

MAINSTREAMING HUMAN RIGHTS INTO ALL NGO WORK

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that the governance of NGOs is critical to the strengthening of the human rights movement. It advocates for the rights based approach that advances the moral obligation of NGOs to apply human rights principles to themselves. It urges each NGO to address the power inequalities within its operations, policies and relationships, identify the rights and duty bearers and the nature of the responsibilities. Cognizant that human rights are indivisible and inter-dependent, it challenges the artificial distinction between human rights and development NGOs. Mindful that human rights are universal, it counsels NGOs to learn how ordinary people have appropriated human rights discourse in relation to their culture, knowledge and experiences. Finally, it challenges the human rights mechanisms to provide leadership that will enhance the credibility of the human rights discourse to tame power and offer protection from any abuse of power.