



Week 2

Exploring the Politics & Policies of Humanitarianism & Development

*Week 2 further introduces the **politics (1)** & **policies (2)** of **humanitarianism & development**. By 'politics', humanitarianism & development must be understood as political modes of governing humanitarian interventions and developmental action in the broad field of international relations. Politics reflects theories & ideologies, as well as movements which are conservative or progressive. By 'policies', humanitarianism & development refer to sets of beliefs, practices, categories, discourses, & procedures in close relation with the political decisions which underpin them. Eventually, mention must be made of the '**humanitarian-development nexus**' (3), that is the transition & the intersection between the provision of humanitarian support & development aid. This nexus rests upon the notion that those two fields of research and practice should increase their collaboration in order to mutualise their reflection and tangible efforts.*

1. POLITICS OF HUMANITARIANISM & DEVELOPMENT



- What is the link between humanitarianism, development, and politics?
- Although an analysis of the interface between humanitarianism, development, and politics is not new, recent work has outlined the aspects of their evolving relationship.
- Humanitarianism/development have arguably always been highly political matters.
- They are influenced by political considerations

of donor governments as much as they influence the political economy of the recipient countries.

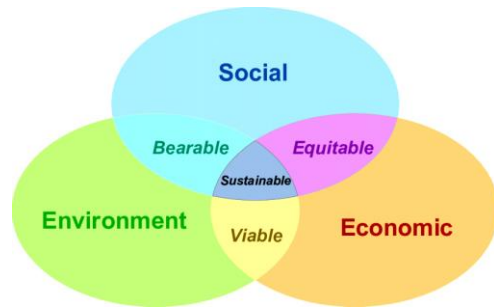
- As a consequence, humanitarianism and development are increasingly being used as strategic tools to fulfil political objectives.
- This is despite the fact that humanitarian and developmental practices seek to ensure that they are driven solely on the basis of need and along the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality.
- In fact, humanitarianism and development appear to be increasingly tied to political objectives and to the political responses of donor countries to complex emergencies.
- Humanitarian aid is becoming one integral part of donors' comprehensive strategy to transform conflicts, diminish violence and set the stage for liberal development.

- This changing role of humanitarian aid is called the ‘new humanitarianism’.

- It includes the forced repatriation of refugees, attempts at conflict resolution with humanitarian aid, and the subsequent assistance meant to meet political goals.

- These goals include geopolitical evolutions; the changing nature of conflict; the (re)definition of security which places ‘under-development’ at the heart of global concerns.

- They also comprise perceived failings of humanitarian action in emergencies, as well as policy considerations among donors.



► **For more information, please consult the ProQuest eBook and additional readings.**

2. POLICIES OF HUMANITARIANISM & DEVELOPMENT



- ‘**Policies**’ are sets of ideas or plans that are used as a basis for making decisions.

- In the frame of humanitarianism and development, policies refer to the rules, principles, guidelines, and frameworks adopted or designed by humanitarian and developmental agencies to attain durable goals.

- Policies are usually set out in a written format that is accessible and formulated to direct as well as exert influence on all the major decisions to be made.

- Policies intend to keep all humanitarian and developmental activities within a set of established boundaries.

- Humanitarian and developmental policies are therefore deliberate systems that must guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes.

- Policies are statements of intent and implemented either as procedures or protocols.

- Policies are also generally adopted by a governance body within one organisation.

- Moreover, policies can assist in both *subjective* and *objective* decision making.

- They are used in subjective decision-making to assist management with decisions that must be based on the relative merits of a number of factors.

- Governments and other institutions adopt policies in the form of laws, regulations, procedures, administrative actions, incentives, or voluntary practices.

- Usually, resource allocations must mirror policy decisions.

- In contrast, policies to assist *objective* decision-making are operational in nature and therefore can be objectively tested.

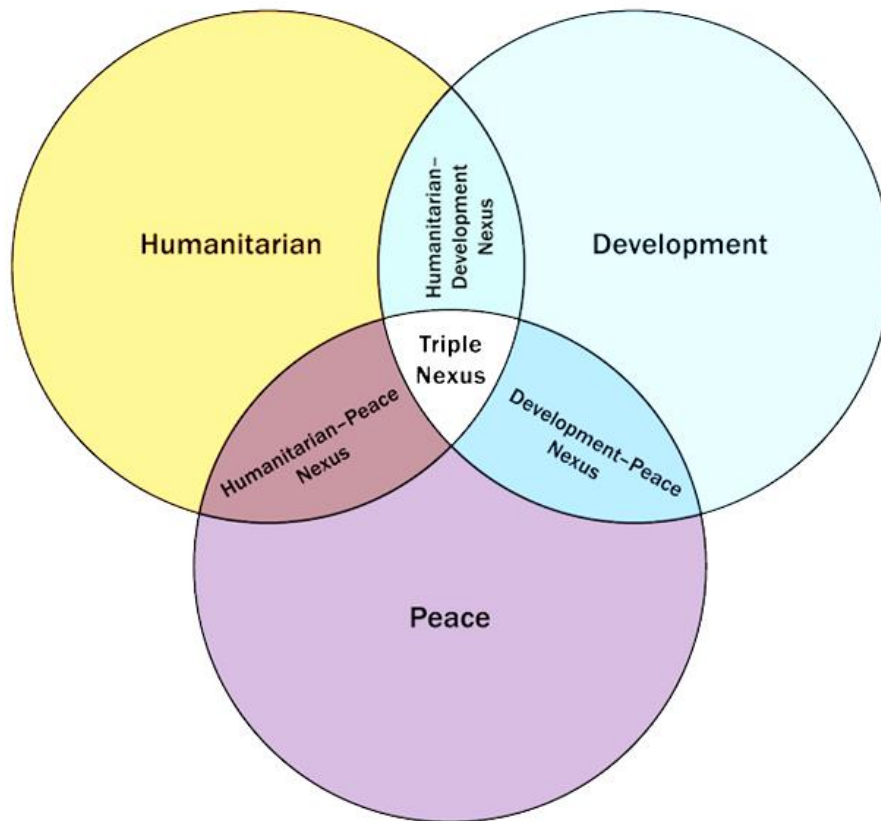
- The term ‘policy’ may apply to government, public sector organisations & groups, and individuals.

- Policies differ from rules or law in so far as while the law can compel or prohibit behaviours, policies only guide actions toward those that are most likely to realise the desired result.



► **For more information, please consult the ProQuest eBook and additional readings.**

3. THE 'HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT' NEXUS



Source: “Connecting the Dots on the Triple Nexus”, SIPRI, 2019



BIBLIOGRAPHY

The below-reading materials can be found on ProQuest through your VLE platform (Online Library).

ProQuest eBook

- Kevin M. Cahill, *History and Hope: The International Humanitarian Reader* (Fordham University Press, 2013), pp. 243-254.

Additional readings

- Roberto Belloni, *The Trouble with Humanitarianism* (*Review of International Studies*, 2007).
- Lindsay Whitfield, *Reframing the Aid Debate: Why Aid Isn't Working and How it Should Be Changed* (DIIS Working Paper n°34, 2009).