangle the bewilderment whether the contradictory approach to politics will becoming a barrier to performing their principles as humanitarian actors and also the consequences of taking that one particular position. The analysis of quantitative data and qualitative literature analysis are presented. The findings indicated Oxfam is actively engaged with politics. It welcomed government and private sector to shared cooperation to reach its goals to alleviate global inequalities. On the other hand, MSF has always taken a strong position to refuse any politics influence within their aid programmes. With no financial assistance from any government, MSF is free from any direct politics intervention. Hence, it can work efficiently with a clear objective to respond the demand side pressures from the people in needs. It is still publicly against politic involvement in the humanitarian activity, but practically, it has been moving forward to politicization in its own definition.

Keywords : humanitarian agencies, humanitarian intervention, humanitarian principles, politicization of humanitarianism

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