Chapter-III
NGOs ROLE IN TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

3.0.0 INTRODUCTION

"The diversity of NGOs strains any simple definition. They include many groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of government and that have primarily humanitarian or cooperative rather than commercial objectives. They are private agencies in industrial countries that support international development; indigenous groups organized regionally or nationally; and member-groups in villages. NGOs include charitable and religious associations that mobilize private funds for development, distribute food and family planning services and promote community organization. They also include independent cooperatives, community associations, water-user societies, women's groups and pastoral associations. Citizen Groups that raise awareness and influence policy are also NGOs" ~ World Bank

From time immemorial India has a natural propensity for voluntary works by virtue of which “Moksha” was said to be attained. The trend persists obstinately. However the nature and mode of volunteerism has changed. In the pre-independence India, conventional volunteerism was aimed primarily at charitable works, ushering in social reforms, providing relief and rehabilitation for the people who became the victims of natural calamities like drought, flood, cyclones, etc.
However, in post-independence India modern volunteerism has become an issue-based approach, an ideology which aimed at income generating programmes, welfare services (like providing education and health service for the underprivileged), protecting human rights (advocacy for women empowerment and the marginalised), creating awareness about environmental protection, AIDS, launching crusade against child labour, assisting the displaced who are the products of development-induced programmes, etc.

Apart from Voluntary Sector alternative terms like Non-governmental organisations, Independent Sector, Civil Society, Grassroots Organisation, Self Help Groups and Non-State Actors are used as well. The NGOs that are often known as the “harbingers of change” can boast of playing multifarious roles like that of advocates, educators, catalysts, lobbyists, conscientisers, protectors of human rights and mass mobilisers who work incessantly for development. They have come forward with a human face to serve a human cause. This sector which has emerged as the universal “Third Force” strives for empowerment as well as social transformation.

The activities of the NGOs can be broadly summed up as:

- To supplement the effort of the Government in such fields where the government is unable to reach the outreached;
- To launch a crusade against the policies and actions of the Government which result in injustice and exploitation;
In the age of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation where the state is withdrawing its authority from many of the development sectors and market is not much willing to share the burden of development, this sector has appeared on the scene as a liberator to protect the society from the onslaught and challenges of consumerism coupled with an urge for an equitable distribution of the fruits of development. The NGOs are known for their virtues of human touch, dedication, great initiatives, flexibility, positive orientation, bonding with the society to reach the masses in a very effective manner. They are often regarded as the partners of development. They make an honest endeavour to empower the marginalised people in such a way so that they can stand on their own feet with self reliance and depend less on charity and concessions provided by others.

3.1.0 ISSUES OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

At the other end of the spectrum is the issue of tribal development. The concern for the indigenous people had received high attention on the international agenda. The concern for “Vanavasi” or “Anusuchit Janajati” as the tribals are called in India finds its echo in the UN Charter as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the post-independence India, welfare of the tribal communities has been the national goal and special responsibility of the Centre and the various State Governments. The Government took commendable initiative for the upliftment of the tribals as they are required to take part in the nation-building process along with the general populace of the country and participate in the
decision-making process. The development of the tribals has been the constitutional obligation of the Government. Coupled with the provisions spelt out in the Indian Constitution and intervention packages, the Government had instituted numerous Commissions and Committees from time to time to assess the tribal situation in the country. But it was very unfortunate that in spite of these efforts and initiatives, the Government could not bring any radical change in the socio-economic development of these marginalised sections and subsequently they were pushed to the periphery. It was soon realised that all the activities and programmes relating to the tribal development can not be done single-handedly by the Government. The failure of the Government gives a fertile ground to the NGOs to work upon and extend a helping hand to their tribal brethren. What is required in the context of Indian tribal situation is the conscientisation of the tribals about their latent capacities and to motivate them for acquiring a better life. Repeated assistance in the form of spoon-feeding would not help them in the long run. Attempts should be made to help them in helping themselves.

NGOs can contribute in a positive note to the development of tribal health and in the protection of their indigenous knowledge base which is either ignored or exploited. We all know that the tribals have the keys to the biologically diverse areas. They have a profound knowledge of the flora and fauna, the appropriate plant species with medical importance, their location, the parts to be used, time of collection, preparation and administration of the same. Their knowledge of the ethno-medicine is
very important for their existence. Moreover, there is a growing inclination all over the world for herbal drugs, nature based products instead of synthetic ones. But, there are certain threats to this indigenous asset of the tribals. Deforestation, environmental degradation, and lack of initiative of the younger generation to learn and adopt the medical practices of the tribal medicine men, lack of proper dissemination and transmission of the knowledge, piracy of the knowledge are some of them. The healing traditions and techniques are transmitted orally from generation to generation in the tribal areas because of the poor level of literacy in those areas. Hence, most of the time they are found in an undocumented form, which means slowly and steadily some part of it may be forgotten for good.

Against this backdrop, the NGOs have a very important role to play. The NGOs may create awareness among the tribals by demonstrating the conservation and preservation of the medical plants. They may use the audio-visual aids for creating a lasting impression and campaign for ensuring the promotion of herbal plants in kitchen-garden and nurseries. Sharing of knowledge in workshops is also recommended where both NGO professionals and tribal counterparts would participate. The NGOs should encourage tribal youths to take up the tradition of practitioners of tribal medicine as livelihood option and encourage in research and development of their practice. There is a global dimension of this problem as well. International agencies and multinationals often pirate the age old knowledge of the tribals for preparing drugs. Documentation
of tribal knowledge becomes an urgent necessity in this case. The NGOs coupled with the Gram Panchayat can play a significant role in it. They can prepare a community register where such knowledge can be documented in the local language. They must be legally made aware of their traditional rights and move in the direction of preserving their knowledge under the auspices of Intellectual Property Right. However, there are certain grey areas in the functioning of the NGOs which must be analysed as well.

3.1.1 Concerns

1. It is an astonishing fact that sometimes there are no linkage and coordination among the different NGOs that are working in the same geographical area and for a nearly identical purpose.

2. There should be more transparency in the function of the NGOs so that they may garner the support and faith of the ordinary people.

3. There is a need for closer interactions and exchange of ideas between the beneficiaries and volunteers of the project. They should explain their programmes to the beneficiaries and involve them in the decision-making process. The NGOs should try to apply indigenous knowledge base.

4. The work should be of a sustainable nature.

5. Fragmentation, powerlessness, corruption, nepotism, and internal weaknesses are some of the negative traits of the NGOs.
6. The NGOs hardly disclose their funding source and expenditure pattern. They refuse to reveal the names of their funding partners and reasons for tying up with them.

7. The NGOs are often alleged of using foreign money to undermine the state’s authority. In a free market economy, the donor agencies are often found scouting around the philanthropic houses. A proliferation of easy money often alters the operation style, the cost calculus, basic ethos, motivations, idealism and ideological underpinning of the sector.

8. NGOs are in a need of a regularised code of ethics and conduct. Flamboyant attitude of the NGO professionals are definitely not encouraging.

9. With the easy availability of foreign aids, working for an NGO has become a very good career option. Many retired bureaucrats take interest nowadays in opening up an NGO both as a pastime and a financially viable alternative. Therefore, the idealism with which the NGOs appeared in the social panorama is declining now.

10. There are allegations against the NGOs for large scale bungling, cheating and forgery.

11. Lack of accountability and commitment to the welfare of the masses are often witnessed.

12. They bring temporary solution to the problem and often fail to address the root cause of it and eradicate it.
13. The NGOs fail to scale or successfully transplant their lessons and experiences into large organisations and programmes for they fail to take into account the socio-cultural and area specific realities.

14. The NGOs are themselves entrenched between the welfare state on one hand and economy driven by globalisation on the other.

However, all these bottle-necks cannot be the reason for overlooking or marginalising the contribution of an organisation. In spite of these criticisms and drawbacks, it is an undeniable fact that the NGOs have emerged universally as a “Universal Third Force.”

3.2.0 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

3.2.1 About NGO

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) is a legally constituted organization created by natural or legal persons that operates independently from any government and a term usually used by governments to refer to entities that have no government status. In the cases in which NGOs are funded totally or partially by governments, the NGO maintains its non-governmental status by excluding government representatives from membership in the organization. The term is usually applied only to organizations that pursue some wider social aim that has political aspects, but that are not overtly political organizations such as political parties. Unlike the term "intergovernmental organization", the term "non-governmental organization" has no generally agreed legal
definition. In many jurisdictions, these types of organization are called "civil society organizations" or referred to by other names. The number of internationally operating NGOs is estimated at 40,000.\(^1\) National numbers are even higher: Russia has 277,000 NGOs;\(^2\) India is estimated to have around 3.3 million NGOs.\(^3\)

### 3.2.2 Terminology

NGOs are defined by the World Bank as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development".\(^4\)

Common usage varies between countries - for example NGO is commonly used for domestic organizations in Australia that would be referred to as non-profit organizations in the United States. Such organizations that operate on the international level are fairly consistently referred to as "non-governmental organizations", in the United States and elsewhere.

---

1. Anheier et al. (2001), "Global Civil Society 2001",
3. oneworld.net (http://southasia.oneworld.net/todaysheadlines/india-more-ngos-than-schools-and-health-centres)
There is a growing movement within the non-profit organization/non-government sector to define itself in a more constructive, accurate way. The "non-profit" designation is seen to be particularly dysfunctional because of at least three reasons: 1) It says nothing about the purpose of the organization, only what it is not; 2) It focuses the mind on "profit" as being the opposite of the organization’s purpose; 3) It implies that the organization has few financial resources, which increases the likelihood that it will. Instead of being defined by "non-" words, organizations are suggesting new terminology to describe the sector. The term "social benefit organization" (SBO) is being adopted by some organizations. This defines them in terms of their positive mission. The term "civil society organization" (CSO) has also been used by a growing number of organizations, such as the Center for the Study of Global Governance. The term "citizen sector organization" (CSO) has also been advocated to describe the sector — as one of citizens, for citizens. These labels, SBO and CSO, position the sector as its own entity, without relying on language used for the government or business sectors. However, some have argued that CSO is not particularly helpful, given that most NGOs are in fact funded by governments and business and that some NGOs are clearly hostile to independently organized people's organizations.

---

8 South African Grassroots Movements Rebel Against NGO Authoritarianism (http://www.indymedia.org/el/2007/12/897831.shtml),
term "social benefit organization" seems to avoid that problem, since it
does not assume any particular structure, but rather focuses on the
organization's mission.

3.2.3 Types of NGOs

The types of Non-Governmental Organizations can be understood
by two ways. They are: (i) orientation and (ii) level of co-operation.

(i) NGO type by orientation:
   - Charitable orientation;
   - Service orientation;
   - Participatory orientation;
   - Empowering orientation;

(ii) NGO type by level of co-operation
   - Community-Based Organization;
   - City Wide Organization;
   - National NGOs;
   - International NGOs;

Apart from "NGO", often alternative terms are used as for example:
independent sector, volunteer sector, civil society, grassroots
organizations, transnational social movement organizations, private voluntary organizations, self-help organizations and non-state actors (NSA's).

Non-governmental organizations are a heterogeneous group. A long list of acronyms has developed around the term "NGO". These include:
• BINGO, short for business-friendly international NGO or big international NGO;
• CSO, short for civil society organization;
• DONGO: Donor Organized NGO;
• ENGO: short for environmental NGO, such as Greenpeace and WWF
• GONGOs are government-operated NGOs, which may have been set up by governments to look like NGOs in order to qualify for outside aid or promote the interests of the government in question;
• INGO stands for international NGO; Oxfam, INSPAD⁹ is an international NGO;
• QUANGOs are quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations, such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). (The ISO is actually not purely an NGO, since its membership is by nation, and each nation is represented by what the ISO Council determines to be the 'most broadly representative' standardization body of a nation. That body might itself be a nongovernmental organization; for example, the United States is represented in ISO by the American National Standards Institute, which is independent of the federal government. However, other countries can be represented by national governmental agencies; this is the trend in Europe.)

⁹ http://www.inspad.org
TANGO: short for technical assistance NGO;
TNGO: short for transnational NGO;
GSO: Grassroots Support Organization
MANGO: short for market advocacy NGO

3.2.4 Classification of NGOs

There are also numerous classifications of NGOs. The typology the World Bank uses divides them into Operational and Advocacy.\textsuperscript{10} The primary purpose of an operational NGO is the design and implementation of development-related projects. One frequently used categorization is the division into relief-oriented versus development-oriented organizations; they can also be classified according to whether they stress service delivery or participation; or whether they are religious or secular; and whether they are more public or private-oriented. Operational NGOs can be community-based, national or international.

The primary purpose of an Advocacy NGO is to defend or promote a specific cause. As opposed to operational project management, these organizations typically try to raise awareness, acceptance and knowledge by lobbying, press work and activist events.

USAID refers to NGOs as private voluntary organisations. However many scholars have argued that this definition is highly problematic as

\textsuperscript{10} World Bank Criteria defining NGO (http://docs.lib.duke.edu/igo/guides/ngo/define.htm)
many NGOs are in fact state and corporate funded and managed projects with professional staff.

NGOs exist for a variety of reasons, usually to further the political or social goals of their members or funders. Examples include improving the state of the natural environment, encouraging the observance of human rights, improving the welfare of the disadvantaged, or representing a corporate agenda. However, there are a huge number of such organizations and their goals cover a broad range of political and philosophical positions. This can also easily be applied to private schools and athletic organizations.

3.2.5 Methods

NGOs vary in their methods. Some act primarily as lobbyists, while others primarily conduct programs and activities. For instance, an NGO such as Oxfam, concerned with poverty alleviation, might provide needy people with the equipment and skills to find food and clean drinking water, whereas an NGO like the FFDA helps through investigation and documentation of human rights violations and provides legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses. Others, such as Afghanistan Information Management Services, provide specialized technical products and services to support development activities implemented on the ground by other organizations.
3.2.6 Public Relations

Non-governmental organisations need healthy relationships with the public to meet their goals. Foundations and charities use sophisticated public relations campaigns to raise funds and employ standard lobbying techniques with governments. Interest groups may be of political importance because of their ability to influence social and political outcomes. A code of ethics was established in 2002 by The World Association of Non Governmental NGOs.¹¹

3.2.7 Project management

There is an increasing awareness that management techniques are crucial to project success in non-governmental organizations. Generally, non-governmental organizations that are private have either a community or environmental focus. They address varieties of issues such as religion, emergency aid, or humanitarian affairs. They mobilize public support and voluntary contributions for aid; they often have strong links with community groups in developing countries, and they often work in areas where government-to-government aid is not possible. NGOs are accepted as a part of the international relations landscape, and while they influence national and multilateral policy-making, increasingly they are more directly involved in local action.¹²

¹¹ Wango.org (http://www.wango.org/codeofethics.aspx)
3.2.8 Staffing

Not all people working for non-governmental organizations are volunteers. There is some dispute as to whether expatriates should be sent to developing countries. Frequently this type of personnel is employed to satisfy a donor who wants to see the supported project managed by someone from an industrialized country. However, the expertise these employees or volunteers may be counterbalanced by a number of factors: the cost of foreigners is typically higher, they have no grassroot connections in the country they are sent to, and local expertise is often undervalued. The NGO sector is an important employer in terms of numbers. For example, by the end of 1995, concern worldwide, an international Northern NGO working against poverty, employed 174 expatriates and just over 5,000 national staff working in ten developing countries in Africa and Asia, and in Haiti.

3.2.9 Funding

Large NGOs may have annual budgets in the hundreds of millions or billions of dollars. For instance, the budget of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) was over US$540 million in 1999. Funding such large budgets demands significant fundraising efforts on the part of most NGOs. Major sources of NGO funding are membership dues, the sale of goods and services, grants from international

---

13 World Bank Criteria defining NGO (http://docs.lib.duke.edu/igo/guides/ngo/define.htm)
institutions or national governments, and private donations. Several EU-grants provide funds accessible to NGOs.

Even though the term "non-governmental organization" implies independence from governments, most NGOs depend heavily on governments for their funding.\textsuperscript{15} A quarter of the US$162 million income in 1998 of the famine-relief organization Oxfam was donated by the British government and the EU. The Christian relief and development organization World Vision collected US$55 million worth of goods in 1998 from the American government. Nobel Prize winner Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) (known in the USA as Doctors Without Borders) gets 46% of its income from government sources.\textsuperscript{16}

Government funding of NGOs is controversial, since, according to David Rieff, writing in The New Republic, "the whole point of humanitarian intervention was precisely that NGOs and civil society had both a right and an obligation to respond with acts of aid and solidarity to people in need or being subjected to repression or want by the forces that controlled them, whatever the governments concerned might think about the matter."\textsuperscript{17} Some NGOs, such as Greenpeace do not accept funding from governments or intergovernmental organizations.\textsuperscript{18, 19}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{16} Intractable Conflict Knowledge Base Project of the Conflict Research Consortium at the University of Colorado. (http://www.intractableconflict.org/m/role_ngo.jsp)
\bibitem{18} Harvard Business School, HBS Cases: The Value of Environmental Activists (http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/5797.html)
\bibitem{19} Greenpeace, Annual Report 2008 (http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/international/press/reports/international-annualreport-2008.pdf) (pdf)
\end{thebibliography}
3.2.10 Monitoring and control

In a March 2000 report on United Nations Reform priorities, former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan wrote in favor of international humanitarian intervention arguing that the international community has a "right to protect" [27] citizens of the world against ethnic cleansing, genocide, and crimes against humanity. On the heels of the report, the Canadian government launched the Responsibility to Protect R2P [28] PDF (434 KiB) project, outlining the issue of humanitarian intervention. While the R2P doctrine has wide applications, among the more controversial has been the Canadian government's use of R2P to justify its intervention and support of the coup [29] in Haiti.

Years after R2P, the World Federalist Movement, an organization which supports "the creation of democratic global structures accountable to the citizens of the world and call for the division of international authority among separate agencies", has launched Responsibility to Protect - Engaging Civil Society (R2PCS). A collaboration between the WFM and the Canadian government, this project aims to bring NGOs into lockstep with the principles outlined under the original R2P project.

The governments of the countries an NGO works or is registered in may require reporting or other monitoring and oversight. Funders generally require reporting and assessment, such information is not necessarily publicly available. There may also be associations and
watchdog organizations that research and publish details on the actions of NGOs working in particular geographic or program areas.

In recent years, many large corporations have increased their corporate social responsibility departments in an attempt to preempt NGO campaigns against certain corporate practices. As the logic goes, if corporations work with NGOs, NGOs will not work against corporations.

In December 2007, The United States Department of Defense Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) S. Ward Casscells established an International Health Division under Force Health Protection & Readiness.[30] Part of International Health's mission is to communicate with NGOs in areas of mutual interest. Department of Defense Directive 3000.05,[31] in 2005, requires DoD to regard stability-enhancing activities as a mission of importance equal to war fighting. In compliance with international law, DoD has necessarily built a capacity to improve essential services in areas of conflict such as Iraq, where the customary lead agencies (State Department and USAID) find it difficult to operate. Unlike the "co-option" strategy described for corporations, the OASD(HA) recognizes health as an essential service. International Health cultivates collaborative relationships with NGOs, albeit at arms-length, recognizing their traditional independence, expertise and honest broker status.
3.2.11 Legal status

The legal form of NGOs is diverse and depends upon homegrown variations in each country’s laws and practices. However, four main family groups of NGOs can be found worldwide:

• Unincorporated and voluntary association
• Trusts, charities and foundations
• Companies not just for profit
• Entities formed or registered under special NGO or nonprofit laws

NGOs are not subjects of international law, as states are. An exception is the International Committee of the Red Cross, which is subject to certain specific matters, mainly relating to the Geneva Convention.

The Council of Europe in Strasbourg drafted the European Convention on the Recognition of the Legal Personality of International Non-Governmental Organizations in 1986, which sets a common legal basis for the existence and work of NGOs in Europe. Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights protects the right to freedom of association, which is also a fundamental norm for NGOs.

3.2.12 Steps in establishing NGOs

The first step in the establishment of the NGO is to identify the area of peculiar needs of the society, such as health, HIV/AIDS, Maternal
Mortality, polio, food, shelter, education, civil liberty and poverty alleviation among others.

The second step is to identify people of similar minds; there must be a unity of purpose. The third step is to engage the services of a qualified legal practitioner for guidance for the Registration process. Some NGOs can be registered with the regional or central government and that depends on the scope of the operations of the proposed NGO.

The next important step also is to identify the internal or external partners with a clearly stated objectives and plan of actions.

3.3.0 HISTORY of NGOs

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.21

During the second half of the 19th century, nationalist consciousness spread across India and self-help emerged as the primary

---

20 The terms “vo” (voluntary organization) and “NGO” (Non-Government Organization) are often used interchangeably in India. However, some draw a distinction between the two, arguing that voluntary organizations are a subset of NGOs and distinguished by the spirit of volunteerism and independence from government and business.

focus of sociopolitical movements. Numerous organizations were
established during this period, including the Friend-in-Need Society
(1858), Prarthana Samaj (1864), Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873), Arya Samaj
(1875), the National Council for Women in India (1875), and the Indian
National Conference (1887).

The Societies Registration Act (SRA) was approved in 1860 to
confirm the legal status of the growing body of non-government
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 India at this time directed 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 Servants of India, a secular
NGO, was established in 1905.

Mahatma Gandhi’s return to India in 1916 shifted the focus of
development activities to economic self-sufficiency. His Swadeshi
movement, which advocated economic self-sufficiency through small-
scale local production, swept through the country. Gandhi identified the
root of India’s problem as the poverty of the rural masses and held that
the only way to bring the nation to prosperity was to develop the villages’
self-reliance based on locally available resources. He also believed that voluntary action, decentralized to gram panchayats (village councils), was the ideal way to stimulate India’s development. Gandhi reinvigorated civil society in India by stressing that political freedom must be accompanied by social responsibility.

After independence, the Government of India increased its presence in social welfare and development but recognized the potential for civil society to supplement and complement its efforts. The first five-year Plan stated, “Any plan for social and economic regeneration should take into account the services rendered by these agencies and the state should give them maximum cooperation in strengthening their efforts.”

The Central Social Welfare Board was established in 1953 to promote social welfare activities and support people's participation programs through NGOs. This additional funding and recognition led to a growing body of professional NGOs. The Government of India decentralized development activities throughout the 1950s. The establishment of the National Community Development Program and the National Extension Service were early steps in this direction. Further, decentralization was achieved with the introduction of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system in 1958. Many farmers unions and agricultural cooperatives were founded around this time, and networking became more commonplace in civil society. In 1958, the Association for Voluntary
Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) was founded as a consortium of major voluntary agencies.

International NGOs entered India in significant numbers to provide drought relief during two consecutive agricultural seasons, 1965–1966 and 1966–1967. Many of them established permanent local operations thereafter. Moreover, foreign funds began flowing to domestic NGOs in India, changing the character of civil society once more.

During the 1970s the government pursued a “minimum needs” program, focusing on the basic impediments to improving the quality of life for the rural poor, such as education, electrical power, and health. Several governmental development agencies were established around this time, such as the 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, NGO 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 NGO sector.

NGOs became strongly associated with the world of international aid during the last decades of the twentieth century, but if we take a longer-term perspective it becomes clear that NGOs are a far from recent phenomenon. Ideas about NGOs can be seen to have emerged from longer-term traditions of both philanthropy and self-help common to all societies.

The concept of ‘philanthropy’, defined as ‘the ethical notions of giving and serving to those beyond one’s immediate family’, has existed in different forms across most cultures throughout history, often driven
by religious tradition (Ilchman et al., 1998)\textsuperscript{22}. A range of local organizations and initiatives have operated in most societies for generations in the form of religious organizations, community groups and organized self-help ventures in villages and towns, often going unnoticed by governments and development agencies (Anheier, 2005)\textsuperscript{23}. For example, research by social anthropologists in West Africa during the 1950s and 1960s is full of accounts of the adaptive role of local ‘voluntary associations’ in helping to integrate urban migrants into their new social and economic surroundings (Lewis, 1999)\textsuperscript{24}.

At the same time, the colonization by European powers of large areas of the less developed world brought missionaries whose activities often included prototypical NGO initiatives that attempted to bring about improvements in the fields of education, health service provision, women’s rights and agricultural development. These included both ‘welfare’ approaches that stressed charity and amelioration of hardship, and more ‘empowerment’ approaches that drew on community organizing and bottom-up community development work (Fernando and Heston, 1997)\textsuperscript{25}.

Many of the UK's best-known NGOs had existed for many years before they became large, internationally known organizations from the 1980s onwards, and had been focused on relief work in Europe. Save the Children Fund (SCF) was founded by Eglantyne Jebb in 1919 after the trauma of the First World War. Oxfam, which was originally known as the Oxford Committee against the Famine was established in 1942 in order to provide famine relief to victims of the Greek Civil War. The US agency CARE was originally engaged in sending US food packages to Europe in 1946 after the Second World War.

Charnovitz (1997)\textsuperscript{26} has traced the evolution of Western NGOs in seven stages. He outlines the ‘emergence’ of NGOs from 1775 to 1918 and concludes with a current phase of relative NGO ‘empowerment’ that has been in evidence since the UN Rio Conference in 1992 (Table 1).

\begin{center}
\textbf{Table 3.1}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{The seven historical stages of Western international NGOs}
\end{center}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Emergence</td>
<td>(1775–1918)</td>
<td>Anti-Corn Law League founded in 1838 in Britain to campaign against unfair tariffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>(1918–1935)</td>
<td>International associations given representation in the newly established League of Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Disengagement</td>
<td>(1935–1945)</td>
<td>The League of Nations falls into decline as Europe falls into authoritarianism and war</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>ECOSOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Nuisance value</td>
<td>(1950–1972) NGOs generally marginalized as UN processes dominated by governments and Cold War tensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Intensification</td>
<td>(1972–1992) NGOs play ever higher profile roles in a succession of UN conferences from Stockholm 1972 onwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>(1992) The Rio Environment Conference marks the new ascendancy of NGOs in development and international affairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Charnovitz (1997)

The history of Western NGOs begins with the growth of a range of national-level issue-based organizations during the late eighteenth century, such as those focused on the abolition of the slave trade and the peace movements. By 1900, there were 425 peace societies active in different parts of the world, and debates over labour rights and free trade were creating new types of interest group which were antecedents of what today we would term NGOs. For example, in the US the first national labour union was the International Federation of Tobacco Workers, which was set up in 1876, while in the UK, between 1838 and 1846, the Anti-Corn Law League campaigned in favour of free trade against what it saw as the restrictive system of tariffs. From the opening of the twentieth century, NGOs now had associations to help them promote their own identities at national and international levels. For example, at the World Congress of International Associations in 1910, there were 132 international associations represented, dealing with issues as varied as
transportation, intellectual property rights, narcotics control, public health issues, agriculture and the protection of nature.

A growing level of involvement of NGOs continued during the League of Nations period in the 1920s and 1930s. When the International Labour Organization (ILO) was founded in 1919 as part of the League of Nations, each of its member countries sent four representatives: two from government, one from employers and one from worker organizations. For the first time, there was a forum in which it was recognized that the three sectors of government, business and community could usefully debate and influence international conventions on labour rights. NGOs began to move from a status as outsiders in the international system, to one in which they attempted to bring important issues to the attention of government within international forums from the inside. But from 1935 onwards, the League became less active as growing political tensions in Europe led towards war. NGO participation in international affairs began to fade into a phase of ‘disengagement’, until in 1945 the newly established United Nations led to a new stage of post-war ‘formalization’.

Article 71 of the UN Charter formalized NGO involvement in UN processes and activities, and there were even NGOs contributing to the drafting of the UN Charter itself. Among the various UN organizations, UNESCO and WHO both explicitly provided for NGO involvement in their charters. However, the reality was that Article 71 merely codified ‘the custom of NGO participation’ and constituted very little advance from the relatively low levels of participation that NGOs had experienced under the
League of Nations (Charnovitz 1997). After the Second World War, NGOs tended to underachieve after this fairly promising period of renewal. Although they were active, NGO influence was hampered by Cold War tensions and by the institutional weakness of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the body that was to liaise with NGOs under Article 71, with the result that NGOs were rarely contributing much more than ‘nuisance value’.

The 1970s, however, marked the beginning of a sea change in which there was an increased ‘intensification’ of NGO strengths and activities. This was evident from the role NGOs played in a succession of UN conferences, such as the Stockholm Environment Conference in 1972 and the World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974. NGOs played a key role in drafting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since 1992, NGO influence at international level has continued to grow, as shown by the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio, in which NGOs were active in both preparation and the actual conference. The Rio conference approved a series of policy statements relating to the role of NGOs. In Agenda 21, the main policy document that emerged from Rio for global environmental action, the need to draw on the expertise and views of non-governmental organizations within the UN system in policy and programme design, implementation and evaluation was formally stated as never before.

27 Ibid., p.258.
All this constituted a substantial trajectory of change as NGOs shifted from a role at the periphery to a place not too far from the main centres of action within international UN policy processes. From only occasional mentions of the role of NGOs in the documentation produced by the Brandt Commission in 1980, by 1995 the Commission on Global Governance recommended that a Forum of Civil Society be convened and consulted by the UN every year. For Charnovitz (1997)\(^\text{28}\) the era of NGO ‘empowerment’ had begun. More recently, Martens (2006)\(^\text{29}\) argues that NGOs now form an integral part of the UN system.

### 3.3.1 International History

The history and origins of NGOs are diverse and can be traced back to a range of complex historical, cultural and political factors in different parts of the world. As Carroll (1992)\(^\text{30}\) points out: “all NGOs operate within a contextual matrix derived from specific locational and historic circumstances that change over time”. This point is a critical one when we are tempted to generalize about NGOs. While we need to recognize a set of common themes and issues, and increasingly global interrelationships that nevertheless inform the world of NGOs, at the same time we need to be sensitive to these different histories when analysing NGOs. The ebb and flow of international NGO activities in the contexts of Western Europe and North America is only part of the story. This section provides

\(^{28}\) Ibid.
brief examples that are intended to provide a snapshot of the diverse origins of and influences on the third sector in different parts of the world, but of course they represent only a small keyhole into vast and diverse strands of cultural, political and religious influences that contribute to different kinds of NGOs around the world.

In Latin America, the growth of NGOs has been influenced by the Catholic Church and the growth of 'liberation theology' in the 1960s, signalled by the Church’s commitment to the poor and to some extent by the growth of popular Protestantism (Escobar, 1997)\(^3\). The philosophy of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, with radical ideas about ‘education for critical consciousness’ and organized community action, has also been influential (Blackburn, 2000)\(^2\). Freire argued that uneducated poor people possessed a ‘culture of silence’ that could be challenged by radical education which, rather than simply imposing the worldview of the elite, could motivate the poor to question the status quo and build new liberating structures and processes for change. Freire's ideas continue to inspire and inform current NGO approaches, such as the participatory budgeting processes that have been taking place in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil (Guareschi and Jovchelovitch, 2004)\(^3\).

---


At the same time, the tradition of peasant movements seeking improved rights to land, and the role of political radicals working towards more open democratic societies, has contributed to the rise of NGOs (Bebbington and Thiele 1993). These radical origins are just one strand in the Latin American NGO community, which also includes highly professionalized careerist organizations that have close relationships with donors and governments (Pearce 1997).

Moving to the context of South Asia, Sen's (1992) analysis of the rise of NGOs in India highlights several distinctive factors, such as the influence of Christian missionaries, the growth of reformist middle classes in many areas of the country and the influential ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, who placed a concept of voluntary action at the centre of his vision of Indian development. Gandhi's campaign for village self-reliance went on to inspire organizations like the Association of Sarva Seva Farms (ASSEFA) (Thomas, 1992)\textsuperscript{34}. Other areas of NGO activity associated with South Asia, such as micro-credit and savings, can be seen to derive from local self-help traditions. For example, Nepal's \textit{dhikiri} rotating credit groups are age-old institutions in which households pool resources into a central fund and then take turns in borrowing and repaying (Chhetri 1995)\textsuperscript{35}.


A wealth of local associational third sector activity underpins many African societies, such as the home-town associations described by Honey and Okafor (1998)\textsuperscript{36} in Nigeria. Such community organizations are increasingly important for mediating resources and relationships between local communities and global labour markets, educational opportunities and village resources. In Kenya, the \textit{harambee} movement of mutual self-help groups was a system based on kinship and neighbourhood ties, and was incorporated by President Kenyatta as part of a modernization campaign to build a new infrastructure after Independence (Moore, 1988)\textsuperscript{37}. It was seen as an alternative to top-down planning and as a way of sharing costs with local communities but, while briefly successful, its initial spirit of voluntarism was gradually sapped by bureaucratization. Other community organizations have more successfully built up their activities to meet contemporary challenges and tap into new resources.

In the Middle East, a still different set of factors and influences has shaped the evolution of NGOs. In Jordan, for instance, political repression, particularly before the political reforms which took place in 1989, have meant that NGOs have traditionally been involved in apolitical activities such as welfare provisions (healthcare, education and orphan support) and vocational training work. Increasing numbers of Islamic NGOs, many of which oppose the regime, channel their activities into service provision around healthcare, scholarships, vocational training and

---


religious cultural work. A strong part of the NGO sector is that of the 'royal' NGOs (RONGOs) that are run by members of the Hashemite family and whose activities are an important symbolic aspect of the regime's ability to demonstrate concern for the welfare of its people (Wiktorowicz, 2002)\textsuperscript{38}.

In the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, there were dramatic increases in the numbers of NGOs as Western donors began what they termed ‘democracy promotion’ and ‘civil society development’, with extensive funding of NGOs as actors designed to promote democracy and market reform. For example, Armenia had only 44 registered NGOs in 1994, but by 2005 the number had increased to 4500 organizations. In this context, what constituted an NGO quickly became bound up with these external donor agendas and the opportunities they presented to local activists and entrepreneurs. This led to a local classification of organizations into three categories: ‘genuine’ NGOs, ‘grant-eaters’, which are NGOs set up as a form of corruption that allows unscrupulous individuals to access grants, and ‘pocket NGOs’, which are front organizations that in reality belong to the government (Ishkanian, 2006)\textsuperscript{39}.


While NGOs have ended up taking different forms across these many and varied contexts, there are basic common features that remain at the core of people's efforts to organize in the third sector. This centre on both needs and opportunities, as Annis (1987)\textsuperscript{40} has shown. On the one hand is the need to raise income, secure rights, or demand services, and on the other are the opportunities that make themselves available in the form of contact with new ideas, links with outside organizations and resources, exposure to new ideas, and political change which brings new space for organizing.

People tend to organize in response to perceived opportunities, such as the landless labourers who see uncultivated land and begin to explore the possibilities of how to get it, forming committees, putting forward leaders, weighing collective against individual risks. Similarly, if someone in a village knows a powerful person in a government ministry, they may form a self-help group to explore what such a connection might bring them. Such informal organizations form the wide base of a three-level structure of organizations within a society, set out in Table 2.2 below. In the middle layer, we find a set of development NGOs which have been built on existing groups or initiatives, in the top layer there is likely to be a range of ‘new’ organizations which have been created from scratch, often based on the inducements offered by outside donors, as described in the next section. The final shape of this diagram, which might be a pyramid or a funnel, will depend on a particular context.

\textsuperscript{40} Annis, S. (1987), “Can small-scale development be a large-scale policy? The case of Latin America”. \textit{World Development}, vol.15 (supplement), pp.129-34.
3.4.0 INDIA AND NGO's

India has a long tradition of social service, social reform and voluntary agencies. NGOs emerged in India soon after Independence when Mahamata Gandhi made a plea for dissolving the Indian National Congress (the political party which came into power upon Independence), and transforming it into a Lok Sevak Sangh (Public Service Organization). This plea was, however, rejected; nevertheless, it did not halt the formation of non-governmental organizations in India. Many Gandhi followers established voluntary agencies to work closely with the governmental programs on social and economical issues. These agencies organized handicrafts and village industries, rural development programs, credit cooperatives, educational institutions, etc. The second stage of growth of NGOs in India was around 1960 when many individuals noticed that the governmental programs seemed to be inadequate to deal with the deprived sections of India. These groups formed organizations that worked on behalf of the poor, the landless, the tribals, the bonded labourers, and many other social groups that were being discriminated against by the policies of the state and social structure. These grass roots organizations work at the micro-level and work with limited resources and lack of coordination.

Since Independence in 1947 until around 1980 there was little effort on the part of the Indian Government to define the role of a voluntary agency or to recognize its importance. In 1980, however, with
the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-1985), the government identified new areas in which NGOs as new actors could participate in development. These areas included: (i) Optimal utilization and development of renewable source of energy, including forestry through the formation of renewable energy association at the block level, (ii) Family welfare, health and nutrition, education and relevant community programs in the field, (iii) Health for all programs, (iv) Water management and soil conservation (v) Social welfare programs for weaker sections, (vi) Implementation of minimum needs program, (vii) Disaster preparedness and management (i.e. for floods, cyclones, etc) (viii) Promotion of ecology and tribal development, and (ix) Environmental protection and education.

This plan, nevertheless, was to become the first of a series. Under the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) the Indian government envisioned a more active role for voluntary organizations to aid in making communities as self-reliant as possible. These groups were expected to show how village and indigenous resources could be used and how human resources, rural skills and local knowledge, grossly underutilized at present could be used for their own development. NGOs because of their situation and interaction with local people can be very effective in bringing change since they are able to address issues that governments are often not able to comprehend. That is, because these organizations work at the grass roots level they are able to sense the urgency of issues and prioritize into the problem solving mode at a quicker pace. This advantage has also been noticed by the Indian government. In the Eight
Five Year Plan the importance of NGOs is further enhanced, paying particular attention to the role of these agencies as participants in rural appraisal for drawing up development plans at a very low cost and involving the rural community. The plan document states, "A nation-wide network of NGOs will be created. In order to facilitate the working of this network, three schemes relating to the creation, replication, multiplication and consultancy development have been worked out by the Planning Commission."

Today, India has a vigorous NGO sector. Although there has been no complete census of NGOs, it is estimated that about 25,000 to 30,000 are active in India. In fact, as of December 31st, 1989, there were 12,313 NGOs registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) 1976; furthermore, 726 NGOs are unregistered but under the prior permission category. One problem with NGOs in India, as with NGOs anywhere else in the world, has been the increasing dependency on governmental funds or donations from external (foreign) donors like the World Bank. This dependent relationship has resulted in a lack of flexibility on the part of NGOs to pick their missions and objectives since many are expected to perform certain tasks in return for funding. But, further still, it has also created structures that have become more bureaucratic in nature and, hence, less effective in development. Nevertheless, NGOs are here to stay and will continue to work in India on political, economical or social issues, the task before them is how they will manage to produce change
will keeping track for governmental documentation. A new actor has emerged on the international stage, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) are increasingly making their presence felt. A decade ago, NGOs were fairly peripheral to major international diplomacy. Today, however, NGOs participate actively in various political, economical and social matters. NGOs work on their own in conjunction with individual governments or with international organizations. As former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and other UN officials have noted, the involvement of NGOs in making decisions on the environment, sustainable development, human rights and women have increased the legitimacy and transparency of intergovernmental deliberations.

NGOs come in all sizes, shapes, ideologies, nationalities, organizing structures and styles. Some focus on nothing but local issues. Others, address issues that span whole continents, and some like Amnesty International span the entire globe. Their very diversity reflects the complexity of these organizations. NGOs encompass everything from charities and relief agencies to political parties; think tanks and academic centers to community organizations; cultural associations to continent wide farmers’ networks; women's groups to environmental federations; social movements to human rights and religious groups.

NGOs are usually formed among private groups of individuals sharing specialized interests in regards to issues that can be local,
national or international. While a few such organizations had existed from the early beginnings of the nation-state, they were to proliferate in the transnational era and increased even more dramatically after World War II. This change can be attributed to technological developments, industrialization, and urbanization. Further still these factors are likely to continue to make the presence of NGOs felt in global arena.

The industrialized democracies in recent years have accounted for well over half of all memberships in international NGOs, and have been headquarters for almost 90 percent of all these organizations. For example, the term NGOs is used to refer to such organizations as the International Red Cross, Oxfam, Care, Amnesty International, International Chamber of Commerce, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, International Criminal Police Organization, Salvation Army, World Federation of United Nations Associations, etc. Hundreds of NGOs are permitted direct involvement in the activities of several UN agencies. Their tasks involve sharing information and advancing proposals as part of a web of governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental efforts aimed at global problem solving. NGOs, then, are a indispensable organ of international importance.

3.5.0 NGOs: AGENTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The strengths and weaknesses, negative and positive aspects of NGOs and the implications of their role in development is discussed in this section. A number of writers questioned the strengths and
weaknesses of NGOs. For example Clark (1992)\textsuperscript{41} pointed out the weaknesses of NGOs in terms of administration on the other hand Edwards and Hulme (1992)\textsuperscript{42} highlight the developmental impacts, efficiency on using resources and effectiveness on influencing the state existing policies on development. Robinson (1992)\textsuperscript{43} highlighted the performance of NGOs on alleviating poverty in rural. There are relatively few critics of NGOs activities. Their functions have been considered and perceived mostly positively. According to Edwards (1989)\textsuperscript{44}, as mentioned earlier, NGOs are accepted as the most efficient agents and motors of reaching and succeeding the sustainable development. In short, it is accepted that, NGOs can use existing resources more efficiently than the others, governments and agencies, and can mobilise additional resources. According to Korten (1990)\textsuperscript{45} ‘the 1980s saw a growing rejection of the myth that government is the sole legitimate agents for development decision making and the management of development process’. It is now widely accepted that NGOs have had an essential, if not central, role where changes in policy have resulted and new possibilities have been opened. Korten states:

\begin{quote}
"Many donors and governments also came to appreciate the important and distinctive development role of NGOs during the
\end{quote}

1980s. *NGOs began to take themselves more seriously, making commitments to strengthen their capacities to provide leadership on important policy issue*.

According to Edwards & Hulme (1992)\textsuperscript{46} most NGOs tend to believe that they know better than the people who, by virtue of poor education, lack of knowledge of the world outside the village, or their overwhelming concern with immediate survival, have distorted or wrong ideas about their situation or ‘real needs’. It hardly needs saying that such attitudes of NGO workers are quite similar to the attitudes of experts, who also, quite often postulate the same ‘good intention’ derived from humanitarian concerns. They also assert that they know what is best for the people (Edwards, 1989)\textsuperscript{47}. Cernea (1988)\textsuperscript{48} express the role of NGOs in development as:

*In Recent years it has been witnessed the explosive emergence of NGOs as a major collective actor in development activities and on the public agenda in general. This is a significant political, social and economic trend. Within the traditional areas of encounter between the state and people, this new actor is asserting himself with increasing people.* (1988:1)

According to Korten (1990:91)\textsuperscript{49}, NGOs have been accepted as ‘peripheral actors on the developmental stage, leaving big issues to organisations that command far larger financial resources’. They have been content to

do well on a small-scale in few localities, often limiting themselves to welfare activities. Masoni has the same arguments with Korten in his analysis on NGOs activities. He argues that the reason behind working in microlevel is that large projects require a bureaucracy and large budget. It also needs coordination of planners, technicians and administrators. Therefore, NGOs prefer face-to-face relations that increase the people’s confidence and work in development which gives the ability to control the project target to create mobilization and improvement in community level (1985)\(^5\).

Markets and private initiatives are seen as the most efficient mechanisms for achieving economic growth and providing most services to most people. Governments ‘enable’ private provision but should minimise their direct role in the economy; because of their supposed cost-effectiveness in reaching the poorest, official agencies support NGOs in providing welfare services to those who cannot be reached through markets. Main characteristics of NGOs are their ability to reach poor communities in remote areas that have few basic resources or infrastructure, and where government services are limited or ineffective; they have the ability to promote local participation in the design and implementation of public programmes by building self-confidence and strengthening the organisational capability among low-income people; they use low-cost technologies, streamlined services and low operating

---

costs; and they are innovative and adaptable in the identification of local needs, can build upon resources and transfer technologies developed elsewhere” (Porter, 1991). Robinson (1992) highlights the same views on the capacities and advantages of NGOs. According to him, NGOs are good at reaching the poorest in the sense of involving them in the development activities and rising their living standards. NGOs are seen as a most effective mechanism that reaches the poor, and their strengthening has for the most part involved direct or indirect funding. NGOs are also effective working with disadvantaged women and improving women's economic and social status or effectively challenging prevailing patterns of discrimination (Robinson, 1992).

Brown and Korten (1991) argues that the NGOs of concern to development have been those engaged in such functions as provision of services, community organizing, technical and educational assistance, training and technical support and advocacy. In reaching the poor that not served by public agencies, to facilitate local resource mobilization and the development, it was agreed that NGOs have demonstrated their ability to promote local participation and willingness to adopt to local needs and conditions. It was also accepted that NGOs deliver services at a relatively low cost and have ability to find innovative solutions to solve local

53 Ibid., p.32.
problems. Those characteristics of NGOs have been accepted as the strengths of NGOs by various evaluators.

There are also weaknesses of NGOs in terms of their activities, organizational behaviour and sustainability of the proposed projects. NGOs are commonly criticized by the capacity of their introduced projects. They were taken as micro level activities and NGOs are determined as ‘micro level actors’ (Brown & Korten, 1991)\(^5\). The scope of activity lies on the center of criticism. According to these criticisms NGOs have not the ability of evaluating and acting in regional or national level. Another issue of criticism mostly goes to the survival or sustainability of projects in community level. Because it was argued that running of the externally introduced projects are difficult by the local people when the outsiders, NGO staff, withdraw their activities in the region. This is the most serious question on the NGO activities. Local peoples’ ability to sustain cooperatives, organization, committees without the guidance and support of professionals are very difficult in developing counties. It needs ability to develop relations with governmental offices and also needs ability to continue the activities within the complex bureaucratic structure of state mechanism.

On the other hand, there are other aspects of criticism and questioning on the status and also roles of NGOs in general. Here, one of the important points which is the differentiation of grassroots organisations and international NGOs. This can be described ‘internal’

\(^5\) Ibid.
and ‘external’ factors in development. Today, many developing countries perceive the international organisations as negative agents for their societies. Many articles have been written on the irrelevance of WB, (Aydın, 1993)\textsuperscript{56}, FAO, UNIDO or any other UN or voluntary organisations in particular in Africa's development in general developing countries, because it is understood, in general, as an import of neo-liberalism and new type of dependency. According to Bayat (1996)\textsuperscript{57} and Rahnema (1985)\textsuperscript{58}, most grassroots movements which have emerged, particularly in the last two decades, should be viewed as the response of this ‘turbulent consciousness ‘to the failing promises of different kinds of Gods and Caesar. In the Third World, in particular, they constitute an expression of people’s deep disillusionment with the realities of development institutions and practices. They also represent their search for new ways of organising themselves in order to solve their problems according to their own cultural aspirations and their often different vision of a desirable society. They finally represent the grassroots people’s belief that any assistance coming from above or outside is either not for the poor, or for ‘relief’ operations that will ultimately increase the Poor’s dependency on the same sources. The lesson is therefore that, for all matters concerning their survival and their ultimate liberation, they


should henceforth only rely on their own collective-forces which they alone will mobilise and to develop.

There is clearly a danger in building up a new NGO myth according to which NGOs could be trusted solely because they are different from the state apparatus. No one could challenge the fact that there are differences between NGOs and governments, namely with regard to their particular modalities of action, their greater freedom from bureaucratic constraints and their field of interest. NGOs are indeed often in a better position to serve and to work with isolated communities.

As such they also may understand better the needs of their ‘target populations’ and the possibility of implementing more effectively the projects designed to this end. Yet there is still little evidence to show that their perception of the people’s deeper cultural and existential aspirations go beyond the significant concept of ‘target populations’, i.e., populations who have been ‘targeted’ by the ‘developed’ world. As such, their views on the ultimate goals of development -as an instrument giving some of the privilege of ‘developing’ others are seldom basically different from those of governmental organizations (Rahnema, 1985).

How one looks at the NGOs and their roles on development often depends on the understanding on ‘development’ and roles of the state. This is an area of various debates varies the approaches that consider

---

39 Ibid.
‘development’ as technical, financial, political, organizational, institutional or social problem.

3.6.0 THE SPECTRUM OF N.G.O. ACTIVITIES IN THE MODERN WORLD

The two historical roots of NGOs, care and welfare activities, find expression in the two principal ways in which NGOs endeavour to achieve their aims through care and welfare activities; alongside their activities oriented promoting change and development. These two functions are not mutually exclusive and thus do not create two recognizable types of NGOs. Many NGOs are involved in both, for now, as in the past, the two are connected: indeed, many NGOs describe themselves as multi-functional. Today, a broad range of organizations, clubs and associations are found in democratic societies which have a wide variety of social, political, civil, sporting, religious, business, cultural and recreational purposes. As new concerns have arisen, and the capacities of governments to meet the needs of their citizens have been reduced by globalisation and economic constraints, the role of NGOs has expanded. At the beginning of 1980s with the effect of neo-liberal ideology the thoughts on democracy have developed and widened. The common understanding was that ‘democracy is not just a matter of formal political arrangement, but a way of life embracing plurality, diversity and difference. Civil society is the virtue of democracy. NGOs have come to be involved in the fields spanning the whole spectrum of human need including health, education rural and urban development, environment, population, social welfare, employment creation, skills
training, economic development, environmental concerns, gender awareness and action, peace and human rights, and the informal sector. They have played a major role in highlighting the impact of national debt, structural adjustment and the unemployment of the disadvantaged sectors of society. In all these fields, much has been done by NGOs to pioneer new policies and practices and create a better public understanding and awareness of many emerging, social, economic, and environmental issues and problems (CWF, 1994).

The rapid rise in the number of civil society organizations and their increase in quantity have not been matched by an increase in quality, resulting in many common problems regarding accountability. The increased outreach of civil society organizations demands a stronger, more reliable and sustainable funding mechanisms. The answer to future escalating demands on apparently limited resources may be in the creation of new and/or indigenous forms of resource mobilization, or in the development of new means to increase known resources.

According to the Report of Commonwealth Foundation (1994), NGO activities can be grouped under two headings. These are:

(a) **Care and Welfare**

- Service and delivery
- Mobilizing resources
- Research and innovation

---


61 Ibid.
· Human resource development
· Public information

(b) Change and Development: These organizations are structured on the following field of activities

· Welfare organisations
· Development organisations
· Environmental organisations
· Indigenous people's organisations
· Women’s organisations
· Youth organisations
· Human right organisations
· Environmental groups
· Income generating projects
· Job creation programmes
· Children organisations
· Disabilities organisations
· Workers organisations

It is argued (Edwards and Hulme, 1995)\(^\text{62}\) that, NGOs can use existing resources more efficiently than other agencies and mobilize

additional resources. They it is claimed ‘speak for the poor’ and are seen as:

- ‘preferred channel’ for service-provision in ‘deliberate substitution’ for the state.
- Vehicles for ‘democratisation’ and essential components of a thriving ‘civil society’
- effective vehicles for the delivery of the agenda's economic and political objectives.

On the other hand, NGOs cannot be separated from the theories of democratization and social transformation. Bayat (1996) critically evaluates their expression and says that:

“There is a marked change in the attitude of many states in the developing countries towards the vulnerable with the collapse of populism and the traditional social contract, the fate of the poor are passed on the market and trickle down of national economic growth. In the context of the apparent failure of the conventional development models, and a clear shift of emphasis from state to individuals in development process, the NGO sector is assumed to act as agent of both democracy and development”.

Both liberals and radicals, meanwhile, welcome NGOs as agents of social transformation from below. As an alternative to state intervention,

---

the NGOs are promoted as agents to realize primary development among the poor. According to Drabek (1987)\textsuperscript{64} one of the fundamental reason behind the recent attentions on NGOs is that they are perceived to be able to do something that national governments cannot or will not do. Yet NGOs have no intention or desire to supplant or compete with the state in their development efforts.

NGOs have established some very good channels to reach people in the developing world. Governments are not able to support the upkeep of social services because of huge expenditures on infrastructure. Infrastructure was accepted as an urgent need, essential to reach development and modernity in the developing countries. Most government expenditures have gone on large-scale projects like dams, hospitals, schools, water and waste-water channels, etc. Governments have generally failed to separate income generating activities and employment investments. Therefore, NGOs have become an alternative sector, some developmentalists describe it as the ‘third sector’ (Uphoff, 1995)\textsuperscript{65}, (Korten, 1990)\textsuperscript{66} by relation to the public and the private. Uphoff analyzed NGOs within civil society according to their characteristics, types and roles.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{65} Uphoff , Norman (1995), ‘Why NGOs are not a Third Sector : A Sectoral Analysis with some Thoughts on Accountability, Sustainability and Evaluation’ in Nongovernmental Organisations and Accountability, Beyond the Magic Bullet, Earthscan Publications, Ltd./SCF: London.
\item \textsuperscript{66} Korten, C.David (1991), Op.cit.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
He argues that there are two types of NGOs in civil society:

*First, NGOs which are concerned with supporting social movements and/or initiatives of development that are expression of the free will of groups. Support the strengthening of civil society and the confictive dynamics of individuals and group aspirations as they try to build a collective society in which every individual becomes a citizen. Second, there are those NGOs which are the expression of certain social movements, having emerged from them or representing a certain degree of their institutionalisation. In this sense, NGOs are the expression of civil society’s capacity for free organisation and its vitality in its different historical perspectives (Uphoff, 1995).*

There may be many different organisational forms in different communities and in different social and political systems. This diversity of NGO activities reflects itself in the wide range of expressions NGOs use to describe their function which include as human rights, environment, development, or religious organisations. The diversity also indicates that NGOs, with their highly specialised personnel, have highly specialised targets.

When we look at the historical process of the NGOs, commonly we find these notions within all perspectives, and also both the governmental and the public side. These notions can be grouped as ‘care and welfare’;

---

'philanthropy’; ‘speech for the poor’; ‘fill gap left by the government’ (Bebbington & Farrigon, 1992)\textsuperscript{68}, (Clark, 1992)\textsuperscript{69}; ‘service substitution’; ‘public service contractors’ (Clark, 1992)\textsuperscript{70}; ‘agents of democratisation’; ‘helping people to help themselves’; ‘change and development’ and so on. These are the images which they are trying to project to communities and societies. These it can be argued affords opportunities to influence governments on their responsibility and accountability.

Changes in what NGOs do, and in the political, economic, social and institutional environments in which they operate, have considerably changed the nature and extent of the relationships NGOs have with others. In general, NGOs have often pioneered and promoted innovative programmes and policies subsequently supported or adopted by governments. But in some cases, NGOs activities or experiments have been adopted for the purpose of control rather than co-operation.

In recent last years there have been many debates on ‘NGO’ activities. Criticism has come mostly from Islamists, socialists and also from Third Worldist perspective. These give voice to opposition to the Western World, New colonialism, Transnational Companies, and International NGOs. These resources have described NGOs as ‘Not-for-Growth Organisations’ or ‘Necessary-to-Governance Organisations’ (Judge,

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., p.152.
Such criticism indicates some aspects of NGO activities especially of international donor agencies (NNGOs) which operate all over the world with the huge budgets. The Islamists in Bangladesh for example see the international NGOs as tool to destroy the fabric of Bengali society. At the time, NGOs were causing a real social revolution by providing women credit in their own right, creating their own-self employment, reducing the dependency on money lenders and landlords. In 1994, NGOs were shaken by the extent of ignorance and suspicious there existed in Bangladeshi society about their work (Holloway, 1997). The other side of coin is that, NGOs, it is argued that, act not as human relief and care organisations in the South but as the representatives of the communities they serve. There are many cases to support this argument. A few of them can be found in Northern Iraq, South Sudan or Afghanistan. The following articulates viewpoint:

*The fact that international NGOs work closely with the Kurds creates important opportunities for representing the concerns of the Kurds in international fora. NGOs are able to make representation to the UN. They can communicate concerns through the international media. (Keen, 1993)*

---


There are several categories of NGO type organisations working within the Third World. One such provides funds and lobbying on several issues. This type of NGO is generally called ‘advocacy NGO’. According to Baitenman (1990)\textsuperscript{74} it is the main characteristic is that most have a political agenda, taking a pro-resistance stance in the case of Afghanistan. Many have ties to right-wing movements, alliances and political parties in Europe on in the US. She argues that “advocacy NGOs engage in a variety of activities which have had the overall effect of supporting the rebels’ goals.”\textsuperscript{75}

The activities of advocacy NGOs through their intermediary NGOs can be broadly classified as follows in the words of Baitenman (1990)\textsuperscript{76}:

\begin{quote}
The provision of information to influence public opinion and build popular support for the rebels has entailed publishing newsletters and journals; writing articles and influencing press; supplying video tapes, photos, print news to journals; assisting reporters with logistic and resources; organizing films, lectures and conferences; conducting research survey and public opinion polls; maintaining libraries; monitoring human right violations; providing journalism courses; and inviting resistance leaders... In Afghanistan, the forty type of activity that advocacy NGOs engage in is the provision of non-lethal aid.
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
This indicates how NGOs are deeply involved in issues which are not in their publicly declared agenda. The situation is same in throughout the world. Today it is highly accepted that where there are internal conflicts, there could be international NGOs located there. NGOs can easy access these places in the name of care and humanitarian aid. Clearly. NGOs humanitarian work has been used for political purposes. They spend huge amount of budgets to implement their agendas most or part of which are hidden. This hidden agenda is generally formulated as ‘destroying the existing social, political and economic structure, and values’, and ‘supporting the internal conflicts’. Baitenman names these types of NGOs as ‘conscious agents of political interest’ (1990)\(^\text{77}\). Furthermore, Sampson (1996)\(^\text{78}\) has expressed the view that NGOs have began to expand into the sectors of women rights, human rights, minority rights and in Albania; the rehabilitation of torture victims. With these activities Westerners are assumed to have their ‘hidden agenda’, to be out for material gain, or are simply naïve.

3.7.0 NGO: TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT – ISSUES AND CONCERNS

It has been recognized that the task of the development of Scheduled Tribes cannot be achieved by Government efforts only. The role of voluntary or non-governmental organizations, with their local roots and sense of service has become increasingly important. They supplement the efforts of the State in ensuring that the benefits reach to

\(^{77}\) Ibid.

large number of populations. In certain cases, it is the voluntary organizations that are in better position to implement the schemes of the Government. This is primarily attributable to the highly committed and dedicated human resources that are available to some voluntary organizations.

In welfare programmes, development oriented initiatives, empowering women and weaker sections, protecting the rights of marginalized segments, protecting the environment, spreading literacy etc, participation of NGO sector has been crucial and impressive. The Ministry of tribal affairs identified a few voluntary organizations as “Established Voluntary Agencies (EVAs)”, so as to partner with them, they being credible. Collaborating with them to implement government schemes is highly successful in some of the cases.

The Christian missionaries are perhaps the oldest among the various agencies responsible for the development of tribes. Though they are primarily keen in evangelisation, welfare schemes such as opening schools, dispensaries, hospitals to the people were undertaken. The intensity of their voluntary services can be traced out in the tribal belts of Assam, Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

Inspired by Gandhian values, a seva kendra was established for the first time in Ranchi in 1940. It formulated two categories of programs the first to implement plans on tribal education and the second to encourage
the scheme of Khadi production, Cottage industries, crusade against alcoholism, and distribution of ayurvedic medicines and to form Gram panchayat and cooperative societies. Of the organizations started in the same lines, Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh under the Presidentship of Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Nagaland Gandhi Ashram are noteworthy. While the former focused in publishing tribal problems, the later established a health centre.

Ramakrishna mission has done excellent work by various activities, such as relief and rehabilitation, medical services, educational work etc. Mobile dispensary and ten bedded hospitals are being run by them at present in Jharkhand and Mysore respectively is outstanding example in this regard.

In the era of good governance, NGOs are playing a more proactive role. They are also acting as a protective role by seeing that the tribal rights are safeguarded. Green Peace is one such organization. Computer centres were also being established by various NGO’s such as Kothari institute. These institutions are directing their energies for socio-economic development of tribes to bring them into fruitful channels of development.

3.7.1 Issues of Tribal Development

At the other end of the spectrum is the issue of tribal development. The concern for the indigenous people had received high attention on the
international agenda. The concern for “Vanavasi” or “Anushchit Janajati” as the tribals are called in India finds its echo in the UN Charter as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the post-independence India, welfare of the tribal communities has been the national goal and special responsibility of the Centre and the various State Governments. The Government took commendable initiative for the upliftment of the tribals as they are required to take part in the nation-building process along with the general populace of the country and participate in the decision-making process. The development of the tribals has been the constitutional obligation of the Government. Coupled with the provisions spelt out in the Indian Constitution and intervention packages, the Government had instituted numerous Commissions and Committees from time to time to assess the tribal situation in the country. But it was very unfortunate that in spite of these efforts and initiatives, the Government could not bring any radical change in the socio-economic development of these marginalised sections and subsequently they were pushed to the periphery. It was soon realised that all the activities and programmes relating to the tribal development can not be done single-handedly by the Government. The failure of the Government gives a fertile ground to the NGOs to work upon and extend a helping hand to their tribal brethren. What is required in the context of Indian tribal situation is the conscientisation of the tribals about their latent capacities and to motivate them for acquiring a better life. Repeated assistance in the form of spoon-feeding would not help them in the long run. Attempts should be made to help them in helping themselves.
NGOs can contribute in a positive note to the development of tribal health and in the protection of their indigenous knowledge base which is either ignored or exploited. We all know that the tribals have the keys to the biologically diverse areas. They have a profound knowledge of the flora and fauna, the appropriate plant species with medical importance, their location, the parts to be used, time of collection, preparation and administration of the same. Their knowledge of the ethno-medicine is very important for their existence. Moreover, there is a growing inclination all over the world for herbal drugs, nature based products instead of synthetic ones. But, there are certain threats to this indigenous asset of the tribals. Deforestation, environmental degradation, and lack of initiative of the younger generation to learn and adopt the medical practices of the tribal medicine men, lack of proper dissemination and transmission of the knowledge, piracy of the knowledge are some of them. The healing traditions and techniques are transmitted orally from generation to generation in the tribal areas because of the poor level of literacy in those areas. Hence, most of the time they are found in an undocumented form, which means slowly and steadily some part of it may be forgotten for good.

Against this backdrop, the NGOs have a very important role to play. The NGOs may create awareness among the tribals by demonstrating the conservation and preservation of the medical plants. They may use the audio-visual aids for creating a lasting impression and campaign for ensuring the promotion of herbal plants in kitchen-garden and nurseries.
Sharing of knowledge in workshops is also recommended where both NGO professionals and tribal counterparts would participate. The NGOs should encourage tribal youths to take up the tradition of practitioners of tribal medicine as livelihood option and encourage in research and development of their practice. There is a global dimension of this problem as well. International agencies and multinationals often pirate the age old knowledge of the tribals for preparing drugs. Documentation of tribal knowledge becomes an urgent necessity in this case. The NGOs coupled with the Gram Panchayat can play a significant role in it. They can prepare a community register where such knowledge can be documented in the local language. They must be legally made aware of their traditional rights and move in the direction of preserving their knowledge under the auspices of Intellectual Property Right. However, there are certain grey areas in the functioning of the NGOs which must be analysed as well.

3.7.2 NGOs Concerns

1. It is an astonishing fact that sometimes there are no linkage and coordination among the different NGOs that are working in the same geographical area and for a nearly identical purpose.

2. There should be more transparency in the function of the NGOs so that they may garner the support and faith of the ordinary people.
3. There is a need for closer interactions and exchange of ideas between the beneficiaries and volunteers of the project. They should explain their programmes to the beneficiaries and involve them in the decision-making process. The NGOs should try to apply indigenous knowledge base.

4. The work should be of a sustainable nature.

5. Fragmentation, powerlessness, corruption, nepotism, and internal weaknesses are some of the negative traits of the NGOs.

6. The NGOs hardly disclose their funding source and expenditure pattern. They refuse to reveal the names of their funding partners and reasons for tying up with them.

7. The NGOs are often alleged of using foreign money to undermine the state’s authority. In a free market economy, the donor agencies are often found scouting around the philanthropic houses. A proliferation of easy money often alters the operation style, the cost calculus, basic ethos, motivations, idealism and ideological underpinning of the sector.

8. NGOs are in a need of a regularised code of ethics and conduct. Flamboyant attitude of the NGO professionals are definitely not encouraging.

9. With the easy availability of foreign aids, working for an NGO has become a very good career option. Many retired bureaucrats take interest nowadays in opening up an NGO
both as a pastime and a financially viable alternative. Therefore, the idealism with which the NGOs appeared in the social panorama is declining now.

10. There are allegations against the NGOs for large scale bungling, cheating and forgery.

11. Lack of accountability and commitment to the welfare of the masses are often witnessed.

12. They bring temporary solution to the problem and often fail to address the root cause of it and eradicate it.

13. The NGOs fail to scale or successfully transplant their lessons and experiences into large organisations and programmes for they fail to take into account the socio-cultural and area specific realities.

14. The NGOs are themselves entrenched between the welfare state on one hand and economy driven by globalisation on the other.

However, all these bottle-necks cannot be the reason for overlooking or marginalising the contribution of an organisation. In spite of these criticisms and drawbacks, it is an undeniable fact that the NGOs have emerged universally as a “Universal Third Force” in tribal development in India.