



POST GRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

MDS 511: NETWORKING FOR POLICY CHANGE

DATE: 8TH APRIL 2026

DURATION: 3 HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 60

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **FOUR (4)** questions.
4. Question **ONE is compulsory.**
5. Answer any other **TWO** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **30 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided**

QUESTION ONE

Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow:

In the region of Lumina, a newly industrializing country, energy policy appeared—on paper—to be the domain of the Ministry of Energy. In practice, however, policy conversations unfolded across a diffuse and unstable network of actors operating at the margins of formal authority.

Engineers circulated draft ideas through professional circles. Environmental activists framed debates in moral and existential terms. Indigenous community representatives navigated participation cautiously, aware that visibility could invite both recognition and risk. Local entrepreneurs, meanwhile, engaged selectively, aligning with whichever narrative promised continuity or advantage.

Alliances were provisional. Commitments shifted with political timing, media exposure, and access to resources. What was articulated publicly often diverged from what was negotiated privately. At moments, a leaked document or viral post abruptly reconfigured relationships, forcing rapid repositioning across the network.

An attempt by a respected professional association to convene the network more formally was met with ambivalence. Some actors viewed coordination as overdue; others feared that structure would freeze disagreement, expose fragile consensus, or redistribute influence in unpredictable ways.

External funding entered the arena through a major foreign donor offering support for renewable energy pilots—conditional upon alignment with international environmental standards. While the funding expanded technical possibilities, it also sharpened tensions between global benchmarks and local realities, particularly where proposed projects disrupted established livelihoods.

Over time, fragments of the network succeeded in shaping regulatory language and implementation practices, often indirectly. Other initiatives

stalled, not for lack of evidence or advocacy, but due to misalignment in timing, trust, or perceived legitimacy. Questions persisted about accountability, inclusion, and whether influence accrued to the network as a whole—or to particular actors within it.

Required:

- a) Drawing solely on the case, analyze the internal organization of the Lumina network and discuss how the internal features shape coordination and influence. **(10 marks)**
- b) Propose a strategy for influencing energy policy that balances formal authority, donor expectations, and local legitimacy. Explain why your approach could succeed where conventional networking mechanisms may struggle. **(10 marks)**
- c) Examine the effects of the network's strategic choices on the distribution of influence and the dynamics among participating actors. Discuss the possible tensions and unintended consequences that emerge from these dynamics. **(10 marks)**

QUESTION TWO

- a) In contexts where state actors are skeptical of non-state organizations, evaluate the risks of prioritizing perception over substance. **(8 Marks)**
- b) Compare networks with fluid, flexible membership to those with formalized structures. Critically assess how structural differences affect the capacity to sustain influence over time. **(7 Marks)**

QUESTION THREE

- a) Analyze the sources and flows of influence in policy networks and discuss the patterns that emerge from their interaction.

(10 Marks)

- b) Propose ways to detect meaningful policy influence when attribution is diffuse or deliberately obscured. Justify your approach using observable and latent indicators.

(5

Marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Analyze how networks can preserve credibility and influence in politically sensitive environments without overexposure or coercion. Discuss potential limits of these strategies. **(5 Marks)**
- b) Develop a decision making model suitable for networks operating under multiple competing priorities and constraints. Explain how the model supports prioritization while embedding ethical trade - offs. **(10 Marks)**