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Non-Governmental Organization Intervention

Justification of Non-Governmental Organizations(NGOs) as a topic area:

For far too long debates have been focused on governmental actions and their repercussions. Often, such topics offer few new insights into the way policies function. The use of NGOs as actors is rare; yet, these groups have been on the international forefront of delivering aid, preventing communicable diseases from spreading, and increasing relations between countries. This topic, focusing on NGO Intervention, has the potential to bring new consideration to debates. It refocuses the debate space on actions taken by NGOs and not the state. That opens debates up to information about new actors from a diverse and different literature base than is often accessible in only 20 minutes of prep. Furthermore, NGO actions need to be examined because of the increasing amount of criticism originating from various countries and their citizens. Thus, a topic area focused on examining NGO Intervention is an area we believe to be interesting, insightful, and debatable.

The current NGO climate on the world stage is under fire. Many countries such as Egypt, Russia, and India have begun to ban NGOs because they are receiving funds from foreign contributors. Egypt passed a bill on November 15, 2016 that says any NGO wanting to do humanitarian work must go through the approval process and follow regulations or face five years in jail (Ahmed Aboulenein 2016). NGOs are claiming this type of legislation will ban them from getting aid to thousands of people and cause other countries to reject their aid as well. Furthermore, on November 13, 2016 China blocked a Taiwanese NGO from making a speech at a UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development meeting because it goes against the UN's principles. The Taiwan Foundation for Rare Disorders focuses on human rights for minorities and says the act "highlights Beijing's very unreasonable attitude" (Lee I-chia, 2016, para. 8). Other NGOs have been outed for corruption and cultural biases. Amnesty International has been

criticized for its one-sided reporting and failures to report security threats that have caused the deaths of hundreds of people. Critics of this group range from Israel, Vietnam, Congo, and the United States.

Regardless of the blocks and criticisms, NGOs have contributed to advancements in humanitarian assistance, increased domestic legislation, along with tackling large-scale issues such as weapons trading. As debaters, we can look at increasing the role of NGOs in these areas which could bring new understandings into the operations NGOs conduct and how they accomplish their goals. Resolutions could be written to either assist or limit NGO activity thus providing adequate affirmative flex with negative predictability. For example, if the affirmative reduced the operations of a NGO, they could argue that another NGO would fill the gap, that domestic governance would be sufficient to solve the harm the NGO was attempting to solve, or that the issue is not an issue at all. The negative would still have access to that NGO being good (credibility type arguments), domestic legislation surrounding the NGO activity being bad, power vacuum arguments, and counterplans that would be predictable about the specific NGO's activities. This gives debaters a unique way to use their research from the topic because it maximizes the benefits and costs of using any NGO as specified in the resolution.

Affirmative Ground

The affirmative can frame the round with specific types of actions that the NGOs can take. These can include, but are not limited to: relations, humanitarian aid, treaty agreements, policy actions, and culture. Credibility advantages of the NGO acting in the resolution could be effective arguments to try and get larger impacts outside the action of the resolution itself. There could also be corruption advantages that focus on how the use of NGOs often results in less reliance on corrupt governments and spotlights the corruption that occurs in government.

Negative Ground

There are many disadvantages that could stem from bringing an NGO into a country. Generically speaking, there will always be some NGO corruption or biased ideologies that could be brought to light. There is a great deal of literature that says NGOs still operate under the state and that they only work with specific groups of people which means your K will have plenty of ground. Other K's that can be run include (but are not limited to) neocolonialism, imperialism, Nietzsche, Baudrillard, and Marx. The use of NGOs as actors in these resolutions also makes trade off and funding disadvantages much more compelling as these organizations are generally more strapped for cash than the United States Federal government. This topic area also opens large amounts of negative ground for counterplans that can use alternate actors that the Negative believes is more effective than those in the resolution. PICs out of different types of aid or areas where aid is given could allow for more in depth debate about how NGOs can be disruptive when providing aid to areas that they are not familiar with.

Possible Resolutions

The West Africa Water Initiative should substantially increase investment in its well drilling programs.

- Aff Ground- The advantages would obviously be based on access to clean water access to rural villages as well as possible credibility advantages for the West Africa Water Initiative.
- Neg Ground- Possible disadvantages could include masking as many wells dug by NGOs have been found in disrepair soon after being constructed as well as disadvantages about pollution from drilling.

Fundación Escuela Nueva should expand its educational program to include higher education.

- Aff ground- The aff can discuss ways that increasing education in young adults can lead to increases in innovation, health care, and employment. It could also gain benefits on reducing poverty.
- Neg ground- The disadvantages could discuss what types of trade off takes place. They could be specific to certain areas based on economy since that means people are more likely to leave their country resulting in a loss of workers.

Project HOPE should substantially increase its Zika prevention efforts in the Caribbean.

- Aff ground- Possible plans could include actions like donating mosquito nets or doing screenings. There could be advantages on disease spread or spill over into other parts of the medical field.
- Neg Ground- There could be disadvantages such as trade off with Project HOPE's other programs in TB awareness or other helpful programs. There could also be Western intervention disadvantages due to Project HOPE's historical ties to the US.

The International Women's Health Coalition should increase mental health programs in all of its clinics for victims of forced sterilization.

- Aff ground- The advantages to this resolution are linked to giving women a space to go to that would help them get through some of the toughest times in their lives. They could be based on the increased sterilizations of the Indigenous women, the ability to prevent STIs, and education for reproductive health.
- Neg ground- Mental health centers could be a disadvantage. From using electroshock therapy, clinical abuses, to labeling women "hysterical" there are many problems that patients could face.

The Red Cross should substantially increase investment in its internal investigations and ethics unit.

- Aff Ground- The advantages could stem from reformation within the NGO to reduce corruption and wasteful spending. This means the Red Cross would have quicker response times and funding to support those affected by natural disasters.
- Neg Ground- Disadvantages could include anything from the Red Cross' masking and corruption issues that took place with the Haiti funding to lack of oversight within Louisiana. Criticisms of the Red Cross could involve cultural insensitivity such as an incidence when they brought a bunch of pork sandwiches to a Jewish retirement home.

Carbon Trust should charge interest on its Energy Efficiency Loans.

- Aff Ground- The Aff would be able to run advantages that by charging for interest on these loans, the Carbon Trust would be able to expand its clean energy efforts with its extra revenue. This would also allow the Carbon Trust to lower the requirements on loans, allowing small businesses to get loans.
- Neg Ground- The neg could use disadvantages about reducing access to loans for small businesses. Counterplans that pick out of certain companies could be strategically beneficial.

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