

THE HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Assessing Implications on the Work of Development NGOs



Marie Engberg Helmstedt

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Thesis Supervisor: Lina Papadopoulou

UNESCO Chair, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

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Name of the student: MARIE ENGBERG HELMSTEDT

Second semester host university: ARISTOTELE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

Name of the supervisor: LINA PAPA DOPOULOU

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Abstract

*Keywords: The Human Rights Based Approach * Development * NGOs * Human Rights * New Institutionalism * Constructivism.*

This thesis explores the Human Rights Based Approach and how it affects the work of development NGOs. It responds to the criticism of the approach, which questions the implications and sustainability of its implementation, suggesting that there is a gap between the HRBA in theory and the practice within development NGOs. The analysis is based on a constructivist theoretical framework, implying that the effects of the adoption of rights-based approaches are depending on the organisational translation of the approach.

Through an empirical analysis of interviews with Danish development NGOs the thesis concludes that the Human Rights Based Approach has influenced the work of development NGOs in significant ways, resulting in increased legitimacy and sustainability of development work. Development NGOs are faced with several challenges in their use of the approach, and its future is highly dependent on a collective effort of human rights and development practitioners to find durable solutions to these.

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