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# The Good Project: Humanitarian Relief NGOs And The Fragmentation Of Reason



## Synopsis

NGOs set out to save lives, relieve suffering, and service basic human needs. They are committed to serving people across national borders and without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, or religion, and they offer crucial help during earthquakes, tsunamis, wars, and pandemics. But with so many ailing areas in need of assistance, how do these organizations decide where to go—and who gets the aid? In *The Good Project*, Monika Krause dives into the intricacies of the decision-making process at NGOs and uncovers a basic truth: It may be the case that relief agencies try to help people but, in practical terms, the main focus of their work is to produce projects. Agencies sell projects to key institutional donors, and in the process the project and its beneficiaries become commodities. In an effort to guarantee a successful project, organizations are incentivized to help those who are easy to help, while those who are hardest to help often receive no assistance at all. The poorest of the world are made to compete against each other to become projects—and in exchange they offer legitimacy to aid agencies and donor governments. Sure to be controversial, *The Good Project* offers a provocative new perspective on how NGOs succeed and fail on a local and global level.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An excellent new work that really looks into humanitarian organizations that we tend to think of as pure good, and getting into the uncomfortable realities of capitalism and rationalization. Krause points out that successful groups, no matter how radical in their origins, will over time resemble corporations in order to appeal to wealthy donors. What kind of good these organizations do, and

how the 'beneficiaries' of charity work are affected is also discussed. This is an excellent, succinct text for any course on civil society or for those interested in careers with NGOs and non-profits

I have a master in public health and consider myself to be reasonably well read about global health, and came to this book thinking it would be another variation of old themes. I was surprised at the originality of Monika Krause's analysis. This book is special, probably one of the few texts that has fundamentally changed the way I think about this work--she analyzes global health nonprofits as a form of production, producing projects, and donors as competing to fund good projects in a marketplace of projects. The people being served, beneficiaries, are even analyzed as a component of the production of projects. For those of us that were taught to pursue buzzwords like the community-centered project, data driven evaluation, and to work using the logic model, this analysis deconstructs these basic components that shape the way global health projects are structured in an academically rigorous but creative way. I loved this book.

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