Chapter 5

NGOs IN TAMEI: PROFILES

In this chapter, an attempt is made to present the profiles of five Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) namely,

- Oriental Rural Development Organization (ORDO),
- Liangmai Naga Baptist Association (LNBA),
- Social Educational Cultural and Economic Development Society (SECEDS),
- Tamei Mahila Mandal and
- Liangmai Naga Arts and Culture Association (LACA).

These organizations are located in Tamei. The present chapter tries to trace the historical background of NGOs and to analyze their activities in the fields of Education, Health-Care, Agriculture, Social-forestry, Horticulture, Culture and Arts. The NGOs have been working to improve socio-economic condition and alleviate poverty by offering better opportunities for the local community with particular emphasis on the improvement of the position of women, children and farmers to contribute to agricultural growth and income generation. The nature of NGOs is that, they worked in different projects for development in Tamei area.

NGOs play an important role in providing humanitarian assistance and in offering a range of services to promote development. They also contribute to promoting awareness by disseminating information. Instead of remaining at the level of individuals and family, NGOs have started adopting strategic approaches, not only towards short term solutions but solutions that could solve problems at the
structural level. Some of their projects focus on local self-reliance with sustainability. Before elaborating the profiles of the NGOs, it is essential to briefly look at the reasons why the NGOs are formed in this area.

**WHY NGOS ARE FORMED IN TAMEI SUB-DIVISION OF TAMENGLONG DISTRICT:**

NGOs were established as functional devices for practical reasons. One of the significant factors for the growth and expansion of NGOs at Tamei sub-division is the failure of the State in promoting rural development programmes and its inability to reach the poor effectively. For instance, the Ministry of Rural Development of the Government of India has allocated Rs 383.94 lakhs for Tamenglong district during 2000-2001. But, the rural development schemes do not reach all the villages in the district. It is essential to mention that out of 207 villages in Tamenglong district, the State government has taken up water supply at one time or other in almost all the villages. The government had allocated a sum of Rs 1282.00 lakhs during 2000-2001 for Rural Water Supply scheme in the State, out of which Rs. One Crore was earmarked for Tamenglong district. (Source: [http://tamenglong.nic.in/hds2000.htm](http://tamenglong.nic.in/hds2000.htm)).

However, it is observed that there is a poor maintenance of water supply and the consequence is that, most of the villages in the district do not possess a drinking water supply system. The villagers are forced to fetch water from the nearby brooks, rivers and spring wells. They are used to boiling water before drinking. Frequently, these village people mostly Zeliangrong women have to walk for miles in order to collect drinking water in their pots. It is indeed a tedious and tiring task especially for women.

Under the National Old Age Pension Scheme, a sum of Rs 75/= per month is sanctioned as Old Age Pension for persons above the age of sixty five (65) and
for those people who are below poverty line (BPL). Under National Maternity
Benefit Scheme, a sum of Rs 500/= is sanctioned to pregnant mothers (for 2 live
births) below poverty line (BPL) (Source: http://tamenglong.nic.in/hds2000.htm).
But, it is observed that a huge majority of the deserving individuals do not get the
benefits from such government schemes. Frustration with the government
programmes led the local community to look at NGOs as an alternative to the State
and expect them to implement various development programmes in the area.

Regarding health conditions in the area, it is found that malaria; typhoid and
tuberculosis are common ailments in the district. Malarial deaths are more common
as several parts of the district encounters malaria epidemic in the past years. The
District Hospital at Tamenglong has only four doctors with few nurses and there is
no specialty service available. Paramedic and support staff is nominal. The basic
infrastructures such ultra sound system, X-Ray facility, operation theatre and others
are also not properly functioning.

The Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Tamei has only one doctor and Nungba
(one of the district of Tamenglong) has only two doctors without any sophisticated
infrastructure. Of the six PHCs in the district, three have no doctors posted. Most of
the medicine or drugs are almost non-existent. Patients have to travel to Imphal,
Silchar or Guwahati (Assam) for the more serious ailments, many having to travel
on foot for long distances.

Immunization programmes are poorly implemented and there are incidents
of infant or child mortality. A huge area covering many rural hill villages are left
out and deprived of regular medical health care facilities except occasional medical
officer touring in the area. In such a scenario, NGOs with different backgrounds
have slowly risen in number as people began to impose faith in them more than in the government sector.

The Oriental Rural Development Organization (ORDO) was formed as a secular organization with the Gandhian ideology to work among the marginalized people as well as empower local ethnic women. Basically, this NGO tries to follow Gandhian ideology of discipline, non-violence, truth and self-sufficiency. Another NGO, Liangmai Naga Baptist Association (LNBA) emerged from a religious movement with a Christian ideology to provide charity to the poor and needy. It was established by religious leaders who found that adopting the label of an NGO facilitated the acquisition of funding and the space to operate in development works besides facilitating spiritual growth for the people.

The Liangmai Arts and Cultural Association (LACA) came into existence with the sole motive of reviving the lost cultural heritage of the tribe. It has revivalism and reformism as the basis of their ideology. The Social Educational Cultural and Economic Development Society (SECEDS) was formed to promote holistic development to the community with a Reformist ideology.

Finally, the Tamei Mahila Mandal (which was the only women’s organization and it is defunct today) was established with the aim to empower women, introduce adult education and help children. It is observed that NGOs comprises of overlapping social networks and collaboration.

1. Oriental Rural Development Organization (ORDO):

It was established in 1983 as a secular non-profit organization by Dr. Paochunbou along with a group of humanitarian motivated friends. He belongs to the area and in the early 1970s; he had set up his pharmacy at Tamei bazaar. He was
also the founder of the Hamai English Senior Secondary School which is managed by the faith-based NGO called Liangmai Naga Baptist Association (LNBA). In the initial stage, he worked for a few years but left the school to concentrate on his pharmacy. He was a successful chemist but eventually left his business in the 1990s and began to work in the voluntary sector. In 2002, he was elected for five years as the President of the All Manipur NGOs Forum based at Imphal, which is also the parent body of all the NGOs across the State.

The organization owes its existence to a grave-concern for the poor and the suffering humanity dubbed with conviction. The NGO was registered in 1984 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. It had also registered under the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA), Ministry of Home Affairs in New Delhi. And, it has obtained a certificate under section 12-A of Income Tax Act 1961 from the Income Tax Authorities to receive donations and gifts from concerned individuals exempting them from income tax liability on the contributions made to the NGO.

ORDO is a member of the All Manipur NGOs Forum and it has been rendering various welfare services not only in Tamei sub-division, but even in other districts like Senapati and Imphal. It functions without any discrimination based on caste, creed, tribe, religion, race, nationality or place of origin. In order to achieve its goals, ORDO attempts integrated development of agriculture, empowerment of tribal women; self help groups (SHGs), afforestation, animal husbandry, healthcare, conservation and regeneration of the environment and ecosystem. It also tries to change the old type of cultivation from jhum (shift and burn) as this traditional practice affects the ecological system in the area. It is promoting agro-based programmes to replace jhum cultivation.
The vision of ORDO is to assist the poor through holistic development programmes. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is the baseline of this organization. This organization endorsed that economic development has to be initiated by the people, for the people and of the people. Poor people as subjects of economic development should play a key role in this search for alternative development process. The NGO translated the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into programmes such as eradication of poverty, empowering women, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other disease besides ensuring environmental sustainability.

The emerging search for alternative economic pattern will avoid the process of pauperization of the rural masses. The NGO visualizes itself as an organization that seeks to improve the economic prospects of the rural poor by providing them with skills, food, clothing and medical care. In other words, it means a life that allows each individual to achieve his/her potential to grow fully and they can be without being suppressed or exploited.

This organization networks with several NGOs at the local level, within the State and in the North East region. Some of the organizations that have been closely networking in the past years include Ideal Mothers, Rural Service Agency (RUSA), Indian Aids Consortium (IAC) and Manipur Network of Positive People in Imphal. They also network with the Village Chiefs, Village Authorities, Local leaders, Youth, and Women Leaders.
The above chart reveals the way the organization operates their functions in every project that they undertake. The annual reports, files and documents were maintained by the staff and made available to any interested researchers during their office hours. The head office is situated at Tamei bazaar and the branch office as well as mailing office is located in Lamphelpat, Imphal. One of the reasons to maintain a mailing address at Imphal is because of the weak and slow communication systems at Tamei.

The organization has a chartered accountant based at Imphal. And it maintains an account with the Central Bank of India, Imphal because there are no commercial banks in Tamei. The account is operated by the Chief Functionary,
Coordinator and Secretary. Some of the major funding agencies of ORDO are the Indo-German Social Service Society (IGSSS) or the Global Social Service Society as it is now known, Ministry of Environment and Forests of the Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of India and National Aids Control Organization (NACO) in collaboration with the Manipur Aids Control Society (MACS).

In carrying out campaigns on health-care and distribution of free medicines to the poor, ORDO collaborates with Manipur Voluntary Health Association (MVHA) and the Manipur Aids Control Society (MACS). These two NGOs have been consistently supporting ORDO in terms of finances, training, provision of manpower and materials. ORDO has, with their help, introduced health-care programmes in the surrounding villages on a regular basis. The health-care programmes are continuously striving and attracting the local community to be aware of the preventive and curative measures.

The organization took up the initiative of imparting entrepreneurial skill to the local community. And, this NGO also trained the local community members to manage their resources and utilize available market. Basically, the organization tries to enable the community to control their market. ORDO has been trying to contribute to transformation of the society in Tamei-sub-division through several activities including creation of Self-Help-Groups (SHGs) to empower Liangmai women. ORDO works in several fields such as SHGs, health, agriculture, horticulture and environment forests.

A substantial segment of the population in the district had political awareness and consciousness about their rights. Thus, it is not too difficult for the NGOs to communicate, interact and mobilize the local community to stand for
solidarity and unity in times of distress and affliction. The campaign of ORDO emphasizes on the dangers of felling trees for commercial purposes. With the cooperation from the local community especially women, ORDO have been creating awareness among the people to preserve trees and its rich natural resources in the hilly region of Tamei sub-division. They have been trying to make the people realize the need to be vigilant against destruction of natural resources.

It is essential to note that conservation of natural resources could be accomplished only through the efforts of NGOs and people’s action as the State Government cannot carry out this huge task single-handedly. ORDO is committed to enhance the quality of life of the poorest of the poor. This organization has been working to enhance standard of life of the whole community and expects community participation in order to create a feeling of oneness, ownership and solidarity. ORDO took up the challenge of implementing banana and pineapple plantations besides planting teak and neem trees in the surrounding villages as an alternative strategy to curb jhumming cultivation.

Implementing projects on horticulture and agro-forestry is crucial for regulating hydrological cycle as well as enhancing their per capita income. These plants are growing well promising prosperity for the local community to sell it in the existing local weekly market at Tamei bazaar. And, it is partially successful in achieving its goals as forests are rich in bio-diversity and it reduces the problems of declining soil fertility, soil erosion, shortage of fruits, fodder, food and fuel.

The efforts of ORDO to ameliorate extreme poverty bears fruits to a certain extent as it enables the collective imaginations to get involve. Group meetings and seminars have been organized occasionally in which lectures were delivered about the significance of higher learning, self-reliance, discipline and non-violence that
promotes the Gandhian principles. People are now much aware that their lives can be made better through education. Besides, they also realized the importance of cooperation.

And, their emphasis is to create a culture of self-reliance and sustainable development. Now, the local community step forward to participate in the various programmes that change their lives and lift them up. At present, ORDO sees training and community participation as essential to its elements of its programmes. In the past one-decade, hundreds of people attended ORDO's training programmes that reflect the scale of their activities and its significance on training and participation. Training is perceived as an important tool to facilitate programmes, improved performance and increased productivity. Relative poverty is an integral part of the life of substantial segment of the population. However, the works of ORDO in their midst has provided them a helping hand to a certain extent.

2. Liangmai Naga Baptist Association (LNBA):

It was formed in 1984 as a faith-based organization by a handful of religious local leaders. It is primarily committed to the values, principles and philosophy of Christian doctrine. It is affiliated to the Manipur Baptist Convention (MBC), Zeliangrong Baptist Council of Churches (ZBCC) and Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCENT) at Guwahati. The organization is administered by Executive Committee of fifteen (15) members elected by the council that consist of seventy five (75) members representing sixty (60) churches/villages as part of the LNBA set up.

The total number of Board members consists of eleven people and the duration of their tenure is three years only. The method of selecting each member of the office bearer is by election. One church member of each village would represent
in the Annual General Assembly that implements the policies and programmes of the LNBA in various villages. The vision of this NGO is to bring about gender equality, freedom and fraternity. It is a State level organization basically operating in Tamei sub-division and it is registered as a body in 1987 under the Societies Act XXI of 1860.

It is also registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India to receive financial aid from the international donors. Besides acquiring the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), it has a certificate from the Income Tax Authorities to receive donations without paying any tax deductions. Their major funding agency includes Action for Food Production (AFPRO), EZE Germany, Tribal Welfare Department of the Government of Manipur and Council for Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART).

The organization has a project office in Tamei bazaar, consisting of three rooms. The office building was constructed with a sum of Rs. 4 lakhs received from Action for Food Production (AFPRO), New Delhi and also by the generous financial aid received from the concerned individuals. Today, the value of the building is increase to Rs.6 lakhs only. Apart from acquiring funds through the donor agencies, it also has other source of institutional income. It has a farm that provides about Rs.6000/= p.a. and this fund is used for development activities.

Occasionally, funds are collected from member churches and concerned individuals on specific programmes. The direct involvement of the NGO with the local community had helped them to select and identify the area, component and beneficiaries for people oriented programmes. The local community also contributes in the various activities in the form of labour, supply of local materials such as bamboo and wood for infra-structural development.
The organization has a chartered accountant who is based in Guwahati. The accounts are maintained in three different banks viz, Central Bank of India at Imphal, United Bank of India at Tamenglong and Indian Overseas Bank Branch at Imphal. The Banks have signatories of three operators: (1). Rev. H. Newmai, Chief Functionary (2). Rev. K. Namjinpibou, Finance Secretary (3). Dr. John Mathai, Coordinator of the NGO and who hails from Kerala.

There are two reasons for maintaining their accounts at Imphal and Tamenglong. Firstly, it is because banking facility is not available at Tamei. It was closed down for almost two decades after few miscreants looted the bank. Since that incident, the State government did not heed the demand of the public to revive it again. Secondly, the organization maintained accounts in different banks for specific projects. For example, in the Central Bank of India, they maintained accounts for vegetable cultivation by women groups basically funded by CAPART.

All heads of various departments are the members of the project Managing Committee. And, the village pastor is also the chairman of the village level development committee. The General Council of the organization consists of the local leaders, church pastors and a few Village Council members. The members of the General Council are usually nominated by the church for a specific duration of years. And, their meeting is conducted annually during the month of December that lasts for three days only. The agenda usually being taken up during the annual meeting has divided into three broad categories.

They are as follows:

- Approval of Annual budgets of each department.
- Election of Office bearers whose terms are completed.
Progress assessment of the organization as a whole.

Management Structure of the Organization

Graphical Representation of the Board

The Chief Functionary who is elected by the church and staff were given orientation training on various programmes. They were trained at Aligarh during the year 1994. In the same year, the accountant was trained at Rural Resource-Cum-Training Centre at Thoubal, Manipur. And, in 1996, the co-ordinator and health
workers were trained at H.B.hospital, Lalitpur, and Uttar Pradesh. One of their consistent donors, Action for Food Production (AFPRO) facilitated them to attend orientation trainings in different places.

The Chief Functionary had attended training programmes held in ARI, Japan for ten (10) months on primary and advanced course on cattle rearing and management in rural areas in 1987. Again in 1996, he had attended a similar programme in Japan for ten (10) months. From the late 1990s till date, some of their staff have been attending orientation programmes either within the State or in North East region. The staff is covered under Medical and Accidental Insurance schemes but they were not entitled to Provident Fund and Life Insurance schemes.


SECEDS was established in 1997 by Mrs. Kengtaliu along with few social activists from the area. The sole objective of this organization is promoting the culture of Liangmai Nagas and helping the poor particularly deserving students by providing financial help. Earlier, she had worked as a teacher in Manipur. But, she left her job and began to involve in social work. She is a dynamic and energetic woman who has a passion and a zeal to work for reviving and transforming the society. This NGO also contributes towards emancipation with media advocacy, strives to remove socio-economic backwardness of the people and focus on holistic developmental works.

This organization has been struggling hard to get funds from the donor agencies. It does not as yet register under Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA). But, it had registered under Societies Registration Act 1860. They have been functioning without any external funding. One of the sources of funds is derived from donations of the members and concerned individuals. The
organization has been generating its own financial resources through various innovative and creative methods.

It has five staff basically involved in monitoring and executing the programmes in different surrounding villages. One method used by this NGO is media advocacy and campaign to influence policies and educate the public on various issues. The media wing is registered under the State government as 'Chun Chun Films Ltd.' The organization has produced a few documentary films which were broadcasted in the Doordashan North East Region, Guwahati. The main themes of the documentary films were oriented on culture, tradition and underdevelopment of the Liangmai Naga tribe. It also recognized the significance of using the media to educate the local community at the grass-roots level.

Media has been playing a very important role in development issues that in turn would strengthen the process of empowerment of the poor. The local community accepted media as a means of connecting themselves with the outside world. The media has an impact in restructuring the society, making it more forward and progressive. The aesthetics and beauty of using media is that, it created awareness on the rich cultural heritage, values, norms, tradition and developmental issues through documentary films that this NGO makes at the local level. At times, the organization conducts self-assessment of their grass-root interventions and examine whether their programmes are relevant in relation to the changing environment. Besides, they also network with other NGOs and strategically ally with them.

This NGO is consciously carrying out their interventions relevant to the requirements of the local community. As a matter of fact, it has registered under the government but does not have Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA) as
wing has installed a disk for cable connection in Tamei bazaar. Hence, the monthly fees collected from those households that took the cable connections have been used for micro-credit systems and other activities.

SECEDS have been using media as an essential instrument of their advocacy strategy. Their involvement in the shooting of documentary films based on arts, crafts and culture of the Liangmai Nagas apart from providing cable television channels to the local community keep certain issues vibrant and enhance popular support for it.

The creation of media events is often essential to attract public attention. There is no doubt that public opinions demonstrated either by print or electronic media is valued by the decision-making bodies. SECEDS has established a weekly newspaper in local dialect that has been circulating among the local tribe. As part of an effort to create awareness and generate debate on vital issues, this weekly newspaper often published relevant articles. They have been engaged in advocacy relying on field information pertaining to issues such as education, culture, folksongs and folklore. Thus, this NGO volunteers to empower the marginalized groups with a great deal of perseverance, commitment and enthusiasm.

4. Tamei Mahila Mandal:

Tamei Mahila Mandal was established in 1972 as a women’s organization with Mrs. Achana as President and Mrs. Asifro Pamei as Secretary. Both of them are house-wives who were committed to serve the people. They often seek the help of a few individuals, preferably local tribal women to work as part-time staff. This organization was registered under Societies Registration Act of 1860 but it did not have Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA).
It is the only women’s organization in the area. The organization started its works with enthusiasm to lift the downtrodden tribal women, render help to the poor children and adults simultaneously. They collaborated through annual meetings and consultation with the Village Authority, local leaders and the State Government. The State government provided funds for this organization in order to maintain a Balwadi school and to involve in the distribution of milk freely among the below poverty line (BPL) families.

Students in the school were not charged any fees either on monthly basis or at the time of admission. A few young women volunteer teachers have exhibit commitment, dynamism and sincerity in their teaching methods although they are not trained. These volunteer staff teaches the kids not only about the curriculum matters but extra-curricular activities such as games, plays and songs as well.

They also receive financial assistance from Council for the Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) to build low cost latrines in Tamei sub-division. But, they could not complete the project due to several factors. Thus, this NGO has declined in the 1990s due lack of effective leadership, coordination, commitment, consistencies, continuous financial aid and ethnic conflict between the Naga and Kuki tribes.

5. Liangmai Naga Arts and Culture Association (LACA):

It started in 1990 with committed local leaders including a local politician Mr. Kaiphuibou who have a vision to preserve and promote the traditional culture and arts of the Liangmai Nagas. They aim to propagate their tribal culture even at the global level. Their ideology is oriented towards reformism and revivalism. Their philosophy is bending towards two schools of thought: firstly, adhering to tradition
without any change and secondly, if modernity becomes mandatory, it should be based on the foundational values of tradition.

Occasionally, they conduct seminars, cultural festivals and exhibitions. From the past many years, they have been planning to construct a cultural hall cum office at Tamei sub-divisional head quarters but it did not happen till date due to lack of funds. It was registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 but it does not have the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA).

One of the reasons for not getting FCRA is because none of the staff could go to New Delhi for pursuing it. Pursuing a goal always requires time, finance and resources but the staff cannot afford to have these factors at their disposal. Their relationship with the other local NGOs is minimal as they do not strongly involve in networking. With regard to funding pattern, they received a one-time financial assistance from the State government.

Thereafter, they did not manage to get further funds from the government. The local politicians have donated small amounts of cash for their activities although they have ceased to do so nowadays. It indicates that this organization lack efficient leadership, skills, management and knowledge to execute the programmes. However, the members have realized about certain vital issues that needs urgent attention. They are trying to carefully examine the NGO mechanisms of operation and work towards renewing their strategy and approaches. It is essential to express that various activities of the NGOs, their vision statements, approaches, methods, ideologies or philosophies differed to a large extent although some of the programmes are observed to be widely overlapping.
In the next chapter, my basic focus will be on the performance and analysis of the selected five NGOs at Tamei sub-division. It will deal with the NGOs potential to promote the socio-economic development, elimination of extreme poverty, their relation with the community, beneficiaries, State government and local leaders. It will also be an elaborate analysis of their aims, visions and to see if they have achieved their goals.