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"Shifting the centre of gravity of the humanitarian landscape towards the field and local actors"

It has been four years since an organisation intended to support research on multiple aspects of "humanitarian transition" was formed around Professor Mattei. As a sociologist of development, I am used to the constant merry-go-round of concepts that are as stimulating as they are ephemeral. The history of development, like the history of humanitarian aid, is a graveyard of "buzzwords" and portmanteaus, in fashion for a few months or a few years at best. Yet it seems that this idea of "humanitarian transition" is much richer, deeper and fertile than anticipated, offering a beneficial frame for the study of ongoing transformations, for example those linked to aid localisation.

The Gallicisation of "aid localisation" is clumsy (it is not a question of pointing to aid activities on a map!), but we will use it here, in the absence of a better term. Resulting from the "Grand Bargain", an initiative adopted at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 in Istanbul, which aimed to compensate for the deficit of humanitarian funding worldwide - "aid localisation" refers to a shifting of the centre of gravity of the humanitarian landscape towards the field and its local operatives. Studying aid localisation therefore amounts to analysing the potential upheavals which it would lead to, both in terms of the orientation of funding, and in terms of the relationships between actors in developed and developing countries, and also with regard to intervention strategies.

It must be noted that for more than a quarter of a century, the emergence of civil society organisations in a number of developing countries has led to significant changes in the field of development assistance. Following strategies of decentralisation and deconcentration by sponsors and skills-reinforcement for partners in developing countries, Western actors have been forced to reexamine their roles, strategies, and practices. Inspired by this experience, we might say that 2017, a year marked by the emergence of "humanitarian aid localisation", is the herald of new and exciting avenues of research.

Gautier Pirotte
Professor of sociology at the University of Liège
Member of the International Scientific Council
of the Red Cross Fund



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Aid localisation under discussion at the Fund's annual research day "Humanitarian transition: the state of research"

Last March in the Le Monde auditorium in Paris, the Red Cross Fund organised a day for the summaries of the research carried out by the year's laureates, in partnership with Le Monde diplomatique. This annual gathering is the opportunity for researchers who are supported by the Fund to present the conclusions of their research in front of a wide audience, and then to take part in debates with renowned experts. This year's theme was "international aid localisation, views and realities of the transfer of humanitarian action from the global to the local scale". Whilst the legitimacy of this transfer is recognised by the sum of all humanitarian actors and observers, its methods and concrete implications have stirred up lively debate. Analysis.

"Aid localisation", in other words, the transfer of humanitarian action to the local level, is now a given. But what, in fact, is being transferred? Field actions, the organisation of missions, decision-making powers, or even financial management? And which roles will different actors play in this redistribution?

AID LOCALISATION AS A RESPONSE TO A NEED FOR EFFICIENCY

In emergency situations, in the face of disasters, conflicts and epidemics, NGOs implement processes intended to save the maximum number of lives. Humanitarian action is concerned with immediate problems. "But what is the use in saving the life of a small child if he dies the following year from famine?" asked Claus Haugaard Sorensen, main consultant for resilience, humanitarian aid, and crisis response at the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), realistically. "Humanitarian aid must be the starting point for a process which makes the next disaster less likely". In this regard, the example of Haiti, in spite of the presence of more than 10 000 NGOs, is a failure. "Two years after the earthquake, I have not seen an improvement in the capacity for action amongst local actors", said Gary Conille, assistant Secretary General of programmes and operations for the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Faced with this observation, aid localisation is, quite simply, a means to make humanitarian action more efficient in the long run, by focusing on those who will be present at each stage of the crisis - before, during and after. "This permanent presence is the very definition of localisation", highlighted Gary Conille. "It requires the redefinition of the partnerships between actors and a renunciation of the dissociation between humanitarian aid and development, which has become artificial".

"Humanitarian aid must be the starting point for a process which makes the next disaster less likely."

Claus Haugaard Sorensen



The panel in discussion

LOCALISATION AND STATES' STRONG WILL FOR SOVEREIGNTY

Nevertheless, the concept of localisation is not part of a strictly operational logic. It also corresponds to a desire to regain control over the organisation of aid and over strategic decision-making. States are on the front line. "What could be more legitimate for them than to want to regain control of the management of social action for their own people?", asked Jean-François Mattei, president of the Fund.

"What could be more legitimate for them than to regain control of the management of social action for their own people?"

Jean François Mattei

Ethiopia has taken this logic to its extreme. The country imposes strict regulations, and exerts implacable control over the action of international NGOs. For this country, international aid has become an instrument which enables it to develop national infrastructures and public services: hospitals, schools and roads. "For example, when, after long and restrictive procedures, an NGO is finally able to build a hospital, it is usually the governmental agency ARRA that takes over the management, soon after development starts, explained Alice Corbet, a researcher at the Centre français des études éthiopiennes (CFEE). "Services deteriorate, humanitarian workers feel a certain frustration when confronted with the loss of efficiency in their action, and irritation regarding the annoyances they are subjected to. But at the end of the day, they recognise the positive aspects of Ethiopian policy in matters of aid management and the reinforcement of local capacity for action".

"Services deteriorate, humanitarian workers feel a certain frustration when confronted with the loss of efficiency in their action, and irritation regarding the annoyances they are subjected to. But at the end of the day, they recognise the positive aspects of Ethiopian policy in matters of aid management and the reinforcement of local capacity for action".

THE SUDDEN ENTRANCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

In the 1980s, the impartiality of international NGOs, and their independence from political power, were fundamental principles. Though State sovereignty is now considered legitimate and profitable, Akram Belkaïd, a journalist for the *Monde diplomatique* newspaper and a specialist of the Arab world, stressed the "ambiguous role of certain governments in developing countries who lock down on the field of civil society, preferring to rely on Western actors rather than grant autonomy to local actors".



Garry Conille

Of course, aid localisation favours the project of transferring more power to civil society and to local NGOs. "The question is not whether we should go that way, it is a given," asserted Claus Haugaard Sorensen. "The goal set in Istanbul was to give 25% of funding to local operatives as directly as possible." Daouda Diouf, director of ENDA Santé Senegal, called for this development with a degree of impatience: "We are witnessing a circumvention of Western NGOs who are finding it hard to legitimate their intermediary status. Before, in Africa, there was no technical capacity for organising action. But things have changed. We are audited by Deloitte and KPMG..."

"We must invest to build resilient organisations, and to reflect on the complementarity of developed and developing countries, without it becoming a turf war."

Daouda Diouf

WHICH ROLE FOR WESTERN NGOS?

Are Western NGOs clinging on to their positions with too much obstinacy? For Francis Akindes, president of the Fund's International Scientific Council, the reality is much more nuanced. "Not all the NGOs from developing countries present the same guarantees of seriousness and transparency," he reminded us. He asked, "Can one's autonomy be built with other people's money?". Indeed, sponsors have every right to orientate their funding and control its use. Moreover, reducing international NGOs to the role of intermediaries would be unfair, inasmuch as some of them raise considerable sums when disasters strike.

"The success of interventions must not be measured by the number of people who have received aid. The question is rather: when I leave the country, will I have invested in the capacity reinforcement which will enable the population to face up to the next crisis?"

Garry Conille

"All too often, Western NGOs and NGOs from developing countries are presented as opposites", said Florence Daunis, director of operations and technical resources for Handicap International. "When we work in Aleppo, our primary partners are not organisations, but families, communities, civil society...". Moreover, when civil society is, as in Central Africa, part of the conflict, the relative neutrality of international NGOs becomes essential.

Nevertheless, it is clear that aid localisation calls the future role of international NGOs into question. "Their interventions are still indispensable", said Gary Conille. "But we want them to organise themselves around the needs of local actors". Daouda Diouf shared his opinion: "We must invest to build resilient organisations, and to reflect on the complementarity of developed and developing countries, without it becoming a turf war". Will international NGOs have to organise their own replacement, their own obsolescence? Whatever the case, they no longer have any vocation to be irreplaceable, and need to transmit their savoir faire and accompany local actors. "The success of interventions must not be measured by the number of people who have received aid", stated Gary Conille. "The question is rather: when I leave the country, will I have invested in the capacity reinforcement which will enable the population to face up to the next crisis?". As a result, international NGOs have an important role to play in this transition. For Jean-François Mattei, more than the Western NGOs, it will be the very term of "humanitarian aid" that will need to give way to more acceptable terms and practices of social action and international cooperation.

The Participative Approach: Resolving local conflicts to avoid global problems?

“The participative approach allows us to sidestep political solutions and maintain the status quo”



The Project

“Issues and practices in community participation in Casamance”

Postdoctoral research, co-financed by the Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD).

Context and Thematic Issues

REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF PEACE COMMITTEES IN CASAMANCE

Peacebuilding, a method of intervention developed in the 1990s, is based on the assumption that contemporary conflicts no longer involve two distinct belligerent forces, but a multiplicity of actors. It is therefore a question of “making populations participate in peace”, in order to avoid a rekindling of the conflict. In Casamance, one of the most popular strategies has been the creation of peace committees, designed to prevent and manage disputes which arise at the village level. As a backdrop is the idea that little conflicts can feed larger, independentist ones. Given sponsors’ enthusiasm for this approach, NGOs have come to populate this new niche. The study aims to analyse the social impact of these committees in Casamance, and to question the ideological presuppositions on which they rest.

Methodology and Roll-out

INTO THE HEART OF PEACE COMMITTEES

This study is based on ethnographic work carried out in Lower Casamance. A number of interviews were carried out amongst humanitarian actors: 5 international NGOs, 15 national NGOs, and 4 sponsors. Several visits to the field, in six villages, enabled us to witness events organised by the actors: awareness campaigns, inaugurations, follow-up visits. Two sociology students also distributed nearly 30 questionnaires to village populations during the same period. A number of more informal interviews with inhabitants also informed our reflections.

The Project-Carrier

Alvar Jones Sanchez is a doctor in social anthropology (University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain). He is a visiting professor at the University of Distance Learning (UNED) in Spain.



Alvar Jones Sanchez

The data in the table does not all correspond to the same year, but it is the most recent for each indicator. The country ranking per indicator is shown in brackets.

	SÉNÉGAL
Area (km ²)	196 722
Population (thousand inhabitant)	16 054 (72nd)
Growth rate of the population ¹	29,1 (12th)
Number of children per woman	4,88 (17th)
Average life expectancy (years)	67,7(146th)
Infant mortality ²	34,6 (55th)
HDI ranking ³	170th
GDP / inhabitant (current US \$)	900 (199th)
Urbanisation rate (%) ⁴	44,4

¹ Number of inhabitants + or - per year for every 1000 inhabitants.
² Number of deaths between 0 and 1 year per 1000 births.
³ Calculated by the UNDP, the Human Development Index is a composite indicator of development including data pertaining to education, longevity and quality of life.
⁴ Proportion of the population living in urban areas.

Sources :
 - UNDP: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>
 - World Bank: <http://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur>
 - INED (Institut national d'études démographiques) : <http://www.ined.fr>

Interview

POPULATION PARTICIPATION HAS BEEN FUNDAMENTAL IN PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS IN CASAMANCE. HAS THIS IDEA WORKED?

Alvar Jones Sanchez : The intention of starting from the base in order to resolve conflicts is admirable. However, the objectives of participation, its methods and functioning, are prescribed from afar. In these conditions, how can we build support and create dynamics which are considered endogenous?

A number of imperatives in the working of peace committees, such as the integration of women and young people, diminish their legitimacy, in contexts where conflict resolution is often the preserve of men of a certain age and a certain status. There are already a number of mechanisms in place in village societies for conflict resolution. In the absence of social anchoring, those implemented by NGOs are seldom used.

This approach also suffers from the illusion of impartiality. By choosing the “right people”, and giving them the “right training”, it might be possible for committees to act in an impartial manner: this idea leads us to believe that individuals can escape their community and the place they hold in it. The opposite is true: the committees are often instrumentalised as a means of increasing individual wealth, visibility or power, as well as that of the community. They can also be the scenes of pre-existing conflicts in the village, often linked to land tenure and resource exploitation.



NGO acting for peace in Ziguinchor

HOW DO YOU JUDGE THE ACTION OF NGOS?

AJS : For over a decade, it has been easy to see the problems which the committees encounter, and their lack of viability. The immutable character of the strategies clearly shows that reflection on the impact of interventions is limited. The latter are not judged on the basis of the benefits which they bring. They are valued and replicated according to their competitive value on the market of development. In Casamance, peacebuilding has led to the emergence of a particularly profitable humanitarian market.

This marketisation of peace has led to a broadening of interventions. In certain areas, several NGOs fight for the promotion of conflict mediation. They share the same targets (certain villages), the same objectives (conflict mediation), and similar “participative” strategies (the implementation of peace committees). The lack of dialogue between NGOs has had a negative impact on the efficiency and legitimacy of the interventions.

Since the end of the 1990s, NGOs have enabled noteworthy progress in Casamance: they have namely given a voice to the population’s desire for peace, which had been suffocated by the warring parties. But the grey areas linked to the marketisation and the broadening of peacebuilding actions were never taken census of. NGOs, engaged in marketing strategies with their sponsors, provided only a positive reading of their interventions.

HOW DO THE SENEGALESE PUBLIC EXPERIENCE THIS LASTING PRESENCE OF NGOS WITH REGARDS TO A PROBLEM CONCERNING THEIR SOVEREIGNTY?

AJS : There are instances where the local authorities - police, town hall, subprefecture - play the game by sending conflicts to the peace committees for a local resolution. However, most often, the complementarity long-awaited by the sponsors does not come to pass, either because they do not know of the existence of the committees, or because they consider them a threat to their authority.

The Senegalese State adapts itself better to the ideological issues which underlie the NGOs’ approach. The emphasis on community, and the participation of populations in peacebuilding, reveal a diagnostic which presents the independentist conflict as a local problem linked to the cohabitation of populations. Yet one of the main causes of conflict in the villages remains land ownership. These conflicts do not concern the lack of “mutual understanding”, which a culture of peace, promoted by the NGOs and sponsors, could compensate for. They are rooted in a land reform policy from the 1960s which contravened common law. Hence, the participative approach leads to a circumvention of political solutions in favor of the State, whilst maintaining the status quo.



Village communities awareness to conflict resolution

No security without development, no development without security

“The population is caught between three threats: dependence on aid, Boko Haram, but also the state of emergency”

Interview

CAN YOU EXPLAIN TO US HOW SECURITY ISSUES IN DIFFA HAVE ACCELERATED THE TRANSITION FROM EMERGENCY LOGICS TO DEVELOPMENT ONES?

Tatiana Smirnova : The population is caught between three threats: dependence on aid, Boko Haram, but also the state of emergency. Declared after the attacks in February 2015, it led to a ban on commercial activities linked to pepper, cattle, and fishing on Lake Chad. The security approach therefore reinforced social tensions in a region which has close ties to the Maiduguri area, where most of the Boko Haram attacks were recorded. In Niamey, there is often talk of complicity and infiltration. On the ground, the proximity with insurgents is experienced in a more complex way. A lot of people have a relative, an acquaintance, or even a client... or have been victims of an attack. Until recently, the expression “Boko Haram” was never uttered: it was replaced by euphemisms. The sponsors and the State, aware of this delicate situation, developed a new discourse: in order to ensure security, it was necessary to invest in development. Programmes destined to promote community cohesion and to give work to young people were put in place: clearing the riverbanks or dune fixation. Sponsors also financed projects linked to literacy and education. Nevertheless, these efforts were not enough. Especially since instability in the region remained an obstacle to an emergency transition towards development.

Certain communities, moving between several sites, can be forgotten, whereas other beneficiaries receive double rations. Of course, the population could not survive without humanitarian workers. But the current methods of aid distribution provoke frustration and exacerbate tensions within communities.



A soldier and a civilian in Diffa

CAN THE NIGERIAN STATE NOT ACT AS A COORDINATOR?

In Diffa, public services lack the human resources necessary to ensure the effective coordination of operations. At the same time, they suffer from a form of competition and dilution of power. Several institutions are likely to intervene: the Ministry for Humanitarian Action, the Prime Minister's Office, the High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace, planning ministries, the Ministry of the Interior, etc. However, when internal security is at stake, the State strives to regain control. Hence, in April 2017, representatives of an NGO who had not respected the ban on intervening in an unauthorised site were arrested for a few days.

Today; sponsors are putting pressure on humanitarian actors to coordinate their actions, between themselves and with the public authorities. Yet these difficulties will not be fully solved without a consensual vision regarding the future of the region and its displaced persons - an arduous task given the diversity of the actors and the issues at stake.

WHAT YOU ARE DESCRIBING SEEMS TO BE FAR REMOVED FROM A TRANSFER OF SKILLS TO THE LOCAL LEVEL. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON THIS POINT?

TS : The reinforcement of local human resources is an essential condition. But the priority is maybe elsewhere: in the dialogue with communities of displaced persons to ensure an equitable distribution of resources and access to jobs for young people in order to ease social tensions. A better understanding of the context of Diffa and of the complex connections between the region and the insurgents is also necessary. The State and humanitarian actors are gradually beginning to take these factors into account. They have established that security and development are inseparable and that no lasting solution can be built without these two pillars.



A UNHCR board in Diffa

IN YOUR WORK YOU OBSERVED A LACK OF COORDINATION AND A KIND OF COMPETITION BETWEEN DIFFERENT ACTORS. CAN YOU EXPLAIN THIS?

TS: The competition between humanitarian actors for access to funding impedes dialogue. As an example: a representative of an NGO has just finished their mission and wants to propose a new project. In order to develop a pertinent offer, they have to know who is doing what, and where... Since the shared data is not precise enough, they turn to other humanitarian actors, but receive little in the way of a response. During calls for tender, many are reticent about sharing information.

With the intensification of aid, the lack of communication has negative effects in the field: duplications, risks of misappropriation...

The Project

“Configurations of “security” principles in the humanitarian space in Niger (2012-2017)”

Postdoctoral research funded by the Government of the Principality of Monaco

Context and Thematic Issues

SECURITY CRISIS IN THE NIGERIAN PERIPHERY

Since the end of the 2000s, the Diffa region, close to neighbouring Nigeria, has been used as a sanctuary by Boko Haram. During the offensives, populations crossed the river to seek refuge in this region in spontaneous sites. In 2013, a few humanitarian offices sprang up in the city of Diffa: two years later, they can be counted in the dozens. The region currently hosts two hundred thousand displaced persons, half of whom come from Nigeria. In spite of structural food insecurity, Niger has never experienced such a situation. The study aims to understand how humanitarian actors and authorities are negotiating aid, and what the effects are for the population of Diffa.

Methodology and Roll-out

A PROJECT UNDER STRESS

The project is based on an anthropological approach. Niamey, the capital of Niger, was the main site for the study, as it is where the main power institutions and humanitarian organisations are located. Since access to the Diffa region is restrained for security reasons, only one visit was possible, in May 2017, for the international conference organised by the University of Diffa on the theme of deradicalisation and the return of Boko Haram converts. To overcome these difficulties of access to the field, interviews were carried out with people who had worked in Diffa during the crisis, as well as with those who regularly use the shuttle between Diffa and Niamey

The Project-Carrier

Tatiana Smirnova is a doctor in social anthropology and ethnology (EHES). She is an associate researcher at the Centre d'études en sciences sociales sur les mondes africains, américains et asiatiques (CESSMA, UMR 245, Université Paris Diderot-Inalco-IRD).



Tatiana Smirnova



The data in the tables does not correspond to the same year, but it is the most recent data for each indicator. The ranking of the country per indicator is shown in brackets.

	NIGER
Area (km ²)	1 267 000
Population (thousand inhabitants)	21 564 (57th)
Growth rate of the population ¹	40,1 (1st)
Number of children per woman	7,48 (1st)
Average life expectancy (years)	62,7 (172nd)
Child mortality ²	51,4 (26th)
HDI ranking ³	188th
GDP / inhabitant (current \$ US)	359 (226th)
Urbanisation rate (%) ⁴	19,3

¹ Number of inhabitants + or - per year for every 1000 inhabitants.
² Number of deaths between 0 and 1 year per 1000 births.
³ Calculated by the UNDP, the Human Development Index is a composite indicator of development including data pertaining to education, longevity and quality of life.
⁴ Proportion of the population living in urban areas.

Sources :
 - UNDP: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>
 - World Bank: <http://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur>
 - INED (Institut national d'études démographiques) : <http://www.ined.fr>

2017 call: thematic fellowships have the wind in their sails

The Fund is pursuing its main mission of supporting research based on the theme of humanitarian transition. This year, eight research projects were selected from an ever-increasing number of applications. There have been changes, with the extension of the list of research areas to include new countries, and more thematic fellowships from our "Partners' call".

The 2017 call in figures



EVEN MORE THEMATIC FELLOWSHIPS

Out of the eight projects which will receive 20 000€ in funding over the course of the year, five of them are thematic fellowships attributed by the "Partners' call". This call, launched in 2016, concerns more targeted and operational research themes, which are jointly developed by the Fund and a co-financing partner. The Fonds Claire & François is continuing its commitment to "Humanitarian transition and childhood", supporting research on healthcare for pregnant women and children in areas strongly affected by climate hazards in Madagascar.

The Fonds Compagnie Fruitière is funding a fellowship on questions of exchanges between entrepreneurship and humanitarian action, exploring the logics of businesses who engage with social issues and NGOs that borrow methods from the private sector in order to carry out their missions. Finally, the AXA Research Fund enabled the launch of a postdoctoral programme entitled "Risk Management and Humanitarian Action", which is split into three sub-themes concerning three categories of risk: health risks, climate risks, and risks linked to water.

Selected Projects

<p>1</p> <p>Georges DJOHY </p> <p>Agricultural engineer and anthropologist at the Faculty of Agronomy at the University of Parakou (Benin)</p> <p>"Configurations and Dynamics of Humanitarian Aid in Flooding Areas of the Niger River Valley in Northern Benin."</p> <p> supported by the Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD)</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Mariama N. KOUTCHA </p> <p>Doctor and professor of Agro-climatology and General Agronomy at the Université Islamique de Say (Niger)</p> <p>"Economic Evaluation of the Climate Risk-Management Framework: the case of the risk of drought in Niger."</p> <p> supported by the AXA Research Fund</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Kelly POULET </p> <p>Doctor in sociology, affiliated to the CURAPP-ESS of the Université de Picardie Jules Verne in Amiens</p> <p>"Autonomy: From Ethics to Practice. The case of rural FONGS-action in Senegal."</p> <p> supported by the Government of the Principality of Monaco</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Edouard K. KOUASSI </p> <p>doctor in sociology and researcher at the Development Research Centre (CRD) at Université Alassane Ouattara de Bouaké (Côte d'Ivoire)</p> <p>"The Fight against Malnutrition in Côte d'Ivoire: report and perspectives on the appropriation of WASH and CLTS by local Bounkani actors."</p> <p> supported by the AXA Research Fund</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Roseline N'Da GBOCHO </p> <p>Professor and researcher affiliated to the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Université Alassane Ouattara de Bouaké (Côte d'Ivoire).</p> <p>"Palliative care for children in Côte d'Ivoire: care seen from the angle of a gift."</p> <p> supported by the Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Anicet T. ZRAN </p> <p>Doctor, professor and researcher in history, affiliated to the Centre for Research on the History of the Savanah People of Africa (OPESHA) at the Université Alassane Ouattara de Bouaké (Côte d'Ivoire)</p> <p>"NGOs in the Face of the Failure of the Sanitary System in Northern Côte d'Ivoire: palliative or substitute?"</p> <p> supported by the AXA Research Fund</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Tantely V. ANDRIANANTOANDRO </p> <p>Economist, professor and researcher affiliated to the Centre for Research on Development of the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) at the Université Catholique de Madagascar, in Antananarivo</p> <p>"Healthcare for Pregnant Women and Children under Five in Areas Severely Affected by Climate Hazards."</p> <p> supported by the Fonds Claire & François</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Roberta RUBINO </p> <p>Doctor in social anthropology and ethnology at the EHESS in Paris, and affiliated to the UMR Development and Society at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne (IRD)</p> <p>"For Sustainable Food Security. The role and potentialities of micro-businesses in agri-food provision and transformation in urban Burkina environments."</p> <p> supported by the Fonds Compagnie Fruitière</p>

A more detailed description of the projects is available at www.fondcrf.org

3 QUESTIONS FOR...

Marie-Pierre Fabre

President, Fonds Compagnie Fruitière
Partner of the research programme "Entrepreneurship and humanitarian aid"

1. What reasons motivated your engagement with the French Red Cross Fund?

The Compagnie Fruitière endowment fund is convinced of the fundamental role of research in the human sciences for the development of developing countries. By placing ethics at the centre of its reflections, the Red Cross Fund also mirrors our concerns: to act without substituting ourselves, and to let populations develop their autonomy, or to give them the means to do so.

2. How does research fit into your policy of social and environmental responsibility?

The actions of the Compagnie Fruitière and its endowment fund are concerned with sustainability. This is why we are particularly interested in the study of innovative solutions for the autonomisation of populations on the social, economic and sustenance levels. We are always on the lookout for innovative partnership models, which are useful for society but also for businesses.

3. How do you think that your support will enable a better definition of the role of the private sector, in order to contribute to a renewal in the humanitarian field?

The research that we finance broaches the question of sustainable food security in Burkina Faso, by studying local initiatives in the domain of supply-provision and agri-food transformations in the city of Ouagadougou. We wish to see links developing between academic, humanitarian and private actors, in order to create a constructive synergy which will benefit vulnerable populations. With this in mind, we also financed a training seminar on humanitarian aid at the Senghor University in Alexandria at the beginning of the year, for African students and future executives.

In 2017, the Fonds Compagnie Fruitière financed a postdoctoral research fellowship and a training seminar on humanitarian aid in Africa.

3 QUESTIONS FOR...

Raphaël Gusdorf

Chief Operating Officer, AXA Research Fund
Partner of the research programme "Risk management and humanitarian action"

1. Can you present the AXA Research Fund and its mission in a few words?

AXA created the AXA Research Fund in 2007 with the conviction that science gives societies the capacity to respond to future issues. To this day, we have supported over 500 research projects by researchers from 55 different countries. We finance the generation's best researchers for work on our four priority themes: health, environment, economy and technology.

2. What do you expect from your partnership with the Red Cross Fund?

We are proud to have been associated with the French Red Cross Fund for two years, in order to reward researchers for their innovative work in research fields such as climate, health, or access to water. These themes are at the crossroads between humanitarian engagement and the risk management specific to our role as insurers. This partnership allows us to support projects which tackle key issues on the African continent, and which perfectly reflect our mission to protect vulnerable populations.

3. In what way can new insurance mechanisms, namely concerning climate risks, fit into the ongoing humanitarian transition?

Based on meteorological data, parametric insurance enables the securing of farmers' incomes in developing countries. As soon as an abnormal meteorological situation is recorded, on the basis of pluviometry, for example, compensation is automatically triggered. This breaks the spiral of poverty resulting from climate disasters: loss of harvests, decreasing income, followed by an inability to buy seedlings for the next season, consequent impoverishment, and long-term debt.

In 2017, the AXA Research Fund financed three postdoctoral research fellowships and two research prizes.

Annual seminar: focus on the Lebanese humanitarian landscape

On November 16th and 17th, the Fund will hold its annual seminar in Beirut. For the fourth edition, the Fund is leaving the African continent for Lebanon, a country which was included this year on the list of priority research areas. Located at the centre of a conflicted region and weakened by unstable internal dynamics, Lebanon is currently facing a number of humanitarian issues, which have increased since the beginning of the Syrian conflict and the mass arrival of refugees.

Entitled "Humanitarian transition and ethical reflections in Lebanon: what perspectives?", the seminar was jointly organised with the local delegation of the Institut de recherche pour le développement, a historical partner of the Fund, the Lebanese Red Cross, and the Université Saint-Joseph. As with previous editions, the Fund and its partners will bring together academics and local and international NGO operatives, as well as government representatives. The debates will focus on the significant transformations affecting the Lebanese humanitarian landscape, which tend to redefine the characteristics of aid. Indeed, in spite of an initially traditional response to the crisis, local, public and humanitarian actors have made themselves indispensable and have multiplied their partnerships. New models of NGOs are

appearing, victims of conflicts are becoming actors, and NGOs are using the market sector in order to generate their own resources.

Lebanon now appears to be a laboratory for initiatives which favour political stability and security in a country under pressure, in which local and international actors collaborate in order to redefine humanitarian action. The Fund's seminar therefore offers a space for direct and open dialogue with the different parties involved, with the aim of jointly defining the realities and perspectives of the Lebanese humanitarian landscape, the methods of humanitarian transition, and the articulation of the pertaining ethical principles.

We were there...

Convergences World Forum

PARIS / SEPTEMBER 2017

The round-table discussion organised by the Fund in partnership with the review Humanitarian Alternatives, on the theme of **"Impacts of climate change on poverty and humanitarian crises: observations and proposals from civil society organisations"**, attracted more than 150 people. The debate, moderated by Stéphanie Stern, the head of Action Contre la Faim's LAB project, brought together four experts: Cheik Kane, a consultant on climate resistance in West Africa for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre, Benoît Hazard, an anthropologist and research fellow at the CNRS and EHESS, Jeannot Ramiarmanana, the director of the Centre for Economics and Ethics for the Environment and Development at the University of Antananarivo and Claire Fehrenbach, the general director of Oxfam France (from left to right in the picture below).

A summary video of the round-table discussion is available at www.fondcrf.org



The 4 panelists of the round table

We will be there...

Forum espace humanitaire (FEH)

ANNECY / JANUARY 2018

"Controversies in Humanitarian Aid: realities and perspectives" is the theme of the next edition of the FEH, which the Fund will attend in January 2018, along with 70 directors of humanitarian organisations, at the Fondation Mérieux's Pensières Centre in Annecy.

Humanitarian transition: the state of research 2018

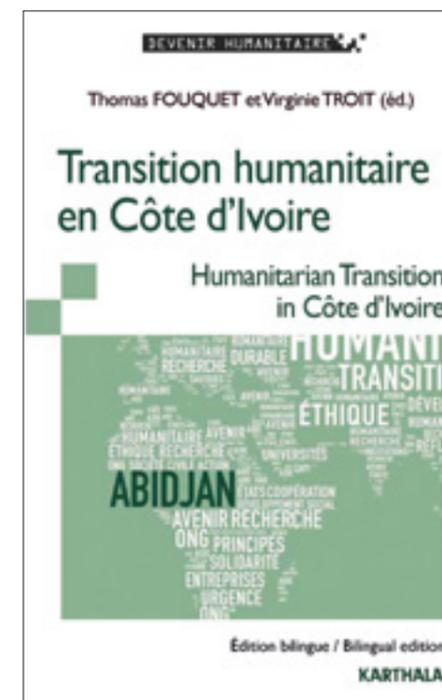
PARIS / MARCH 2018

The laureates of the 2016 fellowships will gather in Paris at the beginning of next year to present to conclusions of their work, during the day-long event « Humanitarian transition : the state of research 2018 ».

Humanitarian Transition in Côte d'Ivoire

DEVENIR HUMANITAIRE COLLECTION

Following *Humanitarian Transition in Senegal*, this is the new opus of the Devenir Humain collection. Published in July last year, this second bilingual volume is the result of a call for papers in the context of the seminar organised by the Fund at the end of 2016 in Abidjan. It contains articles which analyse the humanitarian transition currently underway in Côte d'Ivoire, and offers an in-depth study of the role played by researchers in social sciences in the response to the Ebola outbreak. The third volume, scheduled for next summer, will focus on humanitarian transition in Madagascar.



Transition humaine en Côte d'Ivoire, FOUQUET Thomas and TROIT Virginie (Eds.), 354 pages, KARTHALA, 2017, 22€ TTC

The French Red Cross put to the test by the Ebola epidemic in Guinea

TO BE RELEASED SOON

An article co-authored by Mr Toily Anicet ZRAN (Doctor, Professor and Researcher in History at the Université Alassane Ouattara de Bouaké, in Côte d'Ivoire), Mr Jean-Pierre DOZON (Anthropologist, Director of studies at the EHESS and Vice-President of the Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme (FMH) in Paris), and Mr François BRICAIRE (Doctor in Medicine, Professor of Infectious and Tropical Diseases at the University Pierre and Marie Curie in Paris, and Board member of the French Red Cross) on the humanitarian intervention in Guinea in the context of the struggle against the Ebola virus, in particular the emergency actions implemented by the French Red Cross and the incidence of rumours.

Humanitarian Alternatives

The fifth issue of the review, which came out in July, is dedicated to the subject of Africa.

Three researchers financed by the Fund contributed to this issue, with an article on "the difficulty for NGOs to gain autonomy from the State" in Senegal and another on "the impact of international procedures for the circumvention of the State" in Madagascar.

The following issue will focus on private-public partnerships.



N° 5, July 2017, quarterly, 18€, free access online: www.alternatives-humanitaires.org

Les Papiers du Fonds

Since the beginning of 2017, six Papiers du Fonds have been published and are available in open access on the Fund's website. They are scientific articles of 15 to 20 pages, written by the laureates of the Fund's 2016 postdoctoral fellowships, with the aim of circulating the results and perspectives of their research for the common good. A number of them have been translated into English.

Papers are free to download at: www.fondcrf.org/publications/les-papiers-du-fonds-2/

Fresh impetus for humanitarian and social research

The first meeting of the board of directors of the Red Cross Foundation was held on the 17th of October this year. Officially recognised as a public interest organization by a decree of September 1st, it will be operational from January 2018.

With this foundation, we wanted to give fresh impetus to research for humanitarian and social action. As a continuation of the remarkable work carried out by the Red Cross Fund and the "Fondation pour le lien social", which it will replace, we want to place the French Red Cross at the forefront of social innovation and ethical reflection. No suffering or vulnerability must be overlooked in our reflection or in our action.

Now more than ever, France and the world need the Red Cross. An innovative, agile, present Red Cross. An audacious Red Cross, that takes responsibility and looks towards the future. Anticipating, imagining, developing: to remain what we are, we must change.

In order to prepare for the future, the Foundation will base itself on data and experiences drawn from actions by the French Red Cross. By mobilising the scientific community, in developed and developing countries, together with suffering populations, it will participate in the global debate surrounding the future of humanitarian and social action, and reinforce collaborations between research worlds, civil society, and private and public sponsors. Finally, like all the actors of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, it will relentlessly pursue the ideal of the common good, rooted in the refusal of fatality and in action.



Professor Jean-Jacques Eledjam
President of the French Red Cross

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THE FRENCH RED CROSS FUND

The French Red Cross Fund is an endowment fund dedicated to research and ethical reflection in the humanitarian field. Created in 2013 on the initiative of the French Red Cross, its mission is to activate, support and reward research projects which put the evolving principles, practices and purposes of humanitarian aid into perspective.

LA LETTRE DU FONDS

La Lettre du Fonds – a bilingual newsletter published twice a year – aims to present the Fund's research themes by way of its various activities. Subscribe to this newsletter or check out past issues on the Fund's website.

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EDITORIAL CONSULTING

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GRAPHIC DESIGN

Agence Hungry & Foolish

ENGLISH VERSION

Juliet POWYS
Caroline VITAGLIONE

CONTACT

Fonds Croix-Rouge française
Hôpital Henry Dunant
95 Rue Michel-Ange
75016 PARIS
Tél : +33 (0)1 40 71 16 34
Fax : +33 (0)1 46 51 52 97

 contact@fondcrf.org

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