CHAPTER 6
PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN NGOs OF DISTRICT KANGRA

In the previous chapter, detailed discussions were made on services and activities of NGOs. It is found that NGOs in district Kangra mainly implement projects linked with livelihood generation and NGOs execute participatory approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA); PNA (Primary Need Assessment) etc. NGOs found economic instability and gender based disparity as major difficulties of women of Kangra. As far as their own problems are concerned, most of the NGOs report corruption and struggle for existence as major troubles. It is observed that NGOs in district Kangra focus more on campaigning activities. In mass mobilization, NGOs adopt silent protests, dharnas, and hunger strikes etc. Personnel management aspect is not yet fully achieved by NGOs. Slightly less than half of the organizations do well in staffing aspect. Half of the organizations are proficient in arranging forged full time staff; well maintained office etc. before executing big projects and appraisals. NGOs asserted that they are able to enhance aptitude level of women with their learning and capacity building programmes.

This chapter is based on women’s perceptions about their participation in NGOs. Three years are taken as minimum period of association of women with NGOs. Amongst respondents, several were even associated with NGOs for more than ten years. In rural settings, the notion of NGOs and women’s participation in such organizations is considered a non-conventional practice by the natives. Often because of socio-cultural restraints, women are not able to extend their competences beyond the boundaries of their houses. This chapter aims to analyse hilly women’s participation in NGOs of district Kangra. For this the chapter is divided into two sections. Section one focuses on conceptual understanding of women’s participation and inhibitory elements in women’s participation. Whereas extent of women’s participation in NGOs, broader themes of their activities and barriers to their participation in NGOs is discussed in section two.

Participation of women in all the spheres of life is considered a prerequisite for their empowerment. To pave a way to empowerment, a woman has to gain a certain degree of power in the economic, socio-political, educational and other aspects
governing her life. To gain authority and control over various aspects of life, a woman must intervene, move or participate. Participation endows people with opportunities and gives chances to change and challenge present circumstances. Participation needs to expand the domains of human co-operation and power to win the trust of others. Co-producing authority through participation advances confidence in its approach to human endeavour (Noorani et al., 2013).

I

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF PARTICIPATION

The term participation has its origin from Latin word ‘participare’, which means, ‘taking part’. Participation includes: taking part or involvement in an activity; and greater involvement of persons in policy decisions which affects them directly. Paul (1987) defines participation in the context of development, “community participation refers to an active process in which receivers take active part in all the stages of projector plan.” It is also defined as an organised effort to empower groups that have previously been excluded from controlling material and non-material resources (Pillai, Shannon and Mckim, 1995:317). Chambers (1994) introduces participatory approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) etc. to get close to the deprived people. Participatory development is instrumental in bringing overall progress in society.

There is a misperception in usage of participation both as a method and as a process. Ostrom et al (1993) explains that as a method, participation is instrumental in attaining competence and subsistence in development projects. The notions of participation can be visualized as ‘participation as contribution’ by voluntary efforts or ‘participation as organisation’ through co-operatives, farmers associations, irrigation management committee, where priority is given to self-development activities.

Participatory activity as a process takes people’s views to new horizons. Participation enhances people’s knowledge by mutual sharing. As a process, participation is for furthering the goals of empowerment, equity and social change (Cleaver, 1999:598; Puri, 2004:2511). As a process, participation in development is best understood through the practices of development. The importance of
‘development as practice’ (Thomas, 2000) in development theory means that the role of participation in practice needs to be examined in detail. Participation is a process that incorporates empowering potential at all the stages.

The concept of participation is explained by various intellectuals in their own ways. According to most of the authors, participation comprises of a continuum in which it flows from one direction to mutuality. In its real notion, it is a reciprocal and contributory in nature.

**Significance of Women’s Participation**

Participation is mandatory for women empowerment. It is one of the most important dimensions of their strengthening (figure 1) because it fulfils human being’s urge to explore the world (learning), helps in emancipation of talent (expressiveness), enhance self-esteem, leads to a shift in personality and makes human being self-dependent.

![Figure 1](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Significance of Women’s Participation**

- **Changes at Individual level**
  - Competence
  - Development of Skills
  - Awareness
  - Generation and Enhancement
  - Independence
  - Critical Thinking
  - Expressiveness
  - Social Dealings
  - Open-Mindedness
  - Self-Confidence

- **Changes at Social level**
  - Perceived Positive Image in Society
  - Increased Sense of Power

Figure 1, exhibit that participation of women is necessary because it brings numerous changes in women’s lives by bringing change at both individual and societal level. Participation enables women to think of development and undertake such activities at personal as well as social level. It gives them skills to save and protect things and to properly manage their personal and social relationships. It inculcates development aspects in women and their sensitization towards issues also enhances. Independence is another positive change brought in by participation. By meeting new people and going through positive learning women can develop their critical thinking. An ability to express and to get recognition for their valuable
thoughts is a positive feature of women’s participation. Social dealings, open-mindedness, self-reliance are another benefit which women get from their participation.

**INHIBITORY FACTORS IN WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION**

Participation in all the spheres of life is not an easy task for women of different sections of society. Schuftan (2010) asserts that amongst 137 million illiterate youths in the world, 63% are females. In no region of the world do women have a presence in national parliament that exceeds 20%. Forty three million girls of school age are not enrolled in school; most of them belong to socially excluded groups. Non-recognition of women as an entity has severe consequences on women’s self-perceptions and on their evaluation of roles and statuses. The marginalization of women ultimately creates an atmosphere of silent oppression and subordination of their individual psyches.

Research studies reflect a dire need of women participation or their mainstreaming in development. A recent study among OECD countries finds that female labour participation rates are positively co-related to gross domestic product. In other words, nations with high rates of women workers have high rates of economic performance. Countries with greater equality between women and men have economies that are more competitive and grow faster. All of these studies conclude significant points such as: removing barriers to women's role and participation in economic development etc.

Several countries treat women as second rate citizens. In 2010, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, a government appointed health and social worker had her arms cut off because she tried to discourage and prevent child marriages among villagers on Akshya Tritiya that is considered the most auspicious day for marriage. Similarly, another worker Bhanwari Devi employed under a women’s development project in the state of Rajasthan, was gang raped for having stated and stopped marriage of an underage girl in an influential local family (Shukla and Sarwaonkar, 2010). There is no shortage of talented, creative and capable women in varied sectors from the political realm to the world of arts to technology and science etc. The only thing that is missing or meagre is the lack of impetus for these talented women. Some factors that are inhibitory in nature as far as women’s participation is concerned are discussed ahead:
Socio-Cultural Inhibitory Factors

In medieval period of India, holding of land and religious rights by men became the criteria of superiority. Gradually, the role of women was confined to the household activities. This practice gave birth to patriarchy. Later degradation in the position of women started. Famous jurist and law maker Manu remarked that, women whether minor, young or old, must not act independently. Another Indian scholar Chanakya (Economist) says, fire, water, shaken royal family and women are the cause of destruction, therefore beware of them (Tirmare, 2010). Our history itself expresses that where we put our women in social structure. Women’s weak portrayal is deeply embedded in the Indian society.

Since our society keeps on piling rigid perspectives in context to women, it is quite difficult to break or alter age old patterns of weak women statuses. In India, there is a culture of early marriages which adversely affects girl’s education and denies them opportunities of developing self-esteem and self-confidence that are essential for decision making in adult life. Shukla and Sawargaonkar (2010) asserts that in India, as many as 50 per cent of all girls marry before attaining the age of 18 years, though the mean age of marriage is now 19.3 years compared to around 13 years at the beginning of the century. In fact some states reward money to the girls who marry after 18 years of age. Multi-media campaigns have also been conducted in the states like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh to create public opinion against child marriages and to mobilize social forces to prevent them.

Parents from poor Dalit and tribal families in India view early marriage as protection against dangers of sexual assault. Early marriage and young girls getting married to men above 60 is common among some communities. Gender discrimination is another reason that young girls become submissive and practice the culture of silence towards gender discrimination. In such a scenario who worries about women’s extension of capabilities, her psychological or intellectual growth, the only thing that matters is their timely wedding and relieving of responsibilities. It is undeniable reality of most of the women that they are drawn towards huge responsibility of marriage before they attain self-dependence in life. It is now a trend in some urban or sub urban zones that women prefer to become self-dependent first than to indulge in wed lock. Kapur (1974) states that, educated, urban women have now begun to realize that job can raise their self-esteem and self-confidence and can
accomplish their socio-psychological security and freedom. People are changing their perspectives towards their women’s active social participation. But this proportion is still inadequate to bring change.

**Participatory Inhibitions: Stereo Typification of Women**

Women who do participate, the scenario is disturbing for them too. Stereotypification of women emerges out as a part of socio-cultural structure of society. For instance strong women candidates in political arenas are discouraged by men in order to retain their hold over core public spaces which they do not want to be violated. Effective and hardworking women are subject to psychological pressures. Women who have got recognition through community leadership are seen as a threat.

Women’s dress, election campaigns, meetings and strategies are areas of male control as the patronage of the family (male members), *biradari* (clan) and *jati* (caste) is considered to be important. Women who go for campaigning unescorted are criticized as ‘bad’ women; character assassination and the degeneration of women candidates are common (Khullar, 2006). Research has shown correlation between sex rate stereotyping and people’s reactions to men and women in organizational settings. Another myth that is firmly entrenched in Indian society is that the working women have somehow lost some of her ‘goodness’. People often, consciously or subconsciously, believe that women in positions of power have got there through bribing men with their sexuality rather than through their own capabilities (Mitra, 1997). Another reason why men may consider it degrading for women to work is that today the majority of women who work are actually forced to do so through depressed economic circumstances and they mainly join low status and low paid jobs. So according to society, these women are working because their husbands are not good enough workers to support the family (ibid.).

Women’s participation is often terminated or not encouraged on the basis of such century old stereotypes or discourses. Such stereotypes, discourses disrupt, disturb any women’s journey towards development. People have great impact of such stereotypes on their minds that even now if an analysis is to be made on matrimonial advertisements, and then it is most likely written that “a beautiful homely bride” is required for a well-salaried, educated and a good background boy. People do not give much importance to women’s capabilities. This is a reality of urban spaces; one can imagine a scenario of rural society.
Familial Inhibitory Factor

Bagchi (2000) says that a substantial number of parents expect the girl child to be good natured, well mannered, well-behaved, obedient and respecting elders. Other qualities that are considered important are humility and politeness, willingness to share and assist in household work, tolerant and of adjustable nature. Qualities such as ability to get a good job or economic independence are not given enough significance (C.f. Tirmare, 2010). Girls are given a training to be a good domestic worker, care giver in their houses till they reach their in-laws house. And for some girls life takes a crucial turn when they reach their in-laws’ house. According to a UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) report, more than 12 women die every day as a result of being burned alive by their in-laws or husbands due to dowry disputes. Most of these incidents are reported as accidental burning or suicides. A study conducted in Chandigarh in northern India, reported that married women made up 78 % of total female fatalities and that many of these were the result of dowry disputes (Murthy et al., 2010).

Domestic Violence is a terrible reality of today’s society. The result of physical trauma can be minor or life threatening, result in permanent disability or death of the victims. Globally an estimated 40-70 % of homicides against women are committed by intimate partners. Effect of physical abuse includes injuries in the abdomen and thorax, bruises, welts, haemorrhage, burns (1st, 2nd or 3rd degree), reduced physical movements etc. Furthermore, women who have been subjected to physical trauma often do not have access to medical care since they are not permitted to seek assistance by their abusers and must suffer in silence. The damage caused by psychological abuse is often noticeable but the remaining trauma can be far more disturbing than that resulting from physical trauma. Depression, anxiety, eating and sleeping disorders, feeling of shame and guilt, phobias and panic disorders, suicidal behaviour and self-harm, sexual dysfunction etc. are the consequences of violence (ibid). Familial treatment of most of the girls/women is awful and because of such conditions they spend their lives doing nothing and remain silent. Somehow productive roles of women are over shadowed by their wretched situations.

Poor Treatment at Work Place

Poor treatment at work place becomes a discouraging factor for any woman to move out and work. Young girls and women often seek work in the informal sector of
the economy; the home based industry and agriculture as well as hazardous sectors such as bidi rolling, agarbati production, making of crackers, zari and embroidery work etc. Besides, the forced nature of work, inhumane working conditions, absence of minimum wages, physical and sexual abuse, gross violation of laws, lack of proper and adequate facilities for labour worsen the condition of women even more.

Poor working conditions give rise to various health issues such as stunted height, poor eyesight, and respiratory track diseases resulting in TB and so on among child workers. Lack of development opportunities, educational facilities, bridge-courses, vocational training facilities; exposure and awareness of rights among adolescent make the situation even worst. They continue to exist where they are. Poor working conditions worsen a women’s condition more than improving it. On one hand they have to bear spine breaking responsibilities of their homes and they have to convince family to work out. And their deprived condition at work makes their living even more difficult.

**Government Inhibitory Factor**

At the global level, despite the fact that the heads of the state at the Millennium Summit made gender equality and the women empowerment a top priority worldwide (Millennium Development Goals), nothing much has happened in this domain since then. It is perhaps because women’s rights are often side-lined and not given importance by policy makers and heads of the state. (Datta, 2001:78) says that in context of Third World, women’s relationship to the state depend upon policies that the state makes in the areas of employment, education, health, environment, political participation etc. State seems as a supporter for women welfare through its programmes and schemes. However, the theories of the ‘development state’ are gender-blind (Rai, 1996) and the discourse on empowerment; social justice and equality are not necessarily followed in practice.

In case of India, this issue is brought forth by Sen (2002:463) when she says that the state in the Indian context has a dual and paradoxical attitude to the women’s issue. On the one hand, it launches several women empowerment schemes and on the other side, the execution of the projects is not good. Somewhere government does not try to detect the basic notion of women’s weakness. In case of India, liberal laws against domestic violence were passed, but these laws raise superficial issues only and
do not question the basic power balance between men and women, women’s decision making within the family and their status within the society (Agnes, 1997:522). State should access the primary needs of the women of different strata and there should be proper execution of programmes/schemes etc. And these schemes should reach the masses far and wide. It is observed that some inbuilt social inhibitory patterns stop women from thriving. They need an impetus from families, communities and governments etc. As women strengthening is a reciprocal and contributory process.

II
PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN NGOs OF DISTRICT KANGRA

Non-governmental and grassroots organizations have a specific role to play in creating a social, economic, political and intellectual arena based on equality between women and men. NGOs are active and working in several issues of women i.e. women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, nutrition, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, girl-child issues, women and the environment, human rights for women, economic empowerment of women, social empowerment of women, women in difficult circumstances, women and technology, women and governance, women and media, entrepreneurship in women etc. Women should be actively involved in the implementation and monitoring of the platform for action. Non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to contribute to the design and implementation of strategies or national plans of action. They should also be encouraged to develop their own programmes to complement government efforts (c.f. Dharmrajan, 2001:14).

Women respondents in district Kangra express their own instances of struggle in their communities or families regarding their participation in NGOs. In some cases husbands stopped talking, even battered their wives, family members de-motivated or overburdened women. And in other cases where family is supportive, women have to face character assassination from their respective communities. An interesting fact is that even after all the negativities around, women exhibited great confidence for their participation. People who used to oppose them previously have now come to them for suggestions on grooming of their own daughters.
In 2012, while obtaining data for the present study, the researcher happened to meet a police inspector in police station to enquire about the rates of abuse over women and how NGOs have intervened in this matter. Herein is a piece of conversation (contains abusive language) taken with the police official.

**Police inspector (with a sarcastic smile) to researcher, “Yeh aurate (fieldworkers of a renowned NGO) sansthao k enaam pe dhanda karne jati hai, hotelo mein raat bitati hai aur logo ke gharo ko todne ka kaam karti hai” (these women are involved in prostitution under a camouflage of voluntary organizations)”.** Then enters a Junior female police personnel with a tray of tea in her hands, another police officer suddenly pointed out to her and said, “Iska Pati bhi isey martha tha, maane issey kaha ki ghar ki baat diwari mein rehne dena, kuch bhi ho jaye, tu chup rehna, kyo ki rehna fir wohi hai.” (Her Husband too assaulted her, I suggested her not to disclose this to anyone at any cost because ultimately she has to live with her husband only).

The above mentioned piece of conversation has clarified the status of rural hilly woman who move out from their home either for livelihood, awareness or to raise voice against injustice. If so called educated bureaucrats have such kind of outlook for women working out, what better can be expected from a common person? Such discourses for women reflect psyches of dogmatic people. In an era where women empowerment is discussed and debated everywhere, it seems as if people do not even know how to give space to women in society. She is not even considered worthy of moving out freely in society, in such a scenario discussion on higher dimensions of empowerment is not productive.

In another incidence, one of the women volunteer of NGO said, “It is disgraceful but they have heard nastiest verses about them from their own community or neighbours and it is a serious character assassination.Late arrival to their homes because of travelling or attending meetings, accompanying male colleagues for joint participations in workshops etc., is a matter of gossip for surrounding people.Women were interviewed regarding various factors linked with their participation.

**Distance between Women’s Abode and their NGOs in Kangra**

Geographical configuration generally affects women’s mobility. District Kangra is a hilly region and women there has to commute for long distances to reach their destinations. Women are not even allowed to visit their neighbourhoods at some regions. So it becomes interesting to know that what distances they cover to participate in NGOs. Table 6.1 has been constructed to view the distance between women’s houses and NGOs’ offices.
Table 6.1

Distance between Women’s Abodes and NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance between Abode and NGOs (in Kms)</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-60</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1 indicates that majority (54.8 per cent) of women commute up to a distance of 1-20 kilometres to reach NGOs’ offices. More than one fourth of (30.8 per cent) women travel up to a distance of 21-40 kilometres. And less number of (7.6 per cent) women traverse up to 41-60 kilometres to join the activities of NGOs. Very few (6.8 per cent) women cover a distance of 61-80 kilometres to participate in activities of NGOs.

It is observed that road connectivity is a big aspect that affects women’s participation in district Kangra. Women travel outside the village for secondary schools; for health especially institutional deliveries; for enhancing livelihood opportunities; for temporary migration even on a daily basis; for fetching fuel and firewood beyond the immediate periphery etc. Lack of appropriate physical infrastructure compounds the situation even more by not ensuring gender-sensitive regular, accessible, affordable, safe and secure all-weather connectivity.

Gender-sensitive infrastructural development has not been either emphasized upon or even debated in India. According to Midline Himachal Pradesh Road User Satisfaction Surveyiiiby TNS India, A sizable proportion of women (58%) do not feel safe on Himachal roads. This feeling was relatively higher on MDR (Major District Road), RR (Rural Roads) etc. The qualitative findings reveal that the major reason why women do not feel safe is because of high traffic or lack of pedestrian foot paths. The issue of women’s security is among the most important components that need to be in-built into all transportation programmes and policies. Some of these issues include adequate lighting; rest-rooms and dormitories at main bus stations; accessible
and functioning toilets; ‘request stop’ services etc. Gender sensitive infra-structure is a one way to promote women participation.

**Frequency of Women’s Visit to NGOs**

Level and degree of understanding enhances participation of women. Lack of clarity makes beneficiaries to quit the project in between. Partial knowledge about the programmes limits people’s participation up to a level of a spectator only. Common people prioritize their benefits before participation in activities. NGOs in district Kangra mostly direct their village level workers (gramsewaks or gramsewikaye) to various regions to mobilize masses on different issues. They organize regular meetings with rural women to influence or inspire them to participate. Task of involving people for their own well-being is a tedious job. NGOs use participatory approaches for problem identification to enhance participation of women. These approaches incorporate the knowledge and opinions of rural people in the planning and management of development projects and programmes. NGOs in Kangra generally use participatory techniques such as a) group dynamics, e.g. learning contracts, role reversals, feedback sessions; b) sampling, e.g. transect walks, wealth ranking, social mapping; c) interviewing, e.g. focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, triangulation, d) visualization e.g. venn diagrams, matrix scoring, timelines etc. To know the extent of participation, women were asked about their frequency of their visits to NGOs (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Visits to NGO</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 times a week</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whenever NGOs plan activities</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Quarterly/ Half yearly)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2 depicts that 47.6 per cent of women visit their respective NGOs 3-4 times a week; nearly 33.2 per cent of women daily access services of NGOs and 19.2 per cent of women go to NGOs whenever NGOs plan their activities (Quarterly/ Half
Such women participants are those who access NGOs for consultative aid or legal support in domestic violence cases. These women visit NGOs in capacity building programmes whenever they call them for further strengthening.

Forms of Women’s Participation in NGOs of Kangra

Women as voice and agency are effective indicators of development. Voice means being able to raise voice and be heard, and to express in discussions. Agency is being able to control aspects of one’s lives and to achieve desired outcomes free of violence, retribution or fear. Gender stereo-typification is a big hurdle for any women to extend her capabilities. Previously women used to participate in limited activities only but now they have extended their participation in varied dimensions. Table 6.3 has been built to assess forms of participation by women in NGOs of district Kangra.

Table 6.3 demonstrates that 51.2 per cent of women participate in NGOs activities by giving suggestions only. Less than one fourth of (18 per cent) women represent in various committees of NGOs. Very less number of women (14 per cent) share costs and contributes in NGOs’ welfare activities and lesser women (16 per cent) denote to an inactive participation.

Table 6.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Participation in NGOs</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Giving Suggestions</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Sharing Costs</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Representing in Committees</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive Participation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of the women participate in NGOs’ activities by giving their valuable suggestions. Showing trust in women’s voice and opinions is immensely important. So it depends upon NGOs to build and perpetuate that trust. Trust is not only a matter of realizing and legitimizing the capacities of others. It is very important to create a space where views of participants are well taken and given importance. Feeling heard
and accepted made them feel self-assured. The rapport developed and the trust building in participants is more important than the techniques for participation.

**Participation of Women at Various Stages of Projects**

An NGO’s project has varied stages. Involvement at all the stages gives impetus to the participants and aids them with the inherent knowledge. The planning stage determines the nature and scope of the project. This stage has to be well planned and perfect by assessing primary needs of the masses. The initial stage includes a plan that involves the areas: a) assessment of people’s need, b) studying of the present procedures, c) cost effectiveness and financial management, d) analysis of participants, staff, employees etc., e) agreement of the project including costs, tasks, deliverables, and schedule etc. Implementation comprises of the methods used to accomplish the work. This process involves managing people and assets, as well as adding and executing the activities of the project in accordance with the project plan. Monitoring and controlling comprises of the processes performed to discern project implementation. This process is mainly meant to identify problems in a suitable manner. The use of this process is that it is easy to calculate variation in project implementation and to control the problems fall in between.

**Table 6.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation in Various Stages of Activities</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>476</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Multiple Responses were given by Women*

Follow-up phase is extremely important, and it is often the most neglected one. Activities such as writing handbooks, providing instruction and training for users, setting up a help desk, maintaining the result, evaluating the project itself, writing the project report etc. are the part of this stage. Table 6.4 indicates that
majority (44.1 per cent) of women helps or co-operates in implementation of the projects.

Nearly, one fourth (23.7 per cent) of the women assists in planning of projects. Monitoring is that stage of project in which 15.8 per cent of women participates. Almost similar but very less number of women i.e. 8.8 per cent and 7.6 per cent participates in evaluation and follow up respectively.

By extended discussion and questioning, the women apprehended that most of the programmes of NGOs and government are not sustainable because the planning, the evaluation of the projects is done by the sponsors or agencies. Beneficiaries generally remained uninvolved in important stages like formulation, evaluation and follow-up. Such projects collapse when project organizers withdraw from communities. Development projects are successful only if beneficiaries are given equal chance to participate at all the levels of projects.

**Participatory Activities of Women**

NGOs focus on varied activities such as: advocacy, campaigning, consultancy etc. NGOs have become progressively active as supporters at all levels i.e., local, national and international etc. NGOs have also been active as decision-makers, preparing position papers and lobbying documents, and in contacting the media by means of press releases and press conferences and arranging press visits and encounters.iv NGOs work at community level; some provide scrutiny reports and serve as pro warning mechanisms and help in monitoring and implementing various agreements.

**Figure 1**

Broader Participatory Themes
It is observed in figure 1 that, 56.0 per cent of women participated in various seminars/workshops based on the themes of awareness building on the issues of violence, farming methods, vermi-culture and herb cultivation, youth leadership, panchayati Raj, hobby building, SPEEDS (Self Pride Enhancement by Enabling, Driving Skills), photography/reiki/yoga training/ self-defence etc. Less than one fourth (18.8 per cent) of women got a chance to attend programmes on women’s rights, income generation through micro enterprise. Very less number of women (12.8 per cent) attended workshops on health awareness. And lesser women (12.4 per cent) attended info workshops/seminars on reducing substance use related HIV vulnerability in female drug users and female partners of male drug users.

**Barriers in Women’s Participation in NGOs of District Kangra**

There are a number of factors that are problematic in women’s participation in community life such as: illiteracy and lack of education and the similar work openings as men, economic reliance and a lack of adequate financial resources, burden of responsibilities in the home, biased cultural and social attitudes and adverse stereotypes sustained in the family and in public life, harassment and violence, lack of access to information etc. Several inhibitory factors in women’s participation were discussed in detail in previous part of this chapter. Table 6.5 has been constructed to view that whether women felt any hindrance in participation in NGOs of district Kangra.

**Table 6.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is there any hindrance in participation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is found that nearly 89.2 per cent of women have faced hindrances in their participation. Few (10.8 per cent) women did not bear much of the hurdles in their participation in voluntary organizations’ activities. Further table 6.6 depicts that majority of the women (38.5 per cent) asserted that their husbands/families did not support them whereas 37.2 per cent of women expressed that it is spine breaking
responsibilities of household chores that was difficult in their participation. Nearly 24.2 per cent of women said that they themselves lacked confidence in moving out to participate in voluntary activities.

**TABLE 6.6**  
**Barriers to Women’s Participation in NGOs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to Participation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overburdened with Household Chores</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family’s lack of Support</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Self Confidence</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>223</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is observed after in-depth discussions that families and especially husbands were reluctant to send their women to participate in NGOs previously. The main reason behind it is the social stereo-typification of women in society. Community does not support the idea of women participating in unconventional ways in society. Character assassination is common as such women have to attend meetings, travel alone, work at unusual times to participate in projects/workshops etc. So, families do not want them to be odd one out. There are other problems related to male ego. Some women disclosed that their husbands did not support them because they somewhere take it as an ego issue that they are not capable of running their household. In some cases husbands even misbehaved and beat their wives too. Women bear physical and mental violence in their process of participation in NGOs.

Secondly, in hilly region, along with burden of household chores, farming etc., women of the rural areas have to lead a life of restrictions and compulsions. Women undertake a number of activities that help in their household to save incomes, if not to directly earn it. Fetching water and collection of firewood, including preparation of cow dung cakes, are the predominant activities in rural areas. If all these activities were to be included in the economic activities, the participation rates of women would be considerably higher than what has been currently estimated (Mishra and Pandey, 2012). Instead of recognition of their participation, women are often overburdened by domestic chores by their families. And they are not given space to pursue their interests.
In some cases, women themselves were not confident enough to go out. Women said that they were not able to talk to strangers but after attending meetings and workshops and after coming in contact with other women they saw a change in themselves. Their lack of confidence was due to a fear of ill-treatment of women in society. Eve-teasing, sexual harassment etc. are some reasons that act as a psychological barricade for any women entering into outer world.

Conditions were quite different after they participated. It astonishes that even after lots of barriers women manage to participate voluntarily in NGOs. Women give ample credit to NGOs for their personality development. Some women said that it is because of NGOs, they recognize their worth and became able to interact actively in outer.

The chapter can be summed up saying that majority of women commute from a distance of 1-20 kilometres to reach their NGOs. Lack of appropriate physical infrastructure, gender-sensitive regular, accessible, affordable, safe and secure all-weather road connectivity create problems for women’s participation in district Kangra. Nearly half of the sample women assess their respective NGOs 3-4 times a week. Most of the women are active in NGOs’ activities by giving suggestions only. And largely their complete participation can be seen at implementation stage. Women are less active in all the other stages such as planning, evaluation, follow-up of the project etc. Projects and programmes require complete participation of women at all the stages for subsistence.

Majority of the women participated in various seminars/workshops based on the themes of awareness building on the issues of violence, farming methods, vermi-culture and herb cultivation, youth leadership, panchayati raj, hobby building, SPEEDS (Self Pride Enhancement by Enabling, Driving Skills), photography/reiki/yoga training/self-defence etc. Most of the women expressed that they have faced interruptions in their participation. Families and husbands mainly do not let women to move out freely as they considered it non-conventional. Overall the mobility of women is difficult in hilly region. Even after bearing all the socio-cultural restraints, women tried to go beyond boundaries of their households. Almost all the women and in some cases their families too found their participation as self-constructive. Though there is a requirement of full participation at all the significant stages of NGOs’ projects.
Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was officially born on 30 September 1961.

http://rcpds.org/early.html
