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CAPACITY BUILDING OF NGOS FOR
EFFICACY IN PANDEMIC : A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

There are roughly 3.7 million NGOs worldwide with an estimated 2 million of them in India who have addressed a wide range of concerns and issues prevailing in society and have played very important role in providing aid to distressed and needy. The present paper aims to focus the need of strengthening their capacities to meet the challenges aroused in recent pandemic. After a brief review of previous research and the available literature including authentic data base, the researcher finds empowering NGOs as a pressing need with an insistent coverage especially in crisis like current situation. Further the proposed research work, thoroughly overviewed the constraining factors hampering the efficiency of NGOs. Among the various challenges NGOs face, limited capacity emerged as one of the major hurdles in entire operative system and ground laying structure of these organizations. Frail capacity, affects the overall performance of organizations, eventually, larger section of vulnerable society is deprived of batters and betterment of life. It becomes imperative to converse on strengthening strategies, enhancing their capabilities and making them stronger and serviceable in the present milieu.

Keywords : NGOs, Strengthen, Efficiency, Pandemic

Introduction

Overview

An organisation does not have direct Government affiliation is usually known as NGO, though the NGOs receive Government's financial aid to carry various welfare schemes as this is ultimately what every Government works for. Mostly, the NGOs are non profit organisations, involved in charitable work in human rights, environment issues, health care, and disaster relief operations and raise people's concern to the Government and extend helping hand to the vulnerable sections of society. Voluntary participation of enthusiasts is another imperative characteristic of these organisations, as these are groups of people, clubs and associations or unions and even lobby groups work at local, national or international spectrum. Political parties or even self styled terrorist organisations are also groups of people but their

operating system and working mechanism is different (Karns M P 2020) and cannot be labelled as welfare or charitable organisations. Empathy, compassion and humanitarian disposition are essential components to make any organisation a philanthropic one. The concept of 'doing good' to others does not limit itself to charity and non profit purposes only, as we find some NGOs like World Economic Forum aims to focus on industrial and economic improvement by engaging world leaders. Its mission to improving the state of the world by shaping global industrial policies, confer WEF as one of the largest organisations. The think tank are also non government, non profit organisations but their work may be conducted for governmental as well as commercial clients, though, "think and do" tanks work on raising funds for charity. Hence, instead of defining NGO as a 'term' as it restricts the inclusion of other purposes, it is

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advisable to envisage it as a 'concept' which allows us to understand different manifestations.

In brief the NGOs as concept can be summarised with following distinctive features :

- ❖ No direct affiliation with Government, though NGOs seek financial aid from it and little intervention is assumed.
- ❖ NGOs are mostly non profit organisations. Few profit making unions or associations also having the NGO status. They are not merely charitable organizations, but engage in socio-economic-cultural activities.
- ❖ NGOs are group of people working independently with specific mission aiming to orient desirable changes in a target group or areas of grave situation.
- ❖ It's commitment to the oppressed and under privileged, makes NGOs a useful proxy for the concerns of society and stakeholders.
- ❖ Empowerment of people and advocating public policy is the ultimate goal of NGOs.

Chronicles :

Having not a long historical background, NGOs

could be traced only after World War II, particularly, when there was a transient rush of helping the people to recover from the devastating trauma of war and its ill effects. The slaves, homeless people, small children, exploited women and elderly people were in dire need to seek shelter, food and basic survival facilities. Though, 130 international organisations were reported in 1910 under the **Union of International Associations**, the NGOs were identified with the UN formation since 1945. As the human rights started gaining momentum and protecting fundamental rights of every citizen irrespective of caste, religion, colour, creed and gender, NGOs started sprouting at International levels followed by national and local bodies also started working on various issues of human rights. Amnesty International, Red Cross Society, Oxfam International, CARE, Save the Children, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Green Peace are some organisations having very good repute. With the advent of technology and its impact on environment various organisations shifted the focus on global warming, ecosystem restoration and conservation of nature. What we find NGOs are working for, can be summarised in the following ways :

PLANET	Centre for Environment Research and Conservation, Green peace, Fauna and Flora International, Nature conservancy, Earth Justice, Global Footprint Network, World Wildlife Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council etc.
PEOPLE	Poverty alleviation and action against hunger, malnutrition, obesity, children and women in distress, refugees
PROPRIETY	Disaster Management, Relief operations, Education, Health, Advisory, Justice, Protection of Human Rights, Financial Aid
PARTNERSHI	United Nations, Governments, Private Funding Agencies, Corporate Lobbies, Charitable Trusts, Local Civic Bodies, Media,
PEACE	Interaction, Discussion, Exchange of Ideas, Consultation, Managing Resources and providing solutions to the people/problem,

Research Methodology

It is comprehensive literature search, which included research publications, newspaper articles, Government reports, Census data and various other sources. The paper offers a systematic, original perspective on recent developments in certain areas of the field of NGOs accountability. The work of review started quiet before as the researcher has been working on Food Wastage and the voluntary organizations working in this area, this specific review is done only for the purpose of the proposed International Conference. The keywords were denoting the extensive literature and available information on internet. Experts views, PPT presentations, Q&A sessions, database available on internet were thoroughly studied and made it useful for presenting the ideas. Projections were based on literature reviews.

The objectives were

- To assess the work done by NGOs with historical background in terms of its usefulness.
- To aggregate the constraints emerged out of research findings and to make this subsequent reading to gain new insights.
- To highlight the suggestive measures for building the capacity of NGOs and to channelize their best services for the various humanitarian causes.

Discussion

The COVID-19 virus has spread throughout the world, to date; there have been 5,206,614 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 337,736 deaths reported by WHO. No country could tackle this unprecedented pandemic at initial stages. The situation got worse after the abrupt lockdown when the students, employees, migrant labors got struck and could not move to their home. The magnitude of crisis is vast and even the medical professionals could not find a solution and different medicinal trials were done in haste. It is a total chaotic situation and we are left with no choice but to follow the safety precautions. History of global crisis has proved that no Government could overcome such situations on their own. In the never seen before crisis caused by Covid-19, involvement of voluntary organizations is very important than ever before. The

severity was immediately gauged across the world and with spontaneity, score of organizations wholeheartedly consecrated and extended whatever they could. When the finance ministry announced a relief package of Rs 1.7 lakh crore (£18bn) included food, grains and cooking gas, but there was no roadmap for how this aid would reach people, in such times. NGOs could have been a better facilitator. As thousands of workers and volunteers are feeding migrant laborers and maintaining community kitchens, as well as distributing masks and soap and protective equipment for frontline health workers.

An India Today Analysis established that in 13 states and UTs, NGOs are outperforming state governments in feeding people. It further reported that states like Kerala, which has been praised for its response to Covid-19, and Telangana, "all meals were exclusively provided by NGOs during the lockdown, while in states such as Gujarat, AP and Mizoram; NGOs provided 92.8%, 91.7% and 88.5% of all the meals, respectively". NITI Aayog, the government think-tank, in fact requested that more than 92,000 NGOs help the Government fight the Pandemic by establishing funds to strengthen national health capacities and providing financial support for groups in vulnerable situations. The statement, "Civil society-NGOs and common Indian are fully taking care of the hunger problem" (Gupta) would not be an exaggeration, where, everyday, we have been receiving stories of compassion and humane.

It is the time of social work (Palshikar Suhas 2020) as the political parties were never dirtier than they are today. Blame game and political strategies surpassed the issues of migrant labours which proved fatal as the focus was shifted from providing basic survival facilities to defend the government of their own interest. In this crusade, it was the poor and labours suffered a lot and only NGOs could reach to the people on streets and extended the required facilities where the Government machinery failed to do so. Thousands of volunteers, celebrities, professionals did not wait for any relief from the Government and contributed at their best.

Contribution of NGOs in Corona Crisis in India :

- ❖ With 92 partner NGOs, Goonj started work in 18 states. By 20 April, field teams had delivered

rations to 17,700 families, and 16,600kg of grains. They had also produced 42,800 face masks and 24,900 sanitary pads.

- ❖ Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram-Ekta Parishad is doing the same in 39 districts across 10 states.
- ❖ The American India Foundation (AIF) said it has tied up with the World Central Kitchen (WCK) for organising the meals. This collaboration is the latest as part of the AIF's COVID-19 Response through which it is serving more than 1,00,000 vulnerable people -- including migrant workers in India -- from the economic and social fallout.
- ❖ Charcha-2020 hosted nine plenary sessions and 16 parallel events to cover the broad range of topics and expressed on how the nonprofits have been able to leverage resources and network to minimise the risks and achieve the overall serving purpose.

- ❖ Zomato distributes 5 lakh ration kits among daily wagers affected by COVID-19
- ❖ Oxfam, so far it has reached out to **40,50,000 (4.5 million)** to create mass awareness about the disease, supplied dry rations to **8,000** households and provided **48,000** packets of cooked meals to migrant workers and the homeless across several states. Now, it is striving to reach out to **50,000** families with food, unconditional cash transfers, and PPE kits.
- ❖ Akshaya Patra has started a COVID-19 relief service. As of today, it has distributed **1,06,55,875** cooked meals & **4,12,231** grocery kits to people from low-income groups.
- ❖ Over **87000** families have been provided by Actionaid India dry ration, **57000** with sanitary and dignity kits and over **3,00,000** individuals have received cooked meals. Action Aid plans to deliver support material to **80,00,000** more people.



Conclusion

Financial crisis, unequivocally, appear as one of many challenges, NGOs faced particularly in the current pandemic, though it has always been a major issue ahead all NGOs. Many organisations in second phase of lockdown could not provide services due to lack of funds (Sunder Pushpa 2020). More autonomy to NGOs to raise funds from national and international donors will allow them to reach to the maximum beneficiaries. Mandatory CSR should be eased and companies should be allowed to donate to NGOs, as it proscribed the corporate lobbies funding to any other one than the Government in India. NGOs also need to establish themselves as credible organisations with financial transparency and sustained services. The UN as well as the respective Governments needs to provide increased financial and administrative support for non-governmental organizations and their networks, in particular those based in developing countries, that contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 21 programmes,

The risk of life was indeed much greater than ever before and scarcity of testing, safety kits, masks and other facilities hampered the ethos of serving people and connecting with them. Specialised short term training to the volunteers to tackle the crisis with safety measures would have made the NGOs more efficient. Henceforth, assistance should be provided to develop their own training programmes at the international and regional levels to enhance their partnership role in programme design and implementation

Coordinated efforts between Government agencies and NGOs could enhance the welfare services and larger people could have been benefited. More effective and efficient ways of working partnership between the NGO sector, the government and the private sector is an essential prerequisite. In future we may have to combat the situations like pandemics, epidemics, global climate issues, floods, storms etc, India needs to be prepared for such uncertainties. The government has to redefine its responsibilities towards its citizens, extending its role to include universal social welfare for all citizens.

Global network among the NGOs should be emphasized and strengthened in support of efforts to achieve the common goals. These organizations also need to improve cooperation and communication among themselves to strengthen their capacity or potential for achieving sustainable development.

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