

# Why work “at home”? Domestic poverty programmes and their challenge to Northern development NGOs

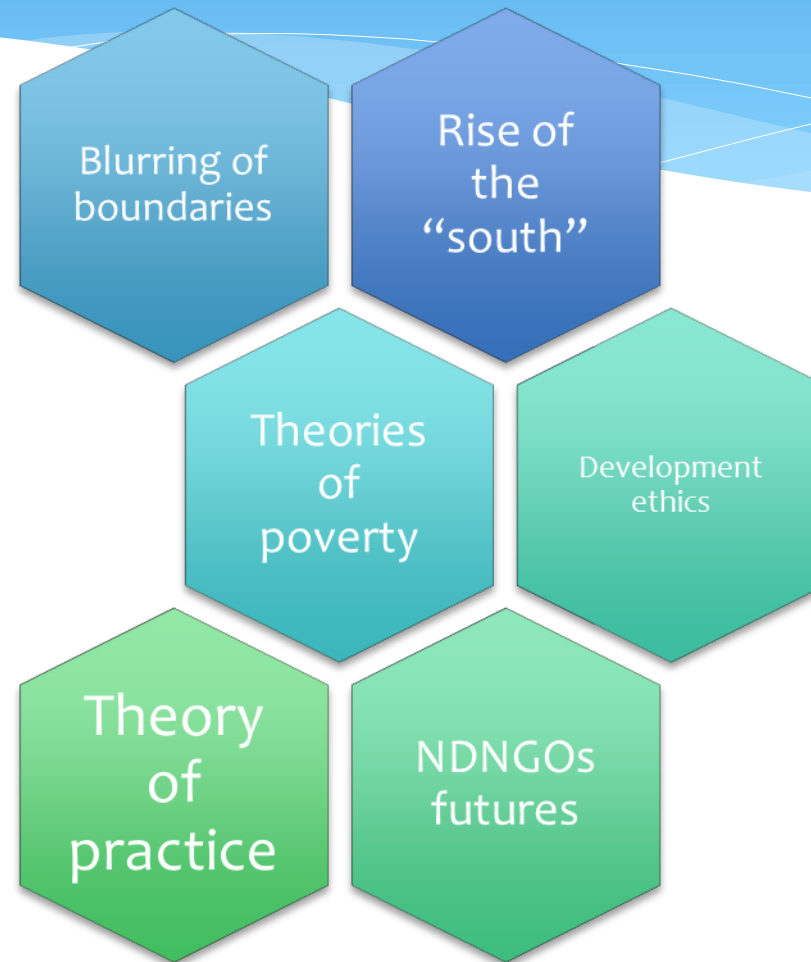
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# ... a road map

1. Why is this question significant?
2. Literature on NDNGO futures
3. Methodology
4. Findings
5. Implications for our understandings of development in a transformed world

# Intellectual terrain



## Group of Six (1974) *An assessment of the relationship between poverty in Britain and the third world and proposals for action*

but an up-to-date reappraisal in the light of our common interest in the interrelationship between policy towards poverty at home and abroad is now an urgent necessity.

# NDNGO futures

**Beyond north-south, silos and discipline “bending”** (Gaventa 1999; Edwards 2008; Hossain 2011; Lewis 2014)

**Beyond aid** (Fowler 2000; Malhotra 2000; Severino & Ray 2009)

**Decentralisation** (Fowler 1992)

**Time bound NGOs** (Berlan & Vijfeijken 2013)

**Re-orientation and re-invention** (Banks & Hulme 2012; Elbers & Schulpen forthcoming)

**Bridging with other societal actors** (Tandon 2000; Banks, Hulme & Edwards 2013)

**Global citizen action** (Edwards 2001)

**Advocacy & leverage** (Edwards, Hulme & Wallace 1999; Rugendyke 2007; Gaventa & Mayo 2009)

**“Alternatives”** (Bebbington, Hickey and Mitlin 2008)

**Quality of engagement with own constituency** (Edwards, Hulme & Wallace 1999; Fugere 2001 )

# Methodology

- \* Empirical study of four case studies: OGB, IR, RB, OA
- \* Informed by Hilhorst's (2003) ontology – “NGO-ing” and Krause's (2008) epistemology - privileging the understandings of those working for and with NONGOs.
- \* Semi-structured interviews with Oxfam GB partners, staff and beneficiaries in UK and India x 35 in April – July 2010.
- \* Corporate and archive documents x 140
- \* Atlasti coding and thematic analysis.

UKPP partners: UNISON Scotland, Church Action on Poverty, Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum, South Riverside Community Development Centre, ATD Fourth World



*So we were looking at how can we as a northern NGO be most, I think legitimate is a word that came up quite often, but it was a bit wider than just legitimacy but what sort of organisation do we want to be really? And so that was part of the general thinking was from a charity here doing good works there into concepts of social justice and so on... (OGB staff)*

*INGOs - this is a very big debate whether they should work directly or not. ... I think that in Africa most INGOs should work where there are no local NGOs. But India has a vibrant CS - so what is the harm with let them work on their own. They have to take a very rational lead - sometimes to work directly and sometimes not. The interface between the INGOs and SNGOs is not very clear. How do you operate? I think we have to use that space and work together. (India partner)*



# Findings – a range of assets

Assets	Examples
Intellectual consistency	UNISON presentation at Scottish Parliament.
Relationship between theory & practice	Application of sustainable livelihoods approach to Cardiff, Thornaby, London, Peak District
Making visible a theory of poverty	Poverty as social, economic and political powerlessness; non-economic dimensions
Neo-colonial distancing	<i>“white men in shorts out there doing stuff” (OGB P1 2010).</i>
Rootedness & credibility of international advocacy grounded in experience	1995 concern to be publicly rooted, shared by southern partners.
Highlighting the agency of the poor	<i>The Roles We Play</i> – film & exhibition
Transformatory relationship with the public	<i>Fair Play: Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Scotland, A Guide for Journalists (2007)</i>
Early warning system for overseas work	MICs and middle classes

# Conclusions & implications for new understandings of development in a transformed world

1. UKPP – more than just a country programme – responds to critiques of northern NGOs’ legitimacy and credibility.
2. The UKPP offers a set of 8 assets which can be used to explore the possible future role of these organisations.
3. PLUS - future envisaged incorporates new understandings of development:
  - \* broad, inclusive, non-binary and potentially disruptive notion of what “development” is
  - \* This moves understandings of development away from ideas of “them and us”, “here and there”, “developed and developing
  - \* A new domain?
4. More empirical work on the “souths in the north” and “norths in the south” is needed if we are to fully understand how civil society organisations, such as northern development NGOs, are responding to these changes and if we are to evaluate the range of strategies they choose to employ to this end.



**Thank you**