

Gorik Ooms, lic.jur., PhD

Gorik Ooms is a human rights lawyer. He graduated from the Catholic University of Leuven in 1989. During most of his professional career he worked with Médecins Sans Frontières Belgium, of which he became the executive director in 2004.

In March 2008, he obtained a Ph.D. in Medical Sciences from the University of Ghent, for a thesis on the subject “The right to health and the sustainability of healthcare: Why a new global health aid paradigm is needed.” In August 2008, he joined the Department of Public Health at the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp.

Gorik was recently appointed as Global Justice Fellow at the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University, for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Contacts and personal information

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Born on June 8, 1966

Married, 2 children

Publications

- Cometto G, Ooms G, Starrs A, Zeitz P (2009) A global fund for the health MDGs? Lancet. Volume: 373, Issue: 9674
- Ooms G (2008) Shifting paradigms: how the fight for 'universal access to AIDS treatment and prevention' supports achieving 'comprehensive primary health care for all'. Globalization and Health. Volume: 4, Issue: 11.
- Ooms G, Van Damme W (2008) Impossible to “wean” when more aid is needed. WHO Bulletin. Volume: 86, Issue: 11.
- Ooms G, Hammonds R (2008) Correcting Globalisation in Health: Transnational Entitlements versus the Ethical Imperative of Reducing Aid-Dependency. Public Health Ethics. Volume: 1, Issue: 2.
- Ooms G, Van Damme W, Baker B, Zeitz P, Schrecker T (2008) The ‘diagonal’ approach to Global Fund Financing: a cure for the broader malaise of health systems? Globalization and Health. Volume: 4, Issue: 6.

- Ooms G (2008) The right to health and the sustainability of healthcare: Why a new global health aid paradigm is needed. Ghent: Academia Press.
- Ooms G, Ford N (2007) DFID's health strategy. Lancet. Volume: 370, Issue: 9588
- Ooms G, Van Damme W, Temmerman M (2007) Medicines Without Doctors: Why the Global Fund must Fund Salaries of Health Workers to Expand AIDS Treatment. PLoS Medicine. Volume: 4, Issue: 4.
- Ooms G, Derderian K, Melody D (2006) Do We Need a World Health Insurance to Realise the Right to Health? PLoS Medicine. Volume: 3, Issue: 12.
- Ooms G (2006) Health Development versus Medical Relief: The Illusion versus the Irrelevance of Sustainability. PLoS Medicine. Volume: 3, Issue: 8.
- Ooms G, Schrecker T (2005) Fiscal space and the World Bank / IMF: author's reply. Lancet. Volume: 366, Issue: 9481.
- Ooms G, Schrecker T (2005) Expenditure ceilings, multilateral financial institutions, and the health of poor populations. Lancet. Volume: 365, Issue: 9473.
- Hammonds R, Ooms G (2004) World Bank Policies and the Obligation of Its Members to Respect, Protect and Fulfil the Right to Health. Health and Human Rights. Volume: 8, Issue: 1.
- Philips M, Ooms G, Hargreaves S, Durrant A (2004) Burundi: a population deprived of basic healthcare. British Journal of General Practice. Volume: 54, Issue: 505.

Professional Experience

August 2004 – April 2008: Executive Director, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Belgium and Operational Centre Brussels (Brussels, Belgium)

- General coordination.

April 2003 – July 2004: Policy Analyst, MSF Belgium, research centre, access to healthcare unit (Brussels, Belgium)

- Research about structural barriers hampering access to healthcare.

February 2003 – March 2003: Consultant, AEDES (Brussels, Belgium)

- Research about the genesis of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

January 2000 – January 2003: Head of mission, MSF Luxembourg (Maputo, Mozambique)

- Coordinator (design and implementation) of comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment projects in Maputo city, Tete city (Tete province), Angonia district (Tete province.)
- Member of the Mozambican Country Coordination Mechanism for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria and co-author of the national proposal on behalf of NAIMA+ (a coalition of international NGOs.)

April 1999 – December 1999: Head of mission, MSF Belgium (Bujumbura, Burundi)

- Coordinator of support programs to 3 health districts, 3 therapeutic feeding centres, an emergency clinic.
- Coordinator of emergency interventions during the forced displacement of the population of Bujumbura Rural.

December 1998 – February 1999: Manager of the Mayo Kebi prefecture pharmacy and cost recovery scheme, MSF Belgium (Bongor, Chad)

- Manager of a pharmacy providing medicines to 5 districts and supervisor of the cost participation schemes and the functioning of 25 local health committees.

July 1997 – November 1998: Deputy to the Executive Director, MSF Belgium (Brussels, Belgium)

- Support to the Executive Director on specific issues.
- Reorganisation of the operations department and support services.

April 1993 – July 1997: Lawyer (Brussels, Belgium)

- Specialized in international distribution agreements, including intellectual property law.
- Volunteer 'pro bono' lawyer at the Brussels youth tribunal.
- Main client since 1996: MSF Belgium.

December 1991 – March 1993: Civil service (Brussels, Belgium)

- Centrum West (youth community centre), legal council.
- Department of humanitarian law, Belgian Red Cross, research.

January 1991 – November 1991: Lawyer (Brussels, Belgium)

- Specialized in international distribution agreements, including intellectual property law.
- Volunteer 'pro bono' lawyer at the Brussels youth tribunal.

August 1990 – December 1990: Logistician and administrator, MSF Belgium (N'Zérékoré and Conakry, Guinea)

- Administration, assistant of the head of mission in Conakry.
- Water and sanitation for Liberian refugees in N'Zérékoré.

July 1989 – July 1990: Lawyer (Brussels, Belgium)

- Specialized in international distribution agreements, including intellectual property law.
- Volunteer 'pro bono' lawyer at the Brussels youth tribunal.

Associative commitments

- Since May 2008: Director of the Global AIDS Alliance.
- Since June 2007: Director of the Hélène De Beir Foundation.
- January 2002 – December 2002: Co-founder and chairman of NAIMA+, a coalition of international NGOs advocating for more ambitious public health interventions in Mozambique.
- August 2002: Participant of the founding meeting of PATAM (the Pan-African HIV/AIDS Treatment Access Movement).
- April 1993 – June 1998: President of Centrum West – youth community centre.
- January 1998 – November 1998: Director and secretary of Songes – NGO providing support to civil society in the East and the South.
- April 1993 – June 1998: Co-founder and president of BAS! – centre accompanying alternative sanctions for juvenile delinquents.
- September 1988 – June 1989: Representative of the students of the Law Faculty of the Leuven Catholic University to the Faculty Council and the Faculty Board.

Education

- March 2008: Ph.D. in Medical Sciences, obtained from the Faculty of Medicine of Ghent University.
- November 2002: 3 weeks workshop ‘Planning for HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa’, at HEARD (the Health Economics and AIDS Research Division), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South-Africa.
- September 1984 – June 1989: ‘Candidature’ (bachelor) and ‘Licence’ (masters) in Law, Brussels and Leuven Catholic Universities

Languages

- Dutch: native speaker
- English: good reading and writing skills
- French: good reading and writing skills
- German: fair reading skills
- Portuguese: fair reading skills