



HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS THINK TANK

PRESENTATION

By Michel Maietta, Associate Research Fellow at IRIS

Dunantist principles have been tested by the reality of the 20th century. Preserving neutrality, impartiality, independence and humanity has been a constant challenge for Dunantist organisations, which have had to adapt their operational model or introduce new standards.

The Biafra crisis illustrated the changing context in which humanitarian agencies work and marked a turning point: the French Doctors' indignation introduced the "Right of Humanitarian Intervention" as an operational paradigm as well as a new organisation model. A genuine second generation of Non-Governmental International Organisations (NGIO) was born.

This model established the practice of raising non-institutional flexible funds as a part of the political independence of humanitarian response agencies, leading to an economically-oriented growth strategy adapted to the Western capitalist market.

This growth strategy led to the creation of complex mega structures with increased humanitarian response capacity. However, though these INGOs have huge resources, their relative efficiency, particularly in new complex contexts as post-global Jihad Syria, is questionable.

Is the reality of globalisation at odds with principles enshrined in the "Solferino remembrance"? Are we at the end of the French Doctors' interventionist model? What kind of secular organisation could guaranty an efficient application of Dunantist principles in an increasingly diverse field which is no longer so western-centric? Shouldn't the Dunantist principles be radically questioned in a post-globalised world whose gravity centre has shifted to the South?

To try to answer to these questions and to foster creative thinking, IRIS and Save the Children are launching the Humanitarian Affairs think tank, an opportunity for research and speculative thinking, enriched by humanitarian professionals and open to the international general public.



Save the Children

