
UNIT 15 ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

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15.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you should be able to:

- Describe role of NGOs in development planning;
- Discuss the functioning of NGOs in South Asian Countries;
- Explain the relationship between the Government and NGOs;
- Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of NGOs; and
- Suggest remedial measures for cooperative and harmonious relationship between the NGOs and Government.

15.1 INTRODUCTION

The modern notion of the role of NGOs in development planning is one of active people's participation through organised non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the various interfaces of the developmental decision-making process, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of plans and policies. It is the sine qua non of success, efficiency, effectiveness, economy and legitimacy of the government. This unit highlights the NGOs role in development planning. These organisations render speedy and less costly implementation of development policies by providing useful information to administration in programme planning, implementation and evaluation. As the relationship between NGOs and government is utmost important in planning and implementation of the development programmes, therefore, it is important to discuss, the constraints which affect their relationship. An attempt has been made to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of NGOs and to suggest the useful methods to improve their functioning. Broadly speaking, this unit deals with the study of NGOs role in development planning of five South Asian countries – Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

15.2 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOs): CONCEPT AND TYPOLOGY

15.2.1 NGOs

NGO is an organisation that is flexible and democratic in its organisation and attempts to serve the people without profit for itself. The terminology of an NGO varies from country to country. It refers mainly to private organisation that pursues activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of vulnerable groups, protects the environment, provides basic social services or concentrates on community development.

In South Asian countries, the realisation of development goals, such as alleviation of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, inequality, ignorance, environmental degradation and strengthening of national integration, depend upon the active participation of people. Here lies the importance of NGO as an organisation of the “members of the community” that is feasible and democratic in its functioning. It is an organisation committed to the root causes of problems trying to better the quality of life, especially for the poor, the oppressed, the marginalised in urban and rural areas, without profit for itself. NGOs take to undertake developmental tasks on their own and thereby make contribution to government programmes and development planning. In other words, it can be stated that the NGO has emerged as an important instrument of decentralisation and de-bureaucratisation. The World Bank’s definition of an NGO gives the broadest view on the IIIrd voluntary sector (non-governmental organisation) (vis-à-vis the Ist that is, the Public Sector and IInd the Private Sector). “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 organised regionally or nationally and member-groups in villages. NGOs include charitable and religious associations that mobilise private funds for development, distribute food and family planning services and promote community organisation. 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”.

NGOs can serve as watch dogs of government programmes, and also serve as policy advocates, applying their grass root knowledge of development to government priorities and programmes. Such a perspective assumes that indigenous NGOs can influence government behaviour and priorities.

15.2.2 Typology of NGOs

NGOs are identified and classified on the basis of their work, according to the level at which they operate, and according to the approach, which they undertake.

(I) On the basis of their work

- (a) Service Oriented NGOs provide services in the areas of health, education, family planning etc. The programme is designed by the NGOs and people are expected to participate in its implementation.

- (b) Charity Oriented NGOs are directed towards meeting the needs of the poor or vulnerable society such as distribution of clothes, food or medicine; provision of temporary shelter, housing, school, etc. This type of NGOs also undertakes relief activities during disasters.
- (c) Empowerment oriented NGOs aim to develop a clear understanding among the underprivileged sections of society about the socio-economic or political factors affecting their development, and to strengthen their awareness of their own potential power. Here, NGOs act as facilitators and encourage maximum involvement of the local people.
- (d) Participation oriented NGOs often have a participatory orientation such as cooperatives. In the community development project, participation begins with the need definition and continues to be the part of planning and implementation stages.

(II) NGOs: On the basis of level of operation

- (a) Community based organisations include women's organisations, religious or educational organisations.
- (b) City level organisations such as Chambers of Commerce and Industry, ethnic or educational groups remain involved in specific purpose and help the poor.
- (c) National level NGOs, for example the Red Cross, assist local branches.
- (d) International level NGOs, like OXFAM and CARE, are involved in funding local NGOs to implementing the projects themselves.

NGOs play an important role in development. Their crucial role in supporting and encouraging, and if required, in criticising and pressurising the government for human rights and justice, is noteworthy in development planning.

15.3 ROLE OF NGOs

NGOs are expected to play an important role in all conceivable aspects of development as a planner and implementer of development programmes; mobiliser of local resources and initiatives; catalyst, enabler and innovator; builder of self-reliant sustainable society; mediator of people and government; facilitator, supporter and partner of government programmes; agent of demystify technology and disseminate information; factor of transformation, conscientisation and improvement of the poor; and facilitator of development education, training and technical assistance.

The major roles performed by these organisations, are mentioned below:

Supporting Government plans/projects

NGOs help in selecting the most suitable place for innovative projects and specify the weaknesses and strengths. In addition, suggest the ways to overcome the shortcomings that government may face at the time of implementation. NGOs act more quickly than the bureaucracy in planning and implementation of government programmes. They support and demonstrate the pilot projects very effectively and facilitate clear communication between citizens and the government.

Facilitating Communication

At the field level, NGOs have the first hand feel of the community response to the existing programmes and basic needs of the people. They use interpersonal methods of communication and win the confidence of the people (community). The importance of this role is that the NGOs communicate with the government at the policy making level and provide information about the lives, attitudes, culture and capabilities of people in their area. They facilitate communication at both levels, upward (from citizens to the government) and downwards (from government to citizens).

In this context, upward communication includes informing the government about the requirements, thinking, and ability of local people. They provide much needed feedback for modifying or changing the existing programmes and formulating new policies and programmes, as per the needs of local people. However, communication downward reflects informing people (local) about the government plans, functions and resources. NGOs organise themselves to work in more global strategic ways and also share information and develop networking between other organisations involved in the similar work for development.

Mobilising Local Resources and Initiatives

NGOs play a crucial role in development especially in uplifting the backward society. They develop land, building material supply centres and community based economic enterprises, construct houses and provide infrastructure to the community. They also operate and maintain infrastructure, such as drinking water supply, public toilets and solid waste collection services. In certain cases, NGOs become spokespersons for the poor or underprivileged sections of the society.

Advocacy for and with the underprivileged

They prepare and empower the poor to overcome psychological inhibitions and to raise the voice against atrocities, which is basically an advocacy role. NGOs become ombudsman for the affected people and attempt to influence the government policy and programmes on behalf of the underprivileged sections (women, children or any other). They act through various means ranging from demonstration on formulation of government plans and policy to publicising research results or case of the affected citizens for changes in development policy and practice. They also help the government in monitoring and evaluation of government programmes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The NGOs conduct innovative research and activities in the field of planning and implementation of development programmes, which is documented and shared with the government and citizens. Their efforts in monitoring and sharing of results contribute in the effective functioning of bureaucracy and political leadership, and encourage active people's participation in development process. In such manner, they keep a check on administrative functions. For monitoring and evaluation, some NGOs provide technical assistance and training also.

Facilitating Development Education, Training and Technical Assistance

They develop programmes to provide technical assistance and enhancing training capacity with the help of experts. These organisations provide a training ground for volunteers and other NGOs. Then, the trained NGOs provide their services to

assist the government and other community based organisations. It was greatly needed due to sudden spurt in the welfare and development initiatives by the Government with the help of NGOs.

15.4 GOVERNMENT – NGOs INTERFACE

The role of Government has changed from a police state to welfare state and subsequently to a development state. Similarly, NGOs had undergone various generations of change role such as charity, relief, welfare, development and empowerment. The change of NGOs role, as a development agency in present society is inevitable for development. With the help of NGOs, vast command over resources and embracing power, government can bring all round development.

The legal status of NGOs varies from one country to another. In India the voluntary organisations register themselves under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. However, in Pakistan, NGOs are registered under (1) the Societies Registration Act (XXI), 1860, The Trust Act 1882, The Charitable Endowment Act 1890, The Cooperative Societies Act 1925, The Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961 (XLVI of 1961), and The Companies Ordinances under Section 42 of 1984. In Nepal, NGOs are registered under the Societies Registration Act (1977). The governments of various countries adopt different regulatory and operative Acts, under which the voluntary organisations register themselves to become eligible for receiving foreign aid. In this context, India has adopted Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 1976. Nepal opted for the Social Services National Coordination Council Act, 1977 and Bangladesh followed Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance (FDRO) of 1975.

NGOs in South Asia

NGO movements in Asia grew rapidly, during the 1970 and 1980s, due to social conflicts and tensions and to respond more effectively and quickly to deal with economic crisis and growing socio-economic problems. ACROFOD is a forum of NGOs in Asia working to promote development based on socio-economic reforms, culture and religion. The member countries involved are India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bangladesh, Japan, Malaysia and Philippines. These organisations are more diversified as in India, Bangladesh, Nepal Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

(I) INDIA

India has a long history and tradition of voluntary organisations engaged in social welfare activities, like helping the poor, spreading literacy and so on. The voluntary movements in India grew with the emergence of various religions, social reform movements like Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ram Krishna Mission, etc., Mahatma Gandhi's movement for national independence was rooted in the ideal of social reconstruction, self-help and development of poor and untouchables through voluntary organisation. He gave a new dimension to the voluntary efforts; voluntary organisations like All India Spinners Association (1925), All India Village Industries Association (1934) were active during freedom struggle. The Christian Missionaries imparted relief and rehabilitation services and adopted education and health care activities. The occurrence of frequent floods, droughts, famines and other natural calamities during the 1950s and 1960s prompted massive voluntary actions in the field of welfare, relief and rehabilitation.

A new dimension was given to voluntary efforts under the influence of Sarvodaya Movement, Youth Movements, etc. The changing socio-economic milieu has forced the Indian NGOs to shift their areas of action. These organisations have diversified their activities and become more professional. As a result, the process of networking is also seen among the NGOs.

The second stage of growth of NGOs came about in 1960s. The inability of the government programmes to benefit the deprived sections led to the realisation that mere implementation of government schemes by the government-sponsored agencies were not enough? The Government of India recognised the crucial role of NGOs in development. Since the Sixth Five Year Plan, more emphasis has been laid on the promotion of the NGOs in order to secure people's participation in its various programmes. It is reflected in the creation of the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) in 1953 and the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) in 1986. Similarly, the Seventh Five Year plan stressed for serious efforts to involve voluntary agencies in various development programmes, especially in the planning and implementation of rural development programmes.

India has a vibrant sector of NGOs, (about 30,000 are active NGOs). The largest number of such organisations, that is, 12, 313 is registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976.

NGOs are mostly concentrating in the metropolis and some of them are working in the rural and tribal areas. In the rural areas, a number of NGOs have come into existence. These organisations can be divided into three categories:

- a) The Techno-Managerial Voluntary Agencies believe that the groups of rural development can be accelerated through modern management techniques and technology;
- b) Reformist Voluntary Agencies try to bring changes in the social and economic relationship with existing political framework;
- c) Radical Voluntary Agencies attempt to organise and empower the exploited against the exploiters. In this category, those NGOs and movements are also included which were started for the purpose of protection of environment like the 'Chipko Andolan' led by Sunder Lal Bahuguna, Narmada Valley Protection Movement or Sulabh Shauchalya Movement. NGOs have been quite successful in bringing to the attention of the government, some of the burning problems in respect of development, unemployment, ill-health, exploitation of women, children, tribals, weaker sections, communal harmony to pursue development. After the Bhopal Gas Disaster (1984), many NGOs have been instrumental in persuading the government to accept some of the minimum compensation and relief measures for victims of the gas tragedy. The NGOs successfully petitioned the Government of India and also the World Bank to make alternative changes and to reassess the impact of the Narmada Valley Project. In this context, due to their efforts and influence, the World Bank was compelled to send its team for reassessment of the Narmada Valley Project.

In India, the impact of various NGOs in environmental policy, women's issues, development activities and poverty alleviation programmes in rural areas is discernible. NGOs have been involved in organising women, securing their associations and implementing development programmes, devising strategies for changing the existing social structures, and raising the status of women as equal

partners with men. All India Women Conference, Bhartiya Gramin National Memorial Trust, Self Employed Women's Association, etc., have been working for the upliftment of women. They have been able to influence the enactment of a number of new legislations concerning women and amendments in the already existing laws relating to women marriages and their rights. Some of these are: The Anti-dowry Act, rising of minimum age for marriages of girls, Anti-Sati Acts, the suppression of Immoral Traffic Acts, etc. These NGOs have been instrumental in ensuring a number of facilities and good opportunities for educational and health benefits, prevention of discrimination against women, establishment of women's banks, cooperatives and training of women entrepreneurs and skilled workers, equal pay for equal work. There has been visible impact on various, policy issues due to cooperatives and federations like Khadi Village Industries Commission. These types of NGOs have achieved more powers as pressure groups in their areas.

(II) BANGLADESH

In policy formulation, NGOs have become more active in advocating special needs of the disadvantaged. The government has fostered collaboration between NGOs and various government departments, such as Health and Population Control, Rural Development, Agriculture and Forestry. The Government has attributed advisory role to some leading NGOs.

Earlier, as per the government policy, the NGOs confined their work mainly to urban areas. In the mid 1980s, with the change in government policy NGOs started concentrating on rural areas also. Civil society organisations have increasingly taken the form of NGOs. Recently, NGOs are estimated to cover 23 millions of the population through a community based distribution (CBD) system. A number of NGOs have made a noticeable improvement in the living conditions of many poor by contributing in credit, sanitation, education and nutrition improvement programmes. NGOs also work in health areas and the country's family planning programmes. The leading NGOs in Bangladesh are: Foundation for Promotion of Education and Research, Voluntary Health Services Society, and Centre for Sustainable Development, etc., The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) is a forum for NGOs and provides training, assistance and facilities for coordination at local level. The number of registered organisations to receive foreign funds has increased dramatically. However, the NGO landscape is dominated by a few organisations. Direct donor funding to NGOs resulted in this type of concentration of power and resources as donor representatives looked for those NGOs with the capacity to absorb even larger sums. To ensure steady flow of funds, NGOs indicate new programmes to keep up with changing donor priorities.

(III) PAKISTAN

The NGOs have put in a lot of work for socio-economic development of the country, especially in creating awareness of education, health, population planning, legal aid and child rights. According to the study of Aga Khan Foundation, there is at least "one NGO for every 5,000 people in the slum district of Southern Karachi, with a population of 3,00,000". The NGO movement is passive as compared to other parts of the developing countries. Most of them are urban based. The country so far has not opened its door to large foreign-based organisations. Even then there are certain European NGOs like Church Missionary Society and Action Aid. The Sixth Plan Document offered financial and technical support to voluntary organisations to implement programmes. The cooperation of government with NGOs is mainly in the social welfare sector. During the last decade, the role of NGOs in policies and programmes has increased and many policies and

programmes have been designed and formulated by the provincial and federal governments after due consultation. The formation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) is an example of collaborative efforts of government – NGO partnership.

For improving the status of women and children, the government of Pakistan has signed several international commitments to protect the basic rights and ensure gender equality of women. These include the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Platform for action was signed in 1995 at the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing. The implementation of the NPA, in Sindh, was a step towards the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action and the rights of women to equity and equality.

(IV) NEPAL

NGOs were mushroomed immediately in Nepal after the referendum and restoration of democracy. The Nepal government has recognised these organisations as its development partners seeking better coordination with the government's development efforts. Before 1950, there were only two major NGOs in the form of Trusts that is, the Nepal Gandhi Memorial Charka Propagation Trust (1926) and Paropkar (1947). The NGO movement has substantially grown after 1950. The political movements during 1980s for the establishment of democracy in Nepal helped in the creation of a large number of NGOs. Certain important NGOs, for example, Himal Association, Research and Analysis Services, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, etc., are playing an important role. The number of foreign-based NGOs (such as Tibet Foundation, Action Aid, Baptist Missionary Society and International Nepal Fellowship) is growing. As a result, there is an increase in the large flow of aid to the country.

The Government cooperates with national and international NGOs through its various departments like Panchayat and local development, labour and Social Welfare, etc. NGOs working in Bardiya concentrate mainly on water supply, health/sanitation and education to poor children. At the local level, Rural Reconstruction Network (RRN) Geruwa Gramin Jagaran Samiti and Tharu Women Upliftment Centre are working hard. Geruwa Gramin Jagaran Samiti has distributed shallow tube-wells. Backward Society of Nepal (BASE) has been working as a partner organisation of M.S. Nepal. Under partnership of M.S. Nepal, BASE is planning to establish schools and launch education programmes for children. A growing number of NGOs are beginning to work as catalyst for local decision – making and popular actions. A number of newly formed people's associations or non-formal groups are beginning to register with the Government Community Development Office. In Nepal, the Social Services National Coordination Council (SSNCC) Act 1977, governs the operation of NGOs. It is more comprehensive foreign fund regulatory act, which provides forum for NGOs to integrate private and government actions. The government cooperates with national and international NGOs through various departments like Panchayat and local development. On the eve of preparing 10th Plan, the National Planning Commission (NPC) with the support of the World Conservation Union and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), successfully convened dialogues at different levels. Participants from community based organisations, NGOs, professional solidarity organisations, media and government agencies discussed the policies and shared good examples that had been documented to use the information for formulation of Sustainable Development Agenda for Nepal and the 10th Plan. This exercise helped the policy makers to concentrate on the development issues at the grassroots level.

(V) SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka has a number of NGOs mainly involved in the field of emancipation of women and protection of democratic, civil and human rights. At present, there are about 30,000 NGOs including community organisations concerned with social welfare activities. Their movement has advanced to development activities. They provide training and help the citizens in identification of development needs at all the levels, from grassroots to national, besides planning and management of implementation of development programmes. The rise in their numbers and capacity is a significant factor, which will help with greater cost effectiveness in the delivery of public goods and services.

The attempt to develop people's institutions by the Government of Sri Lanka has been slow. In 1970s, one cooperative society was revived, that is, the Thrift and Credit Cooperative Society. The Government and International NGOs financially assist the national level NGOs. These NGOs are involved mainly in social welfare, women development, family planning and rural development programmes. Sarvodaya is a large voluntary organisation in Sri Lanka. The government's relation with NGOs is supportive; The Ministry of Plan Implementation coordinates and monitors the activities of a large number of international NGOs. In Sri Lanka, many international NGOs are working for integrated rural development programmes. The list of European NGOs includes the names of Church Missionary Society and Christian's Children Fund of Great Britain. The regulation and control of Sri Lanka Government over NGOs is minimal. The government has put forward a comprehensive set of proposals to promote ethnic harmony through a greater devolution of power by constitutional reforms. In such case, to promote ethnic harmony effective role of NGOs can bring socio-economic development in the country.

15.5 CONSTRAINTS AND REMEDIAL MEASURES IN GOVERNMENT-NGO RELATIONSHIP

It is a fact that especially implementation of development plans could get a boost through active NGOs performing their role effectively and in cordiality with the Government. But there are certain constraints acting as bottlenecks in the relationship between the Government and the NGOs.

15.5.1 Barriers in Government-NGOs relationship

- Paternalistic attitude and their dependence on government aid restrict the degree of people's participation in programme/project design.
- Main emphasis and concentration only on those programmes for which aid and assistance is available lose their innovative and enterprising character and become top-down, non-participatory and dependent on external and governmental support.
- Government grants bring in an element of formalism and make it incumbent on the NGOs to evolve and incorporate organisational rules and procedures for strict adherence. Further, bureaucratisation and formalisation make them compulsive about organisational compliance and less responsive to the needs of people.
- Bureaucratisation brings hierarchy in the NGOs. As a result, decision-making tends to be more centralised, which, in turn, destroys their cooperative and collegiate nature.

- Some NGOs combine development concerns with political or religious objectives. The politicians develop vested interest in NGOs and use them for their political gain rather than helping them to freely accomplish their goal of serving the people.
- In the highly political policy environment, NGOs often fail to influence the policy or programmes
- Some of the NGOs are suffering due to political jealousy. Government may not want to foster a healthier NGO sector for fear of bolstering the political opposition.
- NGOs projects may not be as effective as claimed due to lack of capacity in the management of professional skills of staff, the accountability of NGOs to the grassroots, and strategic planning.
- Many NGOs-sponsored projects are not designed with sufficient concern for how activities will be sustained. It results in limited self-sustainability.
- Restricted ways of approach to a problem or area and territorial possessiveness of an area reduces cooperation between various agencies.
- NGOs preference for isolation hence unwillingness to dialogue with government officials develop jealousy of civil servants towards the NGOs' access to resources and making NGOs more vulnerable to government attack.
- The government's passive attitude to fulfil commitment to improve services, eradicate discrimination and poverty, shortage of competent staff at local level, corruption and nepotism lead to confrontation between the Government and NGOs.
- Pressure on successful NGOs from major donors to receive more funds and their dependence on foreign donors at times leads to a decline in their performance and there can be problems between the government and NGOs due to suspicion that the NGOs may be "guided by a foreign hand".
- NGOs involvement in politics develops close affiliation with a party, which undercuts their autonomy. In these circumstances, they cannot freely criticise the government for wrong policies.

The Government has various instruments, for good or ill, to influence the NGOs sector. The level of response may be non-interventionist, partnership, co-option, control or active encouragement.

15.5.2 Remedial Measures

The relationship between the Government and NGOs could improve for betterment.

Ingredients of an enabling environment for better relationship between Government and NGOs include:

- **Good Governance** – policies which encourage a healthy civil society and public accountability of government institutions.
- **Policy formulations** – proper provisions of information to NGOs for dissemination to their constituencies, advance intimation to NGOs leaders to cooperate with official agencies, bodies, etc.,
- **Regulations** - especially designed to help the NGOs in developing sound management discipline and eliminate restrictive laws and procedures.

- **Policy/programme implementation** – Besides government, there are a number of other agencies and actors, which play a substantive role in policies/programme implementation. NGOs complimentary and supplemental role will certainly help ensuring effective implementation. These agencies could do it in a better way because of their informalism and proximity to the masses.
- **Support** - the government provides funds, projects and training opportunities to give special encouragement to NGOs activities without undermining NGOs autonomy and independence.
- **Coordination** – NGOs to be motivated and encouraged to reduce sectoral gaps and avoid religious or ethnic bias activities, which contradict government programmes. The training in the field of improving management skills, strategic planning and sharing experience within the organisation and with Government officials will certainly improve their efficiency and bridge the gap between Government and NGO.
- **Policy environment** - When legal restrictions are minimised, loose regulations and reporting open the door for unhealthy and corrupt NGO activities. Hence, there is a need to enforce the accountability of the NGOs at three levels – (i) members (ii) government, and (iii) Society, for effective functioning.

15.6 ACTIVITY

- 1) Prepare a list of NGOs working in your area and analyse their activities.
- 2) What specific remedies would you suggest for evolving a desirable pattern of inter-relationship between the NGOs and government organisations for better developmental work in your area?
- 3) In your country, what kinds of skills and support are needed to strengthen the role of NGOs in development planning? Illustrate with suitable examples.

15.7 CONCLUSION

NGOs have a vital and decisive role to play in bringing about planned socio-economic development in the South Asian countries, along with other public and private partners. In the context of New Economic Policy of Liberalisation, they have to perform certain specific functions like abolishing inequalities, ensuring distributive justice and judging every issue in terms of human rights. NGOs have been trying to sensitise, organise and mobilise people at village, local (community), national and international levels. They have been quite successful in bringing attention of the government to the issues of development like equity, participation, gender, sustainability, empowerment, illiteracy, poverty, unemployment and health. It is suggested that the government should appreciate the role of NGOs in providing: better delivery facilities; information; cost effectiveness; field testing facilities for new technologies; and training inputs. The Governments in South Asian Countries should accommodate and accept the NGOs as legitimate and dynamic institutions of the civil society, and in turn solicit their help and cooperation in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating plans and programmes. The NGOs should rise above the feelings of losing their autonomy and independence, of being susceptible to bureaucratic control, of being greedy for achievement and indulging in corruption. Their confidence in the government, cooperation and joint efforts with personnel will strengthen the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the nation and promote socio-economic development.

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