



Democratization, development and governance reforms in the Democratic Republic of Congo: The work of the international community seen from the bottom

Seminar of the Subsaharan Africa Programme, Ifri

Friday, 12 June 2009

Ifri, Salle de conférence, 27 rue de la Procession, 75015 Paris

EVENT

The international community – understood here in a narrow sense, comprising UN agencies, international financial institutions, multilateral and bilateral aid agencies, and foreign non-governmental organizations - has played and still plays a major role in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since the end of what was once called “Africa’s Second World War” and the signing of the Global and All-inclusive Agreement in South Africa, the international community has invested in supporting the country’s delicate political transition (2003-2006), and the new regime elected in 2006.

Its forms of engagement are diverse: they range from food distribution to internally displaced persons in the Kivus, to budget support in the education sector. Working methods are equally diverse: ranging from “policy advice” given by the IMF to the government, to “advocacy” and the denouncing of human rights violations by Human Rights Watch. Its actors are also diverse: development agencies, UN agencies, churches, international NGOs and private businesses. However, its goals are less numerous and can be summarized briefly: **democratization, development, and governance reforms.**

In this context, major international donors, who guide the agenda for the development community in the DRC, heavily rely on project aid and on international NGOs to implement this agenda. This subcontracting system constitutes one of the pillars of the international community’s activities, and shatters the traditional image of NGOs as mere suppliers of humanitarian aid

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, as in all other post-conflict countries, NGOs act within an extremely broad and diverse scope, that goes well beyond humanitarian assistance: they are indeed mandated to implement institutional reforms, entrench democratic culture, and conduct development activities of varying magnitude. They are placed de facto in a position that is both delicate and strategic, in between institutional donors and local recipients of aid.

The objective of this seminar is to develop a reflection on this unusual and little known aspect of the work of NGOs and the international system of aid, from a country case-study, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Several representatives of international NGOs involved in the areas of democratization, development and governance reforms for a number of years will present their interventions and the lessons that we may draw from these.

The following issues will be particularly studied and discussed:

- the specificities of NGO interventions in these sectors
- the dynamics of relations between international NGOs / donors / recipients of aid
- the constraints and opportunities of this system of implementation of international assistance.

Provisional Programme

9h20

Opening of the seminar

Thierry Vircoulon, Associate Fellow at Ifri's Sub-Saharan Africa Programme

9h30-11h00

Panel 1: Problems of international aid in DRC

Théodore Trefon, Head of department at the Royal Museum of Central Africa, Tervuren, Belgium.

Reforms in Congo: assessment of a shared failure

Véronique Moufflet, Anthropologist and Protection Coordinator for the Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli, (C.I.S.P.) in the DRC in 2008 and 2009

Sub-contracting chain: the « emergency » answer of UNFPA in the Kasai Occidental or the evidence of failure

Florence Liégeois, Head of the DRC programme, RCN Justice & Démocratie
Reform of justice: a new arena of international aid. Competition and collaboration between different actors

Moderator: David Ambrosetti, Senior Researcher at the CNRS

11h00-11h15

Coffee Break

11h15-12h45

Panel 2: Long term intervention in conflict zones: Acting in Eastern Congo

Steven Spittaels, Researcher at the International Peace Information Service (IPIS), Antwerp

Mapping conflict motives in Eastern Congo

Marc André Lagrange, Expert in humanitarian action, Head of mission for the Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli, (C.I.S.P.)

Emergencies at the East and West of the DRC: a two speed humanitarian action

Alexis Bouvy, Technical Advisor / Analyst, Life & Peace Institute

Local capacity building and participatory action research: « New » channels for a lasting peace in Kivu? The experience of the Life & Peace Institute in the DRC

Bill Yates, International Alert, London

Moderator: Rory Keane, Policy Analyst, OECD, International Network on Conflict and Fragility

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