

SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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WHAT IS AN NGO? WHAT ROLE DOES IT PLAY IN CIVIL SOCIETY?

Non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, were first called such in Article 71 in the Charter of the newly formed United Nations in 1945. While NGOs have no fixed or formal definition, they are generally defined as nonprofit entities independent of governmental influence (although they may receive government funding). As one can tell from the basic definition above, the difference between nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and NGOs is slim. However, the term "NGO" is not typically applied to U.S.-based nonprofit organizations. Generally, the NGO label is given to organizations operating on an international level although some countries classify their own civil society groups as NGOs. NGO activities include, but are not limited to, environmental, social, advocacy and human rights work. They can work to promote social or political change on a broad scale or very locally. NGOs play a critical part in developing society, improving communities, and promoting citizen participation. Non-governmental organizations (also known as NGOs, or non-government organizations) are organizations that are independent of any government. They are usually non-profit. Many of them are active in humanitarian or social areas. However, NGOs can also be lobby groups for corporations, such as the World Economic Forum. NGOs are a subgroup of all organizations founded by citizens, which include clubs and other associations that provide services, benefits, and premises only to members[dubious – discuss]. Sometimes the term is used as a synonym of "civil society organization" to refer to any association founded by citizens,[12] but this is not how the term is normally used in the media or everyday language, as recorded by major dictionaries. The explanation of the term by NGO.org (the non-governmental organizations associated with the United Nations) is ambivalent: "[an NGO is] any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level," but then goes on to restrict the meaning in the sense used by most English speakers and the media: "Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information."] NGOs are usually funded by donations, but some avoid formal funding altogether and are run primarily by volunteers. NGOs are highly diverse groups of organizations engaged in a wide range of activities, and take different forms in different parts of the world. Some may have charitable status, while others may be registered for tax exemption based on recognition of social purposes. Others may be fronts for political, religious, or other interests. Since the end of World War II, NGOs have had an increasing role in international development, particularly in the fields of humanitarian assistance and poverty alleviation. Russia had about 277,000 NGOs in 2008.[16] India is estimated to have had around 2 million NGOs in 2009, just over one NGO per 600 Indians, and many times the number of primary schools and primary health centers in India. The term "NGO" is not always used consistently. In some countries, the term NGO is applied to an organization that in another country would be called an

NPO (a non-profit organization), and vice versa. Political parties and trade unions are considered NGOs only in some countries. There are many different classifications of NGOs in use. The most common focus is on "orientation" and "level of operation". An NGO's orientation refers to the type of activities it takes on. These activities might include human rights, environmental, improving health, or development work. An NGO's level of operation indicates the scale at which an organization works, such as local, regional, national, or international. The term "non-governmental organization" was first coined in 1945, when the United Nations (UN) was created. The UN, itself an intergovernmental organization, made it possible for certain approved specialized international non-state agencies — i.e., non-governmental organizations — to be awarded observer status at its assemblies and some of its meetings. Later, the term became used more widely. Today, according to the UN, any kind of private organization that is independent of government control can be termed an "NGO", provided it is not-for-profit, but not simply an opposition political party. Public surveys reveal that NGOs often enjoy a high degree of public trust, which can make them a useful — but not always sufficient — proxy for the concerns of society and stakeholders.

Roles of NGOs

Among the wide variety of roles that NGOs play, the following six can be identified as important, at the risk of generalization:

Development and Operation of Infrastructure:

Community-based organizations and cooperatives can acquire, subdivide and develop land, construct housing, provide infrastructure and operate and maintain infrastructure such as wells or public toilets and solid waste collection services. They can also develop building material supply centres and other community-based economic enterprises. In many cases, they will need technical assistance or advice from governmental agencies or higher-level NGOs.

Supporting Innovation, Demonstration and Pilot Projects:

NGOs have the advantage of selecting particular places for innovative projects and specify in advance the length of time which they will be supporting the project - overcoming some of the shortcomings that governments face in this respect. NGOs can also be pilots for larger government projects by virtue of their ability to act more quickly than the government bureaucracy.

FACILITATING COMMUNICATION:

NGOs use interpersonal methods of communication, and study the right entry points whereby they gain the trust of the community they seek to benefit. They would also have a good idea of the feasibility of the projects they take up. The significance of this role to the government is that NGOs can communicate to the policy-making levels of government, information about the lives, capabilities, attitudes and cultural characteristics of people at the local level.

NGOs can facilitate communication upward from people to the government and downward from the government to the people. Communication upward involves informing government about what local people are thinking, doing and feeling while communication downward involves informing local people about what the government is planning and doing. NGOs are also in a unique position to share information horizontally, networking between other organizations doing similar work.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING:

Training institutions and NGOs can develop a technical assistance and training capacity and use this to assist both CBOs and governments.

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation:

Innovative activities need to be carefully documented and shared - effective participatory monitoring would permit the sharing of results with the people themselves as well as with the project staff.

Advocacy for and with the Poor:

In some cases, NGOs become spokespersons or ombudsmen for the poor and attempt to influence government policies and programmes on their behalf. This may be done through a variety of means ranging from demonstration and pilot projects to participation in public forums and the formulation of government policy and plans, to publicizing research results and case studies of the poor. Thus NGOs play roles from advocates for the poor to implementers of government programmes; from agitators and critics to partners and advisors; from sponsors of pilot projects to mediators.

TYPES

NGO/GRO (governmental-related organizations) types can be understood by their orientation and their level of operation.

By orientation

Charitable orientation often involves a top-down effort with little participation or input by beneficiaries. It includes NGOs with activities directed toward meeting the needs of the disadvantaged people/groups. Service orientation includes NGOs with activities such as the provision of health, the family planning, or the education services. In these activities, the programme is held by the NGOs, and the people are expected to participate in it and to receive the service. Participatory orientation is characterized by self-help projects where local people are involved particularly in the implementation of a project by contributing cash, tools, land, materials, labor, etc. In the classical community development project, participation begins with the definition of need and continues to the planning and the implementation stages. Empowering orientation aims to help poor people develop a clearer understanding of the social, political and economic factors affecting their lives, and to strengthen their awareness of their own potential power to control their lives. There is maximum involvement of the beneficiaries with NGOs acting as facilitators.

By level of operation

Community-based organizations (CBOs) arise out of people's own initiatives. They can be responsible for raising the consciousness of the urban poor, helping them understand their rights in accessing required services and providing such services.

City-wide organizations include organizations such as chambers of commerce and industry, coalitions of business, ethnic or educational groups, and associations of community organizations. State NGOs include state-level organizations, associations and groups. Some state NGOs also work under the guidance of National and International NGOs. National NGOs include national organizations such as the YMCAs/YWCAs, professional associations and similar groups. Some have state and city branches and assist local NGOs. International NGOs range from secular agencies such as Save the Children, to religiously motivated groups. They can be responsible for funding local NGOs, institutions and projects and implementing projects. Apart from "NGO", there are alternative or overlapping terms in use, including: third-sector organization (TSO), non-profit organization (NPO), voluntary organization (VO), civil society organization (CSO), grassroots organization (GO), social movement organization (SMO), private voluntary organization (PVO), self-help organization (SHO) and non-state actors (NSAs). In Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian and other Romance languages, the 'mirrored' abbreviation "ONG" is in use, which has the same meaning as "NGO" (for example Organisation non-nongovernmental in French, Organização Não Governmental in Portuguese, Organization no governmental in Spanish, or Organization non governativa in Italian). Governmental-related organizations / non-governmental organizations are a heterogeneous group. As a result, a long list of additional acronyms has developed, including: BINGO: 'Business-friendly international NGO' or 'Big international NGO' SBO: 'Social Benefit Organization,' a positive, goal-oriented designation as a substitute for the negative, "Non-" designations TANGO: 'Technical assistance NGO' TSO: 'third-sector organization' GONGO: 'government-organized non-governmental organization' or 'government-operated NGOs' (set up by governments to look like NGOs in order to qualify for outside aid or promote the interests of government) DONGO: 'Donor-

organized NGO'INGO: 'International NGO' QUANGO: 'quasi-autonomous NGO,' or QUANGO refers to NGOs set up and funded by the government. The term is particularly prevalent within the UK (where there are more than 1,200 of them), the Republic of Ireland, and the Commonwealth. National NGO: A non-governmental organization that exists only in one country. This term is rare due to the globalization of non-governmental organizations, which causes an NGO to exist in more than one country. CSO: 'Civil Society Organization' ENGO: 'Environmental NGO,' such as Greenpeace and WWF NNGO: 'Northern NGO' PANGO: 'Party NGO,' set up by parties and disguised as NGOs to serve their political matters. SNGO: 'Southern NGO' SCO: 'Social change organization' TNGO: 'Transnational NGO.' The term emerged during the 1970s due to the increase of environmental and economic issues in the global community. TNGO includes non-governmental organizations that are not confined to only one country but exist in two or more countries. GSO: Grassroots Support Organization MANGO: 'Market advocacy NGO' NGDO: 'Non-governmental development organization' PVDO: 'Private voluntary development organisation' USAID refers to NGOs as private voluntary organizations. However, many scholars have argued that this definition is highly problematic as many NGOs are in fact state- or corporate-funded and -managed projects and have professional staff. GRO/NGOs exist for a variety of reasons, usually to further the political or social goals of their members or founders. 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.

TRACK II DIPLOMACY

Track II dialogue, or Track II diplomacy, is transnational coordination that involves non-official members of the government including epistemic communities as well as former policy-makers or analysts. Track II diplomacy aims to get policymakers and policy analysts to come to a common solution through discussions by unofficial means. Unlike the Track, I diplomacy where government officials, diplomats, and elected leaders gather to talk about certain issues, Track II diplomacy consists of experts, scientists, professors and other figures that are not involved in government affairs. The members of Track II diplomacy can have more freedom to exchange ideas and come up with compromises on their own.

ACTIVITIES

There are numerous classifications of NGOs. The typology the World Bank uses divides them into Operational and Advocacy. Generally, NGOs act as implementers, catalysts, and partners. Firstly, NGOs act as implementers, because they mobilize resources in order to provide goods and services to people who are suffering, due to a man-made disaster or a natural disaster. Secondly, NGOs act as catalysts that drive change. They have the ability to "inspire, facilitate, or contribute to improved thinking and action to promote change"[citation needed]. Lastly, NGOs often act as partners alongside other organizations in order to tackle problems and address human needs more effectively. 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, may 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[citation needed] violations and provides legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses. Others, such as the Afghanistan Information Management Services, provide specialized technical products and services to support development activities implemented on the ground by other organizations.

OPERATIONAL

Operational NGOs seek to "achieve small-scale change directly through projects". They mobilize financial resources, materials, and volunteers to create localized programs. They hold large-scale fundraising events and may apply to governments and organizations for grants or contracts to raise money for projects. They often operate in a hierarchical structure; the main headquarters being staffed by professionals who plan projects, create budgets, keep accounts, and report and communicate with operational fieldworkers who work directly on projects. Operational NGOs deal with a wide range of issues but are most often associated with the delivery of services or environmental issues, emergency relief, and public welfare. Operational NGOs can be further categorized by the division into relief-oriented versus development-oriented organizations; according to whether they stress service delivery or participation; whether they are religious or secular; and whether they are more public- or private-oriented. Although operational NGOs can be community-based, many are national or international. The defining activity of operational NGOs is the implementation of projects.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning NGOs seek to "achieve large-scale change promoted indirectly through influence of the political system". Campaigning NGOs need an efficient and effective group of professional members who are able to keep supporters informed, and motivated. They must plan and host demonstrations and events that will keep their cause in the media. They must maintain a large informed network of supporters who can be mobilized for events to garner media attention and influence policy changes. The defining activity of campaigning NGOs is holding demonstrations. Campaigning NGOs often deal with issues relating to human rights, women's rights, and children's rights. 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 event.

Both operational and campaigning

It is not uncommon for NGOs to make use of both activities. Many times, operational NGOs will use campaigning techniques if they continually face the same issues in the field that could be remedied through policy changes. At the same time, Campaigning NGOs, like human rights organizations often have programs that assist the individual victims they are trying to help through their advocacy work.

Public relations

Non-governmental organizations 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 Organizations.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

There is an increasing awareness that management techniques are crucial to project success in non-governmental organizations. Generally, private non-governmental organizations 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.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

STAFFING

Some NGOs are highly professionalized and rely mainly on paid staff. Others are based around voluntary labor and are less formalized. Not all people working for non-governmental organizations are volunteers. Many NGOs are associated with the use of international staff working in developing countries, but there are many NGOs around the world that rely on local employees or volunteers. There is some dispute as to whether expatriates should be sent to developing countries.[citation needed] 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 of these employees or volunteers may be counterbalanced by a number of factors: the cost of foreigners is typically higher, they have no grass-root connections in the country they are sent to, and local expertise is often undervalued. The NGO sector is an essential employer in terms of numbers.[citation needed] 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.

FUNDING

Major sources of NGO funding include membership dues, the sale of goods and services, grants from international institutions or national governments, and private donations. Many NGOs depend heavily on governments for their funding, even though the term "non-governmental organization" implies independence from governments. 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 United States collected US\$55 million worth of goods in 1998 from the American government. Several EU-grants provide funds accessible to NGOs. Government funding of NGOs is controversial since, according to David Reef, writing in *The New Republic*, "the whole point of humanitarian intervention was precise 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." Some NGOs, such as Greenpeace do not accept funding from governments or intergovernmental organizations. Some NGOs require sizeable funds to operate. For instance, the budget of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) was over US\$540 million in 1999. Funding large budgets demands significant fundraising efforts on the part of most NGOs.

OVERHEAD COSTS

Overhead is the amount of money that is spent on running an NGO rather than on projects. This includes office expenses, salaries, banking and bookkeeping costs. What percentage of overall budget is spent on overhead is often used to judge an NGO with less than 4% being viewed as good. The World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations states that ideally more than 86% should be spent on programs (less than 20% on overhead). The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has specific guidelines on how high overhead can be to receive funding based on how the money is to be spent with overhead often needing to be less than 5–7%[38], while the World Bank typically allows 37%. A high percentage of overhead to total expenditures can make it more difficult to generate funds.] High overhead costs may also generate criticism with some claiming the certain NGOs with high overhead are being run simply to benefit the people working for them. While overhead costs can be a legitimate concern, a sole focus on them can be counterproductive. Research published by the Urban Institute and the Center for Social Innovation at Stanford University have shown how rating agencies create incentives for non-profits to lower and hide overhead costs, which may actually reduce organizational effectiveness by starving organizations of the infrastructure they need to effectively deliver services. A

more meaningful rating system would provide, in addition to financial data, a qualitative evaluation of an organization's transparency and governance:

(1) an assessment of program effectiveness; (2) and an evaluation of feedback mechanisms designed for donors and beneficiaries; and (3) such a rating system would also allow rated organizations to respond to an evaluation done by a rating agency. More generally, the popular discourse of non-profit evaluation should move away from financial notions of organizational effectiveness and toward a more substantial understanding of programmatic impact.

MONITORING AND CONTROL

In the March 2000 report on United Nations Reform priorities, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan wrote in favor of international humanitarian intervention, arguing that the international community has a "right to protect" citizens of the world against ethnic cleansing, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Following that report, the Canadian government launched the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) 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 in Haiti. Years after R2P, the World Federalist Movement, an organization that 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. Greater collaboration between corporations and NGOs creates inherent risks of co-optation for the weaker partner, typically the non-profit involved. In December 2007, The United States Department of Defense Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) S. Ward Cass cells established an International Health Division under Force Health Protection & Readiness. Part of International Health's mission is to communicate with NGOs in areas of mutual interest. Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, in 2005, requires Dodd to regard stability-enhancing activities as a mission of importance equal to combat. In compliance with international law, Dodd 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 the neutrality of health as an essential service. International Health cultivates collaborative relationships with NGOs, albeit at arm's length, recognizing their traditional independence, expertise, and honest broker status. While the goals of DoD and NGOs may seem incongruent, the DoD's emphasis on stability and security to reduce and prevent conflict suggests, on careful analysis, important mutual interests.

HISTORY

International non-governmental organizations have a history dating back to at least the late 18th century. It has been estimated that by 1914, there were 1083 NGOs. International NGOs were important in the anti-slavery movement and the movement for women's suffrage and reached a peak at the time of the World Disarmament Conference. However, the phrase "non-governmental organization" only came into popular use with the establishment of the United Nations Organization in 1945 with provisions in Article 71 of Chapter 10 of the United Nations Charter for a consultative role for

organizations which are neither governments nor member states—see Consultative Status . The definition of "international NGO" (INGO) is first given in resolution 288 (X) of ECOSOC on February 27, 1950: it is defined as "any international organization that is not founded by an international treaty". The vital role of NGOs and other "major groups" in sustainable development was recognized in Chapter 27 of Agenda 21, leading to intense arrangements for a consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. It has been observed that the number of INGOs founded or dissolved matches the general "state of the world", rising in periods of growth and declining in periods of crisis. The rapid development of the non-governmental sector occurred in western countries as a result of the processes of restructuring of the welfare state. Further globalization of that process occurred after the fall of the communist system and was an important part of the Washington consensus. Globalization during the 20th century gave rise to the importance of NGOs. Many problems could not be solved within a nation. International treaties and international organizations such as the World Trade Organization were centre mainly on the interests of capitalist enterprises. In an attempt to counterbalance this trend, NGOs have developed to emphasize humanitarian issues, developmental aid, and sustainable development. A prominent example of this is the World Social Forum, which is a rival convention to the World Economic Forum held annually in January in Davos, Switzerland. The fifth World Social Forum in Porto Allegre, Brazil, in January 2005 was attended by representatives from more than 1,000 NGOs. In terms of environmental issues and sustainable development, the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 was the first to show the power of international NGOs, when about 2,400 representatives of NGOs came to play a central role in deliberations. Some have argued that in forums like these, NGOs take the place of what should belong to the popular movements of the poor. Whatever the case, NGO transnational networking is now extensive.

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 non-profit laws

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.

Influence of NGOs upon world affairs

Service-delivery NGOs provide public goods and services that governments from developing countries are unable to provide to society, due to lack of resources. Service-delivery NGOs can serve as contractors or collaborate with democratized government agencies to reduce the cost associated with public goods. Capacity-building NGOs influence global affairs differently, in the sense that the incorporation of accountability measures in Southern NGOs affect "culture, structure, projects and daily operations". Advocacy and public education NGOs affects global affairs in its ability to modify behavior through the use of ideas. Communication is the weapon of choice used by advocacy and public-education NGOs in order to change people's actions and behaviors. They strategically construct messages to not only shape behavior, but also socially mobilize communities in promoting social, political, or environmental changes. Movement NGOs mobilize the public and coordinate large-scale collective activities to significantly push forward the activism agenda. In the post-Cold War era, more NGOs based in developed countries have pursued international outreach and became involved in local and national level social resistance and become relevant to domestic policy change in the developing world.[66] In for the cases where national governments are highly sensitive to external influences via

non-state actors, specialized NGOs have been able to find the right partners (e.g., China), building up solid working networks, locating a policy niche and facilitating domestic changes.

International Day

World NGO Day

World NGO Day is observed annually on 27 February. It was officially recognised and declared on 17 April 2010 by 12 countries of the IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum to the 8th Summit of the Baltic Sea States in Vilnius, Lithuania. The World NGO Day was internationally marked and recognised on 28 February 2014 in Helsinki, Finland by Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Former Prime Minister of New Zealand who congratulated with the World NGO Day and highlighted the importance of NGO sector for the UN through her speech.

NGOs and Development: History and Role in India

NGOs are voluntary organizations (VOs). These are popularly known as NGOs because they are free from governmental control in their functioning. They are democratic and open to all those wishing to become member of the organization voluntarily and serve the society. Therefore, they have assumed a significant space in civil society, which is fast emerging today due to the weakening of the state. NGO is a popular term, which has gained currency at global level and commands respect in society due to its welfare services in society. The organization does not seek financial assistance from the government but it operates, at least theoretically, on its own principles and programmes (Punalekar, 2004). VOs are, in principle, open to voluntary membership. Any one may become member by choice and resign from the organization at one's own will. However, Edwin Mashie writes that "it is wrong to label such organizations as free-for-all in that anyone who seeks admission gets it on demand. On the contrary, these organizations have their own rule of eligibility for admission and only those who meet these eligibility norms are accepted as members, albeit with the approval of the existing members. In that sense, these organizations are voluntary in relative terms only" (Masihi, 2004).

History of NGOs in India:

NGOs have a long history in India. In the past, people in this country have been found to have provided help to others in trouble. Since centuries there exists the tradition of voluntary service to the needy and helpless in the country. In the beginning, these services were rendered by people motivated by their religious feelings. They believed that service to people would be the service to God and, therefore, would be a means to attain spiritual salvation and sometimes to atonement for any sinful act. Spirit of charity and altruism guided the voluntary action in the past, which had found expression in diverse forms even outside the formal established religious channels (Punalekar, 2004: 33). Many people including rulers have trod the path of service to their fellow beings and adopted it as their life mission (ibid.). Floods, fires, earthquakes, epidemic outbreaks and other kinds of calamities were the occasions which motivated people to voluntary help those who were trapped in disastrous situations. Community life was very strong and people were guided by the 'we' feeling and selflessness in extending their individual support. The help and support used to be individual, spontaneous and transitory. It is around the late 18th and early 19th century that associations and organizations were being formed to render such activities in a more organized and permanent profile (ibid.). The reform movements of the 19th century were perhaps the first organized forms of voluntary action in the service of society. This was the period when the caste rigidities were strong, untouchability was in practice, and other social evils like child marriage, cursed status of widow's were prevalent in the Indian society against which voluntary organizations came forward to launch reform movements. These organizations were liberal and cut across caste and creed lines and worked purely as a liberal and secular body. "In the early years of 20th century, the religious fervor gave way to more rationalist principles. The birth of the Servants of India Society laid the foundation of secular voluntary action in India" (ibid.). Gandhi was immensely concerned with the problems and evils the people were beset with. He, along with his war against the British rule,

wanted to eliminate the social evils and awaken the people of India to come out of the closed shell of the evil traditions like untouchability, caste segregation, and subservience to the landholding castes and general backwardness.

In order to achieve these goals, several VOs were formed under the influence of the ideals of Gandhiji. A few of them are Sewa, Eklavya, Disha etc., which were instituted in Gujarat and some others might have been formed in other states also. A significant growth of NGOs started after India achieved independence. Democracy was established and people had started understanding the meaning of freedom of speech, the charm of equality and the value of humanity and brotherhood. Also, on the other hand, the government started planning for development and in this effort, launched inter alia the schemes of Community Development Programme and later on the Green Revolution. Over one million NGOs are pursuing their economically gainful activities. The achievements of the schemes were assessed were found to be unsuccessful in providing for the minimum necessary requirements and reducing the gap between the rich and the poor in rural areas, instead rather increasing it. With independence also accelerated the processes of industrialization, urbanization, expansion of education, politicization and democratization and modernization. These processes awakened people to be sensitive to the existing inequalities like economic inequalities (landed inequality in particular), gender inequality, inhuman kind of social segregations like caste inequalities and untouchability, other social evils like child marriage, child labour, restriction on widow marriage and many other stigmas and taboos. Industrialization and urbanization led to the emergence of the problems of rural-urban migration causing imbalance in the rural division of labour, over-urbanization of many cities with the expansion of slum and pavement dwellers, urban unemployment, pollution and depletion of natural resources. Consumerism and over-consumption are yet other serious problems of the present nature of development. Most of the cities of the world in general, and those of the less developed countries in particular, have the grievous problem of garbage disposal. Thus, there are hundreds of problems which have emerged and sensitized the citizens to organize themselves to work for their solution either by their own personal contribution or by pressurizing the government to solve the problem. Thousands of NGOs have thus emerged in India making significant contributions to the processes of development of society. "These NGOs believe in the tasks of mobilizing and conscientization of the masses or their specific target groups – be they women, children, agricultural laborers, construction workers or the social castaways like widows, devdasis or under trial prisoners. They believe sincerely in educating the people and preparing them for ongoing struggle. They believe in social awakening including legal literacy and confidence-building" (Punalekar, 2004: 41). NGOs have gained importance now and are increasing in number very fast. Enhancement of their importance is the result of weakening of the role of state in upholding the welfare and well-being of its citizens and consequent development of the assertive role of civil society to ascertain social welfare and integration. More than half a million voluntary organizations would perhaps be working in the country.

ROLE OF NGOS IN DEVELOPMENT:

NGOs have immense role in bringing about social change and development and it is being experienced from different parts of the country. Development, as we have read earlier, is a multi-faceted process, which essentially involves the aggressive participation of the people that would not be possible unless they are educated, awakened and motivated. NGOs are taking up this job sportingly and successfully.

The areas in which we witness active and appreciative role of NGOs are as follows:

1. The NGOs are active to promote education, particularly among that section of population, which has remained un-benefited or less benefited by the measures adopted by the government. The education of girls, and other deprived people, particularly the SCs and STs, has been their target objective.

2. Women are the other vulnerable section of society. Gender discrimination is a ubiquitous cultural reality. Girls are discriminated in the upbringing pattern in the family. Larger numbers of the undernourished are from amongst the girls. Retention of girls in schools is much less as compared to boys. Women are forced to work as housewife and denied participation in gainful economic activities outside homes. About three-fourths of the work done by women is un-monetized.

3. Since the second half of the preceding century started the change in the status of women with their active participation in political, social and economic activities, which gained acceleration since the last quarter of the preceding century. More and more women started moving out of the four walls of their houses and involving themselves actively in the social sphere outside their homes. Important in this process has been the role of academicians and NGOs. The book Women's Role in Economic Development by Ester Boserup (1970) is the pioneering work in this direction. After a gap of few years, by 1978, a large number of works were published, particularly on the status of women in the Third World – where their position has been more vulnerable. The role of women voluntary organizations towards this cause has been marvelous. Sewa, Sathin, Eklavya, Disha, Environmental Action Group and Agrani Foundation etc. are some of the thousands of NGOs known for their role in development by creating awareness among people and interventions, if required.

4. The approach to development has been almost uniform world over at least in terms of the use of technology, magnitude of production, pattern of consumption and achievement of wealth. Both state and people were unaware or lackadaisical about the backwash of the nature of development pursued. The threat to the human life developed due to environmental pollution and imbalance and the depletion of natural resources as a consequence of the nature of development. Here, the role of NGOs is really noticeable and praiseworthy. Thousands of voluntary organizations are at work to awaken people and governments against environmental degradation and depletion of resources.

5. It is not that the development process has unleashed only environmental threats to the human existence but also many people are displaced due to developmental projects and are quite often not properly compensated and rehabilitated. The NGOs have a major role to play towards the cause of people's resettlement and are also performing commendable job in this direction. The projects like the construction of dams, road highways and railways have often made some sections of people, particularly in rural areas, vulnerable and are displaced without being properly compensated. 6. NGOs are also rendering great service in restoring dignity to the deprived and discriminated sections of the people in the society like women suffering from gender discrimination, lower caste people suffering from caste segregation and the status of untouchable, racial and religious discriminations. Voluntary organizations, working at both national and international levels, have earned praise for their services in societal development. These organizations are busy in creating awareness and zeal for participation in development projects. Ensuring humanism by fighting against human rights violations, social exclusions, domestic violence and others have been common objectives of the NGOs. Of late, these organizations are also entering the sector of economic well-being and standard of living. In the state of Uttar Pradesh, Agrani Foundation's Jan Suraksha Kranti (JSK) scheme of savings and life insurance is indeed a commendable effort in this direction.

What is an NGO :-

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) is a legally established organization, which works independently from any government.

NGOs work for the good causes like eradicating poverty, providing education etc. They are Non Profit Organizations, that means they do not get profits out of their organizations.

Govt gives grants worth crores to Non-Governmental Organizations. They receive funds from people and from foreign countries too.

Positive Side :-

A lot of NGOs are working on the areas where government is not doing much. For example Goonj NGO is providing clothes and other basic amenities to millions of poor. Many such kind of organizations are giving quality education to street children, providing water facility in the remotest areas along with many other good causes. With the help of these organizations, development programs can happen faster and efficiently. And this will help the government a lot. In many cases, government is working with NGOs to solve local problems.

Negative Side :-

Though India has more than 30 lakh NGOs as of 2017, only approx. 3 lakh organizations are submitting the financial accounts. Govt. funds to NGOs are not accounted and audited. This is resulting in misuse of funds and fake Non-Governmental Organizations. If NGOs really working well, all the social challenges in India would have eliminated by now. Forget eliminating problems, there is no satisfactory development in India according to HDI (Human Development Index) report.

FACTS :-

Supreme court ordered Central Government to audit Non-Governmental Organizations and to terminate the licenses of organizations that are not submitting their financial accounts. India has vast no. of NGO compared to other countries.

The no. of NGOs increased in the time of 1960s as people felt that the government projects are not contributing in developing of deprived sections of India. International NGOs started around the year 1839. After the establishment of 'United Nations Organization' in the year 1945, the phrase 'Non Government Organizations' became popular.

CONCLUSION :-

NGOs are a boon to any developing country, but only if they are audited and supervised by Govt. If government takes steps on fake organizations, genuine organizations will get sufficient funds, thereby can help in the development of India.

CRITICISMS

Issa G. Shivji is one of Africa's leading experts on law and development issues as an author and academic. His criticism on NGOs is found in two essays: "Silences in NGO discourse: The role and future of NGOs in Africa" and "Reflections on NGOs in Tanzania: What we are, what we are not and what we ought to be". Shivji argues that despite the good intentions of NGO leaders and activists, he is critical of the "objective effects of actions, regardless of their intentions". Shivji argues also that the sudden rise of NGOs is part of a neoliberal paradigm, rather than pure altruistic motivations. He is critical of the current manifestations of NGOs wanting to change the world without understanding it, and that the imperial relationship continues today with the rise of NGOs. James Pfeiffer, in his case study of NGO involvement in Mozambique, speaks to the negative effects that NGOs have had on areas of health within the country. He argues that over the last decade, NGOs in Mozambique have "fragmented the local health system, undermined local control of health programs, and contributed to growing local social inequality". He notes further that NGOs can be uncoordinated, creating parallel projects among different organizations, that pull health service workers away from their routine duties in order to serve the interests of the NGOs. This ultimately undermines local primary health care efforts and takes away the governments' ability to maintain agency over their own health sector. Pfeiffer suggested a new model of collaboration between the NGO and the DPS (the Mozambique Provincial Health Directorate). He mentioned the NGO should be 'formally held to standard and adherence within the host country', for example, reduce 'showcase' projects and parallel programs that prove to be unsustainable. Jessica Mathews wrote in Foreign Affairs in 1997: "For all their strengths, NGOs are special interests. The best

of them ... often suffer from tunnel vision, judging every public act by how it affects their particular interest". Since NGOs do not have to worry about policy trade-offs, the overall impact of their cause might bring more harm to society. Vijay Prasad argues that from the 1970s "The World Bank, under Robert McNamara, championed the NGO as an alternative to the state, leaving intact global and regional relations of power and production." Others argue that NGOs are often imperialist in nature, that they sometimes operate in a racialized manner in third world countries, and that they fulfill a similar function to that of the clergy during the high colonial era. The philosopher Peter Hallward argues that they are an aristocratic form of politics. He also points to the fact that NGOs like Action Aid and Christian Aid "effectively condoned the [2004 US backed] coup" against an elected government in Haiti and argues that they are the "humanitarian face of imperialism". Popular movements in the global South such as the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign in South Africa have sometimes refused to work with NGOs arguing that this will compromise their autonomy. It has also been argued that NGOs often disempower people by allowing funders to push for stability over social justice. Another criticism of NGOs is that they are being designed and used as extensions of the normal foreign-policy instruments of certain Western countries and groups of countries. Russian President Vladimir Putin made this accusation at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy in 2007, concluding that these NGOs "are formally independent but they are purposefully financed and therefore under control". Also, Michael Bond wrote "Most large NGOs, such as Oxfam, the Red Cross, Cafod and Action Aid, are striving to make their aid provision more sustainable. But some, mostly in the US, are still exporting the ideologies of their backers." NGOs have also been accused of using white lies or misinformed advice to enact their campaigns, i.e., accusations that NGOs have been ignorant about critical issues because, as chief scientist at Greenpeace Doug Parr said, these organizations appear to have lost their efforts in being truly scientific and now seem to be more self-interested. Rather than operating through science to be rationally and effectively practical, NGOs have been accused of abusing the utilization of science to gain their own advantages. In the beginning, as Parr indicated, there was "a tendency among our critics to say that science is the only decision-making tool ... but political and commercial interests are using science as a cover for getting their way." At the same time, NGOs can appear to not be cooperative with other groups, according to the previous policy-maker for the German branch of Friends of the Earth, Jens Katjek. "If NGOs want the best for the environment", he says, "they have to learn to compromise." NGOs have also been questioned as being "too much of a good thing". Eric Worker and Faisal Ahmed bring up three potential critiques of the role of NGOs in developing nations: too many NGOs in a nation—particularly one ruled by a warlord—reduces the NGO's ability to establish a credible threat of removing humanitarian assistance since they can easily be replaced by another NGO; the frequent process of resource allocation and outsourcing to local organizations in international development projects results in high expenses for NGOs and rings into question how much of the resources and money actually goes to the intended beneficiaries at the end of the allocation process; and finally, NGO missions tend to be too paternalistic and expensive, though Worker and Ahmed propose that vouchers are a good way to overcome this obstacle.

CHALLENGES TO LEGITIMACY

The issue of the legitimacy of NGOs raises a series of important questions. Legitimacy is one of the most important assets possessed by an NGO and is gained due to them being perceived as an "independent voice". Their representation also emerges as an important question. Who bestows responsibilities to NGOs or INGOs and how do they gain the representation of citizens and civil society is still not scrutinized thoroughly. For instance, in the article, it is stated, "To put the point starkly: are the citizens of countries of the South and their needs represented in global civil society, or are citizens as well as their needs constructed by practices of representation? And when we realize that INGOs hardly ever

come face to face with the people whose interests and problems they represent, or that they are not accountable to the people they represent, matters become even more troublesome."

The origin of funding can have serious implications for the legitimacy of NGOs. NGOs have increased their numbers and range of activities to a level where they have become increasingly dependent on a limited number of donors. Consequently, competition has increased for funding, as have the expectations of the donors, who may add conditions that threaten the independence of NGOs. An over-dependence on official aid may dilute "the willingness of NGOs to speak out on issues which are unpopular with governments". Some commentators have also argued that the changes in NGO funding sources have ultimately altered their functions. NGOs have also been challenged on the grounds that they do not necessarily represent the needs of the developing world, through diminishing the so-called "Southern Voice". Some postulate that the North–South divide exists in the arena of NGOs. They question the equality of the relationships between Northern and Southern parts of the same NGOs as well as the relationships between Southern and Northern NGOs working in partnerships. This suggests a division of labor may develop, with the North taking the lead in advocacy and resource mobilization whilst the South engages in service delivery in the developing world. The potential implications of this may mean the needs of the developing world are not addressed appropriately as Northern NGOs do not properly consult or participate in partnerships, such that they assign unrepresentative priorities. NGOs are also said to damage the public sector in target countries, e.g. accusations that NGO mismanagement has resulted in the breakdown of public health care systems. Instead of promoting equity and alleviating poverty, NGOs have been under scrutiny for contributing to socioeconomic inequality and disempowering services in the public sector of third world countries. The scale and variety of activities in which NGOs participate have grown rapidly since 1980, particularly since 1990.[100] This has presented NGOs with a need to balance the pressures of centralization and decentralization. By centralizing NGOs, particularly those that operate at an international level, they can assign a common theme or set of goals. Conversely, it may also be advantageous to decentralize to increase the chances of an NGO responding more flexibly and effectively to localized issues by implementing projects, which are modest in scale, easily monitored, produce immediate benefits, and where all involved know that corruption will be punished.