Introduction

In conflict zones where governments fear to tread, volunteers working with Doctors Without Borders rush to the rescue of people in need. Environmental activists have long banded together in organizations like Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth to try to protect whales and tropical rain forests. Since the 1960s, people imprisoned by oppressive regimes have looked to Amnesty International to take up their cause. Sports aficionados take for granted that the International Olympic Committee sets the rules for the Olympic Games. Professionals in many fields join their peers in organizations like the International Sociological Association. As these examples show, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) have become actively involved in a wide range of global issues. While many INGOs focus on matters that do not draw much public attention, others help identify and publicize new issues and exert pressure on states and other organizations to deal with them.

INGOs are voluntary associations of individuals, groups, or corporations who band together to pursue specific goals and activities on a worldwide or regional basis. As a complement to Part VI, the selections in this part focus in particular on the role of INGOs, and the global social movements and international conferences with which they are often associated, in world politics and global governance. While most analysts of world politics see states as the primary actors, stressing their jockeying for power as the driving force behind world development (or, as we saw in Part V, raising doubts about the capacity of states to meet the challenges posed by globalization), in these selections states are not so much "in the driver's seat" regarding world affairs. Instead, states are only one among many types of global actor, and they often are influenced substantially by other actors in ways they may hardly recognize.

Many INGOs act as self-authorized global governance bodies, in such arenas as science, engineering, knowledge management, sports, hobbies, management

The Globalization Reader, Fifth Edition. Edited by Frank J. Lechner and John Boli.
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Published 2015 by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

techniques, medical specialties, and much more. Global authority is exercised, for example, for the game of chess by the World Chess Federation; for volleyball, by the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball; for physics, by the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics and its member national associations; and for psychiatrists, by the World Psychiatric Association. Most INGOs of this sort receive little public attention and are familiar only to their members, but they have important governance functions. They make global rules, disseminate knowledge throughout the world, establish codes of ethics, propagate technical and environmental standards, organize world championships, and so on. In their respective sectors, they are the peak global organizations.

INGOs and the movements they represent are core elements of what is often referred to as global civil society. Analogous to national civil societies, global civil society is the vast network of voluntary organizations, formal and informal, that "world citizens" fashion to pursue common interests, share knowledge, promote professions, address social problems, and so on. Civil society organizations are non-profit associations, largely or wholly independent of the state, governed by democratic structures and committed to encouraging widespread and active participation by their members. Local and national organizations – what are often called domestic nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs – concentrate on local and national issues, but increasingly they are linked to INGOs and thereby to their counterparts in other countries. They thus form complex networks of ties, sharing information about their respective areas of concern and coordinating their programs in line with global organizations, policies, and standards. Of particular interest are INGOs engaged in global social activism and mobilization. INGOs are the key players in most global social movements, and larger movements can involve coalitions of hundreds of INGOs; for example, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines was supported by more than 1,200 organizations.

The best-known social movement INGOs are human rights organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, environmental bodies like the World Wildlife Fund and Greenpeace, and business-reforming INGOs like the International Forum on Globalization and the Clean Clothes Campaign. These groups work to improve conditions in countries all around the world and draw on members from all parts of the world. Many other global movements are also driven by INGOs, almost always in conjunction with domestic NGOs – movements for women's rights, for democracy and free elections, for the rights of indigenous peoples, for improved labor practices by global corporations like Nike or The Gap, for fair trade principles in agricultural production, and so on.

Social movement INGOs stand out because they engage extensively with and often challenge states, trying to change state policies or prompt state action on specific problems. They usually have little choice but to work through states because their own resources are meager and states are the only actors capable of – and responsible for – solving broad social problems. They also, and increasingly, become involved with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), which were introduced in Part VI. Of special importance are the United Nations and its agencies, which formally incorporate INGOs in their work through what is known as "consultative status." Thousands of INGOs have consultative status with UN bodies, and they

are key participants in many UN programs. The UNAIDS Programme even seats an INGO representative on its governing board.

The most important IGO, the United Nations, was formed after World War II as the successor to the League of Nations. Unlike the league, which the United States never joined, the UN mandate from the beginning was much broader than the issues of security and peace. Very quickly the UN became the focal point for global governance in many domains, and by the 1960s it had assumed a major role in promoting decolonization, the formation of new states in the former colonies, and the development of education, health care, and other modern systems in the less developed world. One of the UN's more striking activities has been its sponsorship of major world conferences on emerging issues, such as the conferences on women's issues during the UN Decade for Women (1975–85) and the later Beijing conference in 1995, as well as global conferences on the environment, including the highly publicized "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in 2009. In every instance, the official UN conferences, attended by delegates from states, have vied for attention with the parallel and much larger INGO/NGO conferences that speak not for governments but, in the broadest sense, for humanity as a whole.

To amplify a point we made in the previous section, we therefore find a complex and highly decentralized global governance structure that involves much cooperation among civil-society INGOs, IGOs (led by the UN), and states – but also much divisiveness, disagreement, and controversy about specific policies, programs, and lines of development in many domains. Global consensus is often hard to reach, but the globalization of issues – the degree to which issues and policies are debated and settled at the global level – is continually on the rise.

In the first selection, Israeli sociologist Nitza Berkovitch discusses the global women's movement, which originated in the late nineteenth century and became an increasingly coherent and effective social movement after World War I as it concentrated its efforts on the International Labour Organization, a new IGO set up to promote and standardize labor law and policy. Berkovitch analyzes the rise of new sets of global rules and expectations pertaining to women, crystallizing after World War II in a powerful ideology calling for women's full equality with men. Sparked by the UN Decade for Women, women's INGOs have proliferated rapidly, making the movement both more global and more divided as the voices of Third World women have become increasingly prominent.

Elizabeth Heger Boyle, an American sociologist, shows how the concern regarding female genital cutting (FGC) first arose among Western activists as a feminist issue but was later redefined as a medical problem, in large part because of resistance to the feminist stance by women in places where FGC is practiced. This recasting of the issue brought FGC onto the official agenda of major intergovernmental organizations, particularly the World Health Organization, but the growing importance of the idea that "women's rights are human rights" led to a further recasting of FGC as a human rights issue. This framework remains dominant to the present day.

The human rights framework is a key element in the selection by Rebecca L. Barlow, an Australian international relations scholar, on the women's movement in Iran. Barlow challenges the oft-repeated claim that the international human rights

regime was a Western creation, pointing out that the original proposals for a UN Charter barely mentioned human rights and both the United States and Britain resisted the establishment of a human rights regime. Many non-Western countries pushed successfully for an explicit rights declaration, and non-Western countries were a majority of the members of the first Human Rights Commission. Barlow then recounts the origins and development of the One Million Signatures Campaign in Iran, a massive effort by women's groups – both secular and religious – pushing for gender equality in Iran. Despite the patriarchal theocratic regime, the women's movement is posing a greater challenge to the subordinate position of women than most outside observers recognize.

In the next selection, American sociologists John Boli and George M. Thomas present a high-level overview of the entire population of international nongovernmental organizations since 1875. After charting the enormous increase in INGO formation and its ups and downs with the two world wars, they set INGOs in a world cultural context by showing how they foster and enact increasingly widespread global principles. Their article finds considerable evidence that INGOs can and do influence IGOs and states, though the extent of such influence varies greatly from issue to issue.

Peter Eigen, a German lawyer and former official at the World Bank, builds the case for global action to eliminate government corruption, including the bribing of public officials by companies seeking contracts or investment opportunities. As chairman of Transparency International (TI), the INGO he founded to identify and challenge corruption, he reviews the problems caused by corruption and the measures that TI believes can reduce its prevalence if a strong partnership among INGOs, states, and such IGOs as the OECD can be mobilized effectively.

A different kind of partnership – among NGOs, states, and corporations – takes center stage in the study by Swiss sociologist Franziska Bieri and John Boli of the global campaign to end the trade in conflict (blood) diamonds. They show how two small INGOs were key participants in the origins and development of the Kimberley Process, which produced a certification scheme to keep conflict diamonds off the world market. At issue here is the expanding ideology of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which imposes moral obligations on companies to consider not just profits but the "triple bottom line." CSR thinking proved to be a strong lever by which to induce the industry to embrace the certification scheme. While far from perfect, the scheme has been remarkably successful, greatly reducing the global market share of conflict diamonds.

Finally, we return to the issue of the "bottom billion" discussed in Part IV. In the 1990s, microfinance emerged as an exciting new approach to lifting people out of poverty, thanks largely to the efforts of Muhammud Yunus and his Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. But, as Indian-American urban studies scholar Ananya Roy shows, the microfinance industry has come under strident attack for charging high interest rates, benefitting investors more than the poor, and doing little to reduce long-term poverty. Roy presents a rather different view of microfinance. While it may not have achieved much in terms of spurring development, she argues, it has been quite effective as a form of social protection, helping the poor through hard times and reducing their vulnerability to the ups and downs of world prices for life's necessities, especially food.