



Non-government organizations in India

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Abstract

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. It is Flexible in administration, quicker in decision making, timely in action and facilitating the people towards self-reliance ensuring their fullest participation in the whole process of development. The Achievements and success of NGOs in various fields and the excellent work done by them in specific Areas is no doubt a tremendous task that has helped to meet the changing needs of the social system. However, in spite of its achievements in various fields, NGOs are facing different problems which differ from organization to organization, region to region. In this context, an attempt is made in this paper to discuss some of the problems faced by the NGOs and to give some remedies to overcome these problems.

Keywords: non-government organization, people, programmes, government and problems

1. Introduction

The term, "non-governmental organization" or NGO, came into use in 1945 because of the need for the UN to differentiate in its Charter between participation rights for inter-governmental specialized agencies and those for international private organizations. At the UN, virtually all types of private bodies can be recognized as NGOs. They only have to be independent from government control, not seeking to challenge governments either as a political party or by a narrow focus on human rights, non-profit-making and non-criminal. As of 2003, there were reportedly over 20,000 NGOs active in Iran. The majority of these organizations are charity organizations, and thus would not fall under the category of development-oriented NGOs. In this document the term NGO is primarily used for organizations other than charitable organizations. The structures of NGOs vary considerably. With the improvement in communications, more locally-based groups, referred to as grass-roots organizations or community based organizations, have become active at the national or even the global level. Increasingly this occurs through the formation of coalitions with other NGOs for particular goals, such as was the case in the case of the Bam earthquake for example. A civil society is composed of three sectors: government, the private sector and civil society, excluding businesses. NGOs are components of social movements within a civil society. In the case of Iran, where civil society is not yet mature, NGOs can have an important role in strengthening the foundations of an emergent civil society. The issue of independence is an important one in the credibility of an NGO. It is hard for NGOs not to come under any governmental influence. Individual governments do at times try to influence the NGO community in a particular field, by establishing NGOs that promote their policies. This has been recognized by quite common use of the acronym GONGO, to label a government-organized NGO. Also, in more authoritarian societies, NGOs may find it very difficult

to act independently and they may not receive acknowledgment from other political actors even when they are acting independently. On the other hand, development and humanitarian relief NGOs need substantial resources, to run their operational programs, so most of them readily accept official funds. It is thus important for the NGO to have transparency in its operations and goals so that its relationship. The Indian situation has not been however, different. It the proliferation of NGOs is of any indication, the sector is expanding day to day. As per one conservative estimate, the total number of conservative estimate, the total number of NGOs is over 0.2 million. This figure excludes organizations like trade unions conservative estimate, the total number of NGOs is over 0.2 million this figure excludes organizations like trade unions, schools and hospital but includes only those registered for certification for receiving foreign assistance. The magnitude of funds the NGOs in the country handle today is another index to this growth. The annual budgets of these organizations are now not a party sum but ranges from Rs. 30 million to 5000 million. Today, the NGOs in the country assume a conspicuous role in multifarious developmental programmes and activities. The achievements and success of NGOs in various fields and the excellent work done by them in specific areas is no doubt a tremendous task that has helped to meet the changing needs of the social system. However, inspite of its achievements in various fields, NGOs are facing different problems which differ from organization to organization, region to region. In this context, an attempt is made in this paper to discuss some of the common problems faced by the NGOs and to give some remedies to overcome these problems.

2. NGO in India

India has a long history of civil society based on the concepts of daana (giving) and seva (service). Voluntary organizations-

organizations that are voluntary in spirit and without profit-making objectives- were active in cultural promotion, education, health, and natural disaster relief as early as the medieval era. They proliferated during British rule, working to improve social welfare and literacy and pursuing relief projects. During the second half of the 19th century, nationalist consciousness spread across India and self-help emerged as the primary focus of sociopolitical movements. Numerous organizations were established during this period, including the Friend-in-Need Society (1858), Prathana Samaj (1864), Satya Shodhan Samaj (1873), Arya Samaj (1875), the National Council for Women in India (1875), and the Indian National Conference (1887). The Society's Registration Act (SRA) was approved in 1860 to confirm the legal status of the growing body of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) the SRA continues to be relevant legislation for NGOs in India, although most state governments have enacted amendments to the original version. Christian missionaries active in their efforts toward reducing poverty and constructing hospitals, schools, roads, and other infrastructure. Meanwhile, NGOs focused their efforts on education, health, relief, and social welfare. A firm foundation for secular voluntary action in India was not laid until the governmental development agencies were established around this time, such as the People's Action for People's Action for Development of India. Foreign-trained Indians entered civil society in greater numbers, leading to a professionalization of the sector. India witnessed a rapid increase in and diversification of the NGO sector as a response to the national political scenario and increasing concern about poverty and marginalization. Both welfare and empowerment-oriented organizations emerged during this period, and development, civil liberties, education, environment, health, and livelihood all became the focus of attention. With community participation as a defined component in a number of social sector projects during the 1970s and 1980s, NGOs began to be formally recognized as development partners of the state. Their work was increasingly characterized by grassroots interventions, advocacy at various levels, and mobilization of the marginalized to protect their rights. The process of structural adjustment begun in the early 1990s—and the more recent approach of bilateral and international donors channeling funds directly through the government, NGOs networks, and large corporate NGOs- have somewhat pushed peoples' organizations into the background. Small, spontaneous initiatives at the community level, as a response to social and economic exploitations at the community level, are no longer the hallmark of the NGOs sector.

3. Review of Literature

In India and abroad, several studies have been made on voluntary organizations working in urban as well as rural areas. Much of the literature on voluntary organizations in Indian settings has come from traditional social work many of the Anthropologists, Sociologists and Political Scientists are engaged in the study of the voluntary organizations. Unfortunately, communication among the disciplines about their findings has been far from adequate.

Michael Banton's essay (1957) ^[7] on the Anthropological Aspects of Voluntary Associations notes that "Voluntary

Associations become more common and significant as societies advance in technology, complexity and scale"

David Sills, a sociologist, emphasizes the latent functions as opposed to the manifest functions of voluntary associations Alliband Terry's study of voluntary agencies (1983) as rural development agents focuses on the most widely known successful experiments by voluntary agencies such as Martandam and Sriniketan.

K.A. Suresh's (1990) study deals with the levels of participation of beneficiaries in the development programmes of select NGOs in Kerala. The author found that NGOs are not working as participatory organizations to the extent desired.

Vijay Mahajan (1994) made an attempt to Vijay Mahajan (1994) made an attempt to institutions in DWCRA programme. His study emphasizes that there is a need for the NGOs and training institutions to make DWCRA programme more effective.

M. Ramesh Singh (2004) has made an attempt to provide better understanding of NGOs working in Manipur and their problems by taking up micro level study. He conducted a survey during 2000-2001 in two tribal villages in Manipur by name Khangshin and Minou. He concluded that NGOs are playing active role in development activities in the fields of education, health and sanitation, women and children to improve the quality of life.

F.A Kuponiyi and A.A. Ladele (2007) explored that NGOs are very reliable ineffective adaptation and transfer of technology to farmers, delivery of agricultural support services and effective vehicles for alleviating rural poverty. His study investigated the performance of two agricultural based NGOs in their effort to improve the lots of small scale resource –poor farmers in South western Nigeria Farmers Development Union (FADU), an enterprise building organization and Diocesan Agricultural Development Programmes (DADP), a capacity building organization were studied. The unique features of their strategies were organization of farmers into cooperative groups, attention to supply of inputs, firm arrangement for the provision of farm credit, and clientele participation in decision making.

Nair (2011) highlights the potential for collaboration on when NGOs remain in predefined roles of service provision, but the generation of conflict when NGOs step outside these to question government policies.

D.K. Gosh (2014) opines that attacking poverty and the Government sector. He considers its reduction to an appreciable extent seems to be not manageable only by the Government sector. He considers Government Organizations need collaboration and co-operation from other than Government institutions for creating opportunities, facilitating empowerment and providing security for the poor.

M. Gurulingaiah (2016) observed that an NGO by name 'Abhivruddi' empowered women in rural areas of Gubbi Taluk of Tumkur district in Karnataka state. For almost a decade the NGO has been organizing the women to form SHGs to meet their felt needs and enable them to participate in planning and implementation of their own developmental programmes. Besides, it has been conducting social and health awareness campaigns to eliminate superstitious customs, attitude and thinking related to poverty and child birth which are blocking the progress of tribal women.

4. Problems of NGOs

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have become an irresistible global force today. An NGO are non-profit making agencies that are constituted with a vision by a group of likeminded people, committed for the uplift of the poor, marginalized, unprivileged, underprivileged, Impoverished, downtrodden and the needy and they are closer and accessible to the target groups, Flexible in administration, quicker in decision making, timely in action and facilitating the people towards self-reliance ensuring their fullest participation in the whole process of development. The Achievements and success of NGOs in various fields and the excellent work done by them in specific areas is no doubt a tremendous task that has helped to meet the changing needs of the social system. However, in spite of its achievements in various fields, NGOs are facing different problems which differ from organization to organization, region to region.

Some of the NGOs in India are facing the following major problems:

4.1 Lacks of funds

Most of the NGOs in India are suffering from paucity of funds. Government does not give cent percent grants in aid or make delay in sanctions of grants for numerous programmes. NGOs have to make matching contributions which they are sometimes unable to manage and are, therefore, unable to avail themselves of the grants.

4.2 Inadequate Trained Personnel

It is believed that the personnel working in NGOs may be of personnel working in such organizations is a sense of dedication and commitment and interest in the social services.

4.3 Misuse of Funds

It is a common experience that there have been serious charges of misuse and misappropriation of funds received as grant-in-aid form the government, foreign donors and raised through their own resources by the most of the NGOs. These NGOs may reflect its image to other NGOs who are working with dedication and commitment.

4.4 Inequality in rural areas

NGOs are more developed in urban areas as compared to rural areas. The backwardness and ignorance of the rural people and lack of enthusiasm among social workers to among them in the absence of availability of minimum comforts are the two important reasons for the backwardness of the NGOs in rural areas.

4.5 Lack of Volunteerism/Social work among Youth

The basic characteristic of NGO is volunteerism. In early days, youth are making their career in volunteerism but that enthusiasm seems to have faded these days. The extent of volunteerism is declining day by day and turning it into professionalization. Even the young graduates from social work are interested in making their career in professionalism. This leads to lack of efficient volunteers in NGO.

5. Remedies

The following are the suggested remedies to the problems of

the NGOs in India.

1. The government of India should liberalize the rules and regulations of grants-in-aid and to sanction more grants to NGOs. At the same time, the government should appoint commissions of enquiry or committees to cross check the misuse of funds by NGOs. The member of committee has to supervise and monitor the activities of NGOs periodically.
2. Young graduates from universities, colleges and schools should conduct the public seminars, meetings etc., and use the local media to advertise the importance of volunteerism, success stories of NGOs and encourage people to participate in voluntarism.
3. At the same time, universities, colleges and schools should collaborate with NGOs and conduct a campus interviews for the young graduates who are interested in voluntarism. NSS and NCC should encourage students to participate in voluntarism from childhood days onwards.
4. In India, 65% of populations belong to rural areas. NGOs, therefore, need to operate in rural areas on a bigger scale to enlist the cooperation of village people in making their lives better. At the same time, these NGOs should encourage the educated young graduates of rural areas to participate in voluntarism. The government should also give some special provisions for NGOs who are working in rural areas in getting eligibility conditions for grants.
5. NGOs being a welfare organization should maintain high standard of quality in service. The government also should recognize those NGOs, by giving awards or rewards with additional grants. This would motivate the other NGOs to work efficiently
6. The government should revise the pay-scales and allowances to the personnel of NGOs. At the same time some special funds to be allotted for the NGOs to train the personnel at the grass root level.
7. The NGOs should use of latest technologies like internet, websites etc., for raising of their funds, to have mutual associations, to advertise their products and for the selection of efficient personals.

NGOs are the ones who really intend to care the uncared sections and the people at the bottom of the social stratum. Ours is a developing country which requires these type of committed, devoted and dedicated organizations for the development of the country. So, the government, the leaders, the donors, the politicians and the people should support these organizations and help them to solve their problems at the grass-root level. Then only we can do something for the poor, for the needy.

6. Conclusion

NGOs are the ones who really intend to care the uncared sections and the people at the bottom of the social stratum. Ours is an enveloping country which requires these type of committed, devoted and dedicated organizations for the development of the country. So, the government, the leaders, the donors, the politicians and the people should support these organizations and help them to solve their problems at the grass-root level. Than only their services are undoubtedly commendable in the uplift of the rural poor.

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