



**INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY**

Initiative in Education & Lifelong Learning

## **Certificate Programme**

### **NGO Management: Foundation Course**

#### **UNIT - 4**

**Working With The Government And Dealing With Different Stakeholders**

## **Units of NGO Management : Foundation Course**

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### **Unit 1: Introduction to NGO Management**

- NGOs: Relevance And Rationale
- Definitions And Nomenclature
- Characteristics
- Classification Of NGOs
- Evolution Of NGOs Along Different Developmental Frameworks And Approaches
- NGOs In Developing Countries

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## Introduction

A very important part of NGO functioning constitutes its collaboration with other sectors of society. The efficacy with which it performs its activities or executes its programmes/projects depends on how well it has networked with other stakeholders who share a stake in that particular project or activity. Therefore, good relations and efficient partnerships facilitate the process of development and bettering the lives of communities. Government and its agencies is one such important stakeholder in any NGO's programmes and interventions. Channels such as the media are an equally important part of public activities performed either by the government or NGOs. Harmonious relationship with the media ensures that the information and the benefits accruing out of a particular initiative are disseminated not only locally and nationally, but also at a global level. Lately, the private business sector is also emerging as an important collaborator with the non-profit sector.

This Module deals with the collaborative relationships that NGOs should desirably build and nurture with different stakeholders in society.

## Learning Objectives

After completing this Module, you will be familiar with:

- The concept of stakeholders, its analysis and management strategy
- Various levels of government structures and relationships of NGOs with them
- Other stakeholders such as media, private business, etc, and the importance of collaborating with them

## 4.1 Stakeholders & Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders in a project are often defined as 'the individuals, groups or institutions which are likely to be affected by the organisational mission (either positively or negatively) or who can affect the outcome/s of a project (either positively or negatively) (Bandyopadhyay, 2001).

Stakeholders are key to the successful management of any project. Given how important they are to a well-managed project, understanding who all the stakeholders are and the roles of each is often not as straightforward as many believe. This is why defining project stakeholders can be a difficult, yet necessary, process and one that needs to take place at the onset of a project.

Each stakeholder may have their own particular interest in the project or the project's outcome, either directly or indirectly. While all stakeholders are not equal, they have their own expectations and requirements. Stakeholders in a particular project include its sponsors, project team, higher management, end user of the project's outcomes, or anyone who is affected or has any kind of interest in the project or its outcome. Stakeholders can be classified as:

(i) *Positive Stakeholders*

Positive stakeholders are those who stand to gain from the successful completion of the project. Their gain does not necessarily have to be monetary, although that may be the case. For example, the community which stands to gain by completion of a local water management project functions as a positive stakeholder.

(ii) *Negative Stakeholders*

At times, an individual or group believes the end result of a project will have a negative impact on it. Such people come under the category of negative stakeholders. An example of such a negative stakeholder may be a local water filter company who can be negatively impacted by a project which aims to equip village communities to filter water with the help of home-made techniques. This is crucial information to acknowledge, since full cooperation from negative stakeholders is hard to attain.

## Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis is an important tool for understanding the institutional context of the issues to be addressed with regard to strengthening local self-governance institutions and communities (Bandyopadhyay, 2004). Stakeholder analysis is the process of systematically gathering and analysing qualitative information to determine whose interests should be taken into account while developing or implementing a project. Its findings can provide early and essential information about:

- (i) Who will be affected (positively and negatively) by the outcome of the organisational mission;
- (ii) Who could influence the achievement of organisational mission (again, positively or negatively); and
- (iii) Which individuals, groups or agencies need to be involved to achieve organisational mission.

Stakeholder analysis seeks to promote stakeholder participation and engagement, maximise positive stakeholder influence and minimise negative influence. The basic purpose is to indicate whose interest should be taken into account when making a decision to (re)formulate organisational mission. At the same time, the analysis ought to indicate why those interests should be taken into account. Herein, it is important to understand how to gauge a group's or actor's interest in a given specific and serious consideration. Some pointers in this regard are:

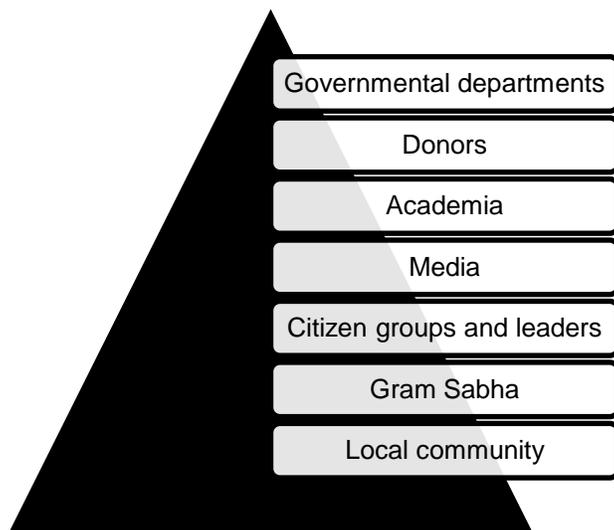
- First, if an external actor or agency is in a position to damage or weaken the political support of an organisation (for example, political parties with vested interests), then it should be taken into account
- Second, if the external agency's presence and/or support provide a net benefit or strengthen an organisation (as for example, a support organisation who provides capacity building support), then it should be given close consideration
- Third, if an external agency is capable of influencing the direction or mix of an organisation's activities, it needs to be counted as a stakeholder (for example, the choices and preferences of donors or demands of the community).

## Steps In Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis is essentially a four-step process (Bandyopadhyay, 2001).

### (i) *Identify key stakeholders*

The first step of stakeholder analysis is to identify key stakeholders from the large array of institutions and individuals that could potentially affect or be affected by the project/mission. This can be achieved by drawing up a simple list. The list which results from this exercise can provide the first input into stakeholder analysis. The figure below lists potential stakeholders for local self-governance:



### (ii) *Assess stakeholder interests*

Once the key stakeholder groups have been identified, their possible interests in the issue can be considered. Some stakeholder interests are less obvious than others and may be difficult to define, especially if they are not explicitly articulated, or if they have multiple expectations, or they may be in contradiction with that of other stakeholders. The following questions can guide the enquiry into the interest of each key stakeholder or group:

- What are the stakeholders' expectations from the organisation?

- What benefits are there likely to be for the stakeholders?
- What resources might the stakeholder be able and willing to mobilise?
- Which of the stakeholder interests are in conflict with the stated organisational mission?

(iii) *Assess stakeholder influence and importance*

Influence refers to the degree of power which stakeholders have in setting the direction of the decisions to be made during or after the dialogue process. It can be exercised by controlling, or facilitating, or hindering the decision making process directly or indirectly. This comes from a stakeholder's status or power, or from informal connections. Importance relates to the degree to which the issue demands active involvement of a given stakeholder group. Stakeholders who are important to the issue are generally those whose needs the issue seeks to meet as well as whose interests converge with the issue. Some stakeholders may be very important to an issue, but may have very limited influence over defining the issue.

For example, women, Dalit or tribal representatives of panchayats may have little influence over the capacity building policy, whereas their participation is important for strong local governance. Therefore, both the influence and importance of different stakeholder groups can be ranked along simple scales – for example, high, moderate or low.

(iv) *Outlining stakeholder participation strategy*

On the basis of the previous three steps in the stakeholder analysis process, some preliminary planning can be done on how the different stakeholder groups can be best involved in the process to achieve organisational mission/project goals. As a rule of thumb, the appropriate approaches for involving stakeholders of differing levels of influence and importance can be:

- *Stakeholders of high influence and high importance* should be closely involved throughout to ensure their support;
- *Stakeholders of high influence and low importance* are not the target of the organisation, but may oppose the achievement of organisational mission; they will

therefore need, as appropriate, to be kept informed and views acknowledged to avoid disruption or conflict;

- *Stakeholders of low influence and high importance* require special efforts to ensure that their needs are met and their participation is meaningful; and
- *Stakeholders of low influence and low importance* are unlikely to be closely involved in organisational planning and require no special participation strategies.

#### 4.1.1 Case Study: Stakeholder Analysis

Rural Development Agency (RDA)<sup>1</sup> was established in 1990 with a group of professionals with the aim of improving the fragile ecosystems of Kumaon region of Uttar Pradesh in India. The agency realised that the quality of life of the people residing in this mountainous region is intertwined with the quality of natural resources. As a consequence of commercial over-exploitation of these natural resources, the lives of the poor people had become more vulnerable to poverty. RDA started an auto-forestation programme in 30 surrounding villages. The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India sponsored the afforestation programme.

As part of the programme, RDA facilitated creation of village level forest protection committees, which then helped create a number of village level nurseries with technical help from RDA. The forest protection committee was also engaged in the protection and management of forest areas. As a result, a number of contractors who were engaged in illegal selling of forest resources became very annoyed with RDA's interventions. The contractors had a very strong connection with dominant political leaders. The MoEF-sponsored afforestation programme became very successful. In 1994, Canada India Village Aid (CIVA), an international donor, agreed to fund RDA's afforestation programme. RDA expanded its afforestation programme in another 20 villages with the available funds from CIVA.

In 1992, the 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional amendment was passed in India to promote Panchayati Raj Institutions (local governance institutions) which created an enabling political environment where rural people can participate in the democratic process to

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the organisation has been changed.

elect their representatives. Panchayat elections were held in Uttar Pradesh in 1995. Within a year, the elected panchayat members started getting recognition from all corners. Some forest protection committee leaders got elected in the newly formed panchayats. RDA also tried to link the village level forest protection committees with the panchayat.

However, the major political parties active in the area were apprehensive about the role of RDA. They viewed it as a major roadblock in pursuing their agenda. During this period, a number of professionals who worked in RDA left the organisation and formed new NGOs. Since most of them had expertise in forestry, they also started similar kinds of activities. RDA realised the need to undertake some action research programmes on forestry. It established contact with Indian Institute of Forest Management in Bhopal and Forest Research Institute in Dehradun. RDA also sent some of its employees to Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development (SPWD), New Delhi to train them in community forestry.

**Steps 1 And 2 Of Stakeholder Analysis:** *Identification of stakeholder groups, their interest in the achievement of organisational mission, and the effect of organisational mission on these interests.*

Stakeholder groups	Interests of stakeholders in the achievement of organisational mission	Effect of organisational mission on these interests		
		+	0	-
Local NGOs	• Interventions of RDA and that of other NGOs should not be duplicated in the same working areas	+		
	• RDA should take a leading role in protecting the interests of these smaller NGOs	+		
Support organisations	• RDA should be able to effectively implement service delivery programmes	+		
	• RDA should pursue community	+		

	participation and empowerment in their programme and projects	
Union government		
Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should comply with all FCRA rules and regulations while accessing foreign funding</li> </ul>	+
Ministry of Home Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should comply with all the necessary official formalities to access funds from international agencies</li> </ul>	+
Ministry of Environment and Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should be able to implement effectively the projects which have been funded by MoEF</li> </ul>	+
Local government (panchayat)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should establish linkages with the local people's representatives</li> <li>It should bring more projects/programmes to deliver more services to the local population</li> </ul>	+
Academic institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA staff should be trained enough to build their technical capacities to effectively deliver the services to community people</li> </ul>	+
CIVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should be able to deliver high quality service to the community</li> <li>It should provide regular monitoring reports</li> </ul>	+
Community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should be able to bring more projects and programmes for the community</li> <li>It should address all poverty related</li> </ul>	+

	issues and try to solve them	+
Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should not continue to work in the areas</li> </ul>	-
Political party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDA should not continue to work in the areas</li> </ul>	-

**Step 3 Of Stakeholder Analysis:** *Mapping key stakeholder's relative influence and importance*

Influence of stakeholder	Importance of organisational mission related activities to stakeholder		
	Low importance	Moderate importance	High importance
Low influence		Academic institutions	Community members
Moderate influence		Support organisations	Political parties MoEF Ministry of Home Affairs Village level forest protection committees
High Influence	Contractors	MoEF Donors (National/International)	Local NGOs

**Step 4 Of Stakeholder Analysis:** *Formulation of stakeholder participation strategy*

Stakeholder	Type of participation			
	Consultation	Collaboration	Confrontation	Any other strategy
Information sharing (one-way flow)				
Local NGOs				√
Support organisations				√

Union government				
-Ministry of Finance	√			
-Ministry of Home Affairs	√			
-Ministry of Environment and Forests		√		
Local government (panchayat)				√
Academic institutions				√
Donors: National/International				√
Community members				√
Forest protection committee				√
Local political party		√		
Contractors			√	

## 4.2 Government As A Stakeholder

The South Asia region is characterised by varied forms of State that has evolved since the end of World War II. Since the 1950s, India and Sri Lanka have a parliamentary form of democracy while Pakistan and Bangladesh have had long periods of military dictatorship. Nepal and Bhutan remained traditional monarchies. The last decade has witnessed a transition in this regard with the reassertion of democracy in Bangladesh and Nepal. Thus, South Asian countries provide a diversity of forms of governance over the past five decades (Tandon R. , Voluntary action, civil society and the state, 2002).

The second important dimension of the character of the State in South Asia has been its dominant interventionist role in promoting development, particularly in India and Sri Lanka. The State took upon itself a pre-eminent and monopolistic stance in defining what constituted development, public good and national interest. It took upon itself the sole prerogative and the power to control resources, ideas and programmes of development. In this context, it is important to mention the different roles that the State has performed in relation to voluntary organisations since Independence. This is important to understand the nature of voluntary organisations and the character of the State. In the Indian context, the State has assumed the role of:

### (i) Regulator

The State in modern society regulates social, political and the economic spaces. The State enacts a variety of regulatory mechanisms through its organs and agencies, and as well as through laws and legislations. The legislation directly affecting voluntary organisations in India today include the ones related to registration, financial requirements, etc.

### (ii) Funder

Over the years, many voluntary organisations have utilised government funds and many continue to do so. Many of them have entirely depended on grants from the State. Therefore,

in many ways, the work of these voluntary organisations has been guided by the nature of the relationship between them and the State as a funder.

### **(iii) Development actor**

Being a socialist welfare state, most of government schemes, departments and agencies have been started with a view to promote development. Therefore, in virtually every area of development – health, education, drinking water, sanitation, etc – the government's own departments, programmes and schemes are the most active. As a result, the space for voluntary organisations in the development arena has been gradually shrinking.

## **Forms Of Government**

Most democratic governments are either Presidential or Westminster; some States are pure monarchies. A brief account of these forms is given below.

### **(i) Presidential form**

Some representative and constitutional democracies have a presidential system of government, which is based on the separation and sharing of powers among three independent and coordinate branches of government: legislative, executive, and judiciary. The United States is the originator and primary example of the presidential system, a model that is followed in only a few other democracies, such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and the Philippines. Unlike the parliamentary form of democracy, it has a strong and independent chief executive with extensive powers related to both domestic, or internal, affairs and foreign policy. The president's independence from the legislature is based on election by the people to whom he or she is directly accountable and not to the legislature, as in the parliamentary system. Furthermore, the constitution grants strong powers to the chief executive in a presidential system.

**(ii) Westminster form**

The Westminster style of Government is modelled on the system of government used in the United Kingdom. In a Westminster system, the cabinet serves as the link between the administrative and legislative branches of government. Westminster style is a feature of Canada's system of government. The Fathers of Confederation embraced the British constitution as the model to guide Canada's development. The British North America Act of 1867 was thoroughly British in both spirit and design. Since 1867, there have been many developments that have shifted Canada away from this model and elements, such as the Constitution Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982).

**(iii) Monarchic form**

A monarchy is a political system based upon the undivided sovereignty or rule of a single person. The term applies to States in which supreme authority is vested in the monarch, an individual ruler who functions as the head of state and who achieves his position through heredity. Succession usually passes from father to son or follows other arrangements within the family or the monarchical dynasty.

**4.2.1 Relationship Between The Voluntary Sector And The State**

As a consequence of the development roles assumed by the State, there have been some significant consequences for the structure and quality of relationships that have emerged between voluntary action and the State in India. They are:

**(i) Dependency**

The predominant form of relationship between the State and the voluntary sector is that of a dependent client (Tandon R. , Voluntary action, civil society and the state, 2002). This dependency arises in situations where voluntary organisations are either implementing

development programmes of the State, or receiving funds from it, or both. It is a dependency of ideas, money and resources.

**(ii) Adversarial**

Adversarial relationship between the State and the voluntary sector arises when the two are perpetually locked in conflict. This is common among voluntary organisations which challenge the policies of the State, its development framework and paradigms. The same is true for voluntary organisations that directly support people's organisations and social movements.

**(iii) Co-option**

Governments can seek to co-opt (or selectively co-opt) the language, vision and activities of NGOs. However, this response only works if governments have the resources to fill the political space. Moreover, this policy choice only makes sense if governments can contribute to co-opt independent NGOs effectively without sufficient public reaction or political visibility (Heyzer, Riker, & Quizon, 1995).

**(iv) Co-operation**

In this type of relationship the emphasis is on healthy co-operation between voluntary organisations and government authorities and machinery. Herein, differences are discussed and understood by all parties, and common areas of action on policy and programme aspects are identified in which voluntary organisations and the government can work together (Tandon R. , Voluntary action, civil society and the state, 2002). Governments recognise and seek to promote NGO participation as long as they co-operate with a government-defined vision of people-centred development (Heyzer, Riker, & Quizon, 1995).

**(v) Collaboration**

Government and NGOs collaborate as partners to achieve a mutually desired effect which they could not achieve acting alone. NGOs can collaborate with the government at an operational level for mobilising demand for services, planning and delivering those services, including innovating and scaling up promising development initiatives. At the policy level, NGOs can

collaborate with the government to 'alter allocation of public resources' and to 'reorient government programmes' towards pressing development problems (Heyzer, Riker, & Quizon, 1995).

### **Current Trends**

Recent events worldwide are reflections of the pressures building up towards the realisation of the urgent need to renegotiate the balance of relationships between the State and the voluntary sector. This relationship needs to be reformulated on the lines of a new social contract, based on the following ideals (Tandon R. , Voluntary action, civil society and the state, 2002):

#### **(i) Accountability**

The State and its agencies need to be accountable to its citizens. Accountability implies rootedness of the State, its institutions and practices in the culture, morality, values and norms of its citizens. The voluntary sector can play the role of a watchdog ensuring such accountability.

#### **(ii) Mediation**

It is important to recognise that the State represents a country's macro, aggregated, cumulated formations and structures. As a result, State policies, agencies and officials operate at a level far more macro than the level of the family. In such a situation, the voluntary sector requires appropriate mediating institutions in order to achieve equitable power balance. This is the role of voluntary associations in a democracy. They can approach and influence elected representatives as well as public institutions and officials on an ongoing basis.

#### **(iii) Differentiation between 'public' and 'private'**

Democratic functioning of society requires institutions of civil society independent of State agencies. This does not mean that the State's provision of services in health, education, etc, should be dismantled; it only means that the State's responsibility for the provision of these services needs to be redefined. The State's responsibility is not necessarily to render these

services on its own, but to foster conditions and mechanisms that are conducive to enabling institutions of civil society to meet the specific needs of their communities. In this way, the State becomes more of an enabler, and less of a provider, while the institutions of civil society are strengthened to ensure provision of services.

### **Working Mechanisms: NGOs And Governmental Organisations**

Working mechanisms between NGOs and the government should be based on mutual respect and trust. NGOs are required to understand the concerns of the government in uplifting the poor and bringing them into mainstream developmental processes. Both NGOs and governmental organisations firmly believe in democracy, respect the legal framework and the constitution of the nation. NGOs do not substitute the state and its machinery; rather they supplement and complement the developmental initiatives of the government.

Since the objectives of both institutions are common, there is possibility to work together. However, there are considerable variations in approach adopted by governmental organisations and NGOs in terms of attitude and in bringing out the desired changes in the social fabric. The end result is to address multidimensional social issues and provide the envisaged benefits to the people. Although the two forms of institutions are forced by existing imperatives, and styles of working between the two vary, the functional gaps between them need to be bridged in order to achieve the specified common objectives.

NGOs emphasise processes than product. They mobilise, develop rapport, organise and facilitate the people for a specified cause. The conscientisation process by NGOs provides a good base to the community from where government agencies can take a convenient leap to implement developmental programmes envisaged for the poorest of the poor. In the pursuit of protecting the rights of the poor, NGOs are often involved in safeguarding their interests. This may not often find an integrated approach; rather it may be sectoral and the initiatives may be skewed towards the downtrodden and the marginalised. Contrary to this, governmental organisations come up with sectoral and integrated approaches that may require the support of the people from different walks of life. In this context, NGOs functions as an interface between

the people and the government. For example, in India, NGOs work in conjunction with Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) in order to address the problems faced by the community.

However, it is important to note that while on the one hand NGOs mobilise the people for raising voice against conflicting government policies for protection of their interest, on the other hand they also collaborate and work with governmental organisations on areas of common concern. Therefore, it is important to understand key issues of the relationship between NGOs and governmental organisations, and the manner in which this delicate relationship is to be sustained.

#### **4.2.2 Working With The State At Different Levels Of Governance**

Governance in India is organised around various structures at different levels. They are:

- National Government
- State Government
- District Administration
- Local Governance Institutions

#### **Working With National/State Governments:**

Governmental organisations and NGOs share the common goal of poverty eradication through community participation and mobilising the poor with the help of a variety of community-based organisations. The vastness of the size of India, unfulfilled basic needs of the people at the lowest strata of society, widespread gender discrimination at household and societal levels and workplaces, the social upsurge amongst Dalits, Adivasis and other disadvantaged groups coupled with the inability of government ministries/departments to reach out to the un-reached warrant collective action by NGOs and the government. All major stakeholders should join hands to collectively fight the root causes of poverty, which is a multi-dimensional and complex issue. Considering limited human/financial resources and time constraints, a partnership model will have a synergistic impact on poverty and the processes could be made more sustainable.

Partnership between the government and NGOs exists in various programmes, projects and schemes implemented by the Central and State governments. This partnership must be seen as a win-win proposition and, hence, this collaborative relationship should be taken forward at all levels, i.e., the village, *mandal*, district, state, regional and national levels. The spirit of this relationship will rest on an objective understanding of the comparative advantage of each partner in conceptualising, designing, planning and implementing people-centred development programmes. It should also rest on the premise that both the government and NGOs complement each other and it is critically important to have such partnerships which have the potential of synergistic impact at the household level.

Efforts made by NGOs and the government should go hand-in-hand to achieve the envisaged benefits for the poorest of the poor. One of the fundamental social obligations of the state is to safeguard the interests of the poor by implementing various programmes aimed at development. This requires the help and association of NGOs to change the destiny of the poor and recast the social fabric. As such, it is felt appropriate to have a joint strategy that addresses the developmental needs of the people in general and the poor in particular. In the present context, the relationship between NGOs and the government in India is characterised by certain compulsions, such as:

- Pooling existing resources for a specific sectoral intervention
- Adapting to changed or revitalised approaches enunciated in the macro planning system of the State
- The need for resources

NGOs should collaborate with the initiatives of the government in a more meaningful and constructive way, especially to address the issues relating to poverty and social justice. Considering the large number of issues to be addressed, NGOs and the government need to identify certain select areas for collaboration and explore the possibilities for partnership.

### **Working With The District Administration**

The district is the principal subdivision within the state (union territories are not subdivided). The district collector, a member of the Indian Administrative Service, is the pre-eminent official in the district. During the colonial period, the collector was responsible for collecting revenue and maintaining law and order. The collector's role in most states is confined to heading the district revenue department and coordinating the efforts of the other departments, such as agriculture, irrigation, public works, forestry and public health that are responsible for promoting economic development and social welfare.

NGOs collaborate with the district administration in the implementation of various developmental plans. Such plans may relate to addressing poverty issues, provisioning various civic amenities, such as housing and infrastructure, providing solutions to pressing issues such as water scarcity, environmental degradation, etc. The district administration, as a sub-division of the state administration, is also in a better position to work in conjunction with NGOs owing to its simplified structure and mode of operation. Further, closeness with the rural and urban communities facilitates the process of collaboration and partnership between the two institutions.

### **Working With Local Governance Institutions**

Local governance institutions in the Indian context refer to panchayats at the rural level and municipalities in urban areas. Their structure and mode of functioning are dealt in detail below.

#### **Panchayats**

The Indian constitution endorsed the idea of panchayats (village councils) through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992, which mandated the establishment of this third tier of governance. This Amendment Act of 1992 provided for devolution of powers and responsibilities to panchayats for both preparation of plans for economic development and social justice and their implementation in relation to twenty-nine subjects listed in the Eleventh

Schedule of the constitution. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are institutions of local self-governance involved in micro-planning exercises and not mere implementers of centrally determined development programmes.

The 73rd amendment of the constitution empowered panchayats to plan for the development of the villages under their jurisdiction, along with allocating powers to the elected members to prepare and implement local area development plans (micro plans). It is here that NGOs collaborate with panchayats for working out joint plans. Where panchayats can be involved in the broad details of a particular project, NGOs contribute by collectivising, mobilising and creating awareness among the villagers as regards the importance of the project. They can also help in the implementation of the projects by working in accordance with a pre-designed plan.

Therefore, such participation of the community in plans/projects devised and implemented jointly by NGOs and local governance institutions contributes towards:

- Unleashing self-help capacity of citizens and elected members so that they demand and provide support to services like sanitation, roads, water sources, electricity, transport, etc, for betterment of their villages
- Developing the economy of the village through increased livelihood options for villagers
- Increasing social harmony and satisfaction among villagers that results in cooperation
- Participatory development through planning influences resource allocation for specific programmes that are planned through community consensus

### **Municipalities/Municipal Councils/Municipal Corporations**

The 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act passed in 1992 mandated the creation of municipalities, which function as local governance institutions in India's urban areas. Nearly 26 per cent of India's population residing in urban areas have municipal corporations/municipal councils as local governance institutions, which are responsible for education, health,

sanitation, safety, and maintaining roads and other public utilities. Similar to its collaboration with PRIs, NGOs can enter into a mutual relationship with municipal bodies in order to carry out various development interventions, while also providing help and support in the delivery of basic services in urban areas.

### **THINK TANK**

Assume that you are an employee of an NGO, which works in the area of ensuring democracy and social justice. Identify the partnership areas and intervention agenda for working with different tiers of government in a project which seeks to build capacities of local self-government institutions.

### **Strategy For Collaboration**

NGOs need to design a strategy to work with government institutions both in terms of organisational strengthening and to make them more responsive and responsible. There are many avenues for NGOs to forge partnerships with governmental organisations. For example, mobilisation of communities for free and fair elections, capacity building of elected representatives, strengthening institutions like gram sabha and ward sabha, facilitating accountability and transparency in local developmental processes, strengthening CBOs to participate in local governance processes, etc, are some potential areas where such partnerships can be forged. NGOs can also contribute to the preparation of micro plans by panchayats. Similarly, they can also forge partnerships with block and district level local bodies, as well as national/state governments.

Given that the term 'development' has different meanings for different people, it is desirable that an NGO leads the process of creating a consensus in the community on what the term 'development' entails. People living in the same village may have different development needs. For example, tribals (forest dwellers) may want to preserve forest land for long term sustenance while others may support setting up of a tube well or a labour cooperative for meeting the economic needs of the village. People living in the same family may also have differing needs to be fulfilled. For some men, building roads means development as it creates economic opportunity, whereas women may want a water source nearer home in order to save time, while children may desire the setting up of quality schools in close vicinity to their homes.

#### **NOTE BANK**

Numerous benefits accrue as a result of collaborative and co-operative relationships between the government and the voluntary sector. Some of them are:

- Clarifying and strengthening the relationship between government and voluntary sector, leading to better focus and greater public awareness regarding various social needs
- Mobilisation of greater combined resources (government and voluntary sector) to solve social problems
- Better targeted programmes and services
- Incorporation of user groups into specific projects
- Framework agreements
- Policy influencing relationships

Hence, NGOs need to create an environment where everyone's views are respected as valid and it is addressed in the planning process. The process of meeting everyone's development needs through a plan will create better opportunities for everyone. This will happen if the NGO gets people to think together for a vision for their village. This would include a plan of action for the next three to five years to bring about the desired change, along with giving thought to the different stakeholders whose help might be needed in the process and the manner in which the plan needs to be implemented for achieving common goals and objectives.

### 4.3 Media As A Stakeholder

In the past, formal segments of civil society have been tentative about engaging with the media. In many countries, domestic media, newspapers and radio/television were largely controlled by government; open advocacy through such media channels was restricted or non-existent. International media were somewhat more accessible, but mostly to international NGOs (INGOs) located in their headquarters (PRIA, 2012). Most local civil society also lacked the capacity to engage with the media in an ongoing manner. Many NGOs remained largely focussed with local constituencies in remote rural areas and, therefore, their partnership with the media was 'non-existent'.

However, with the emergence of new media tools like web access and social media networking, the relationship between the voluntary sector and media has grown manifold, and in a positive manner. This is evident from the fact that new forms of civil society actions, from mobilisation of members to devising and co-ordinating actions, have found the new information and communication technology very user-friendly. Horizontal forms of communication, leadership and solidarity become more feasible with widespread access to the Internet and other social media. Formally structured NGOs have begun to use ICT (Information and Communication Technology) for a wide range of functions – public information and education, resource generation, membership engagement and communication with policy makers.

Although the use of new social media is reshaping the strategies of actors in the voluntary sector, it has not displaced old media – television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and so on. In fact, traditional print and electronic media have become far more accessible in many societies around the world. Many independent and private television channels, radio stations and newspapers in vernacular languages have increased the outreach of social media substantially.

While old media has become more accessible to civil society, civil society too has become a matter of interest for old media. Some examples are (PRIA, 2012):

- India Against Corruption (IAC) gained visibility through old international media and thus garnered support from the Indian diaspora worldwide
- Chilean student protests and HIV/AIDS campaigns of South Africa became known around the world through the spread and outreach of radio, television and newspapers
- Old media played a crucial role in mobilising public opinion and channelising citizen's concerns in Malawi, where print and electronic media gave ample coverage to the preparations for demonstrations
- KRL Mania in Indonesia used mass media to publicise its demands related to high tariffs and lack of safety for commuters, despite its heavy reliance on new media

Therefore, such combinations of old and new media can enhance civil society outreach and increase pressure for reforms by public agencies.

In light of the above, it is important to mention the shifts in the past two decades that have played a big role in establishing new partnerships between civil society and the media.

- First, new media has expanded the outreach to distant others. The globalisation of ICT has expanded the spread of information in real time, thereby expanding solidarity and connectedness of the voluntary sector.
- Second, the expansion of independent and private channels in television, radio and newspaper has created greater options for civil society.
- Third, the capacity of civil society to engage with old and new media has been gradually expanding, with some focussed efforts in this regard in recent years.

However, there is a darker side of this relationship as well (PRIA, 2012):

- (a) Citizen mobilisation and expansion of discourse by the voluntary sector requires effective use of media in its various forms. However, today's media provides visibility and voice and as well as negativity and noise.
- (b) The globalisation of media ownership and its inter-connectedness tends to differentiate between local, regional and global business interests. Thus, global media reacts differently to citizens reactions in the northern and southern countries. While it

supported citizens' movements in India and Malawi, it criticised such protests in Greece and the United Kingdom.

- (c) Social media and the Internet can also confuse and distort issues as 'unregulated access' brings counter-voices as well. Blogs can inform as well as misinform.

Therefore, the open access of social media is both its strength and limitation. Recent attempts by many governments to control and regulate social media may actually reduce access and increase surveillance of civil society

#### NOTE BANK

Interaction with the media involves the use of a number of varied tools such as:

- ✓ **Interview:** A staff member of an organisation gives an interview to a reporter, perhaps as an 'expert'.
- ✓ **Letter to the editor:** It often appears on a special page in newspapers. Use them to start or contribute to a debate, or to respond to or correct information that has appeared in the paper.
- ✓ **Article:** An article (often a feature story) written by a staff member or a freelancer, and provided exclusively to a newspaper or magazine.
- ✓ **News conference:** A question-and-answer session with several journalists and one or more spokespersons.
- ✓ **Press kit:** A packaged set of information and promotional materials about the project or the organisation. It is often given to media personnel before an event, news conference or field visit, and includes contact names, contact details, areas of expertise and short biographies.
- ✓ **Press release:** It is the standard method of disbursing information to the media. A press release is one or two pages of information, written in a format similar to a news story.
- ✓ **Staged event:** It is a newsworthy event such as a ceremony, charity walk, or exhibition designed (among other things) to attract media attention.
- ✓ **Website:** An NGO must make sure that the particular project has its details on an updated website. Information such as contact details, description of activities, and the most recent publications and press releases should be displayed.
- ✓ **Social media:** Social media such as blogs, micro-blogging, feeds, e-newsletters can be used to provide subscribers and supporters with up-to-date information and content about the project and the organisation.

**THINK TANK**

List some important examples of media intervention in your particular country, wherein such intervention has helped the cause of the voluntary sector.

## 4.4 Private Business As A Stakeholder

Partnerships between private business and NGOs have increased in number and sophistication over the last decade. A number of factors are contributing to this trend including governments, consumers and others demanding an increase in the private sector's commitment to being 'responsible members of society'. This, combined with the decrease of government funding of NGOs, means that cross-sector partnerships are becoming core to addressing many complex social and environmental issues. Over time, these collaborations are becoming more sophisticated, strategic and aligned to business objectives, in many cases moving beyond basic philanthropy to 'win-win' partnerships that are in fact generating strong business, social and environmental benefits (Bobenreith & Stibbe, 2010).

NGOs do not have a single type of relationship with business. Some NGOs have very close ties to business or have been specially created by companies or business associations – such as the powerful International Chamber of Commerce or the influential Business Council on Sustainable Development. Other NGOs have mixed attitudes, partly critical, partly not. While still other NGOs tend to systematically differ from business firms in their views of the world and their sense of international priorities. Big companies increasingly seek to have 'dialogue' with critical NGOs and to co-opt them through grants, 'partnerships', 'multi-stakeholder dialogues' and other means. While leading public relations firms pioneer ever-new forms of 'proactive' business policies towards NGOs, global justice movement NGOs pioneer ever-new forms of criticism and public accountability for private firms. Public-private partnerships also include activities such as fundraising or 'resource mobilisation', research collaborations, consultations/discussions, arrangements to implement codes of conduct, corporate social responsibility projects, and contracting out public services.

As the private sector becomes increasingly involved in the delivery of essential services in place of the State, NGOs wanting to influence the quality, cost and reach of such services must involve themselves with the State's utility regulators – now as partners – in advocacy work. On the other hand, NGOs are also seeking more formal engagement with the private sector in order to secure access to subsidies and financial services for the poorest (e.g., Self-

Employed Women's Association [SEWA], India and Planact, South Africa). A number of private sector companies are now creating development departments or promoting development initiatives in partnership with NGOs. For instance, Allied Dunbar, Shell and Barclays Bank all have departments dedicated to 'third sector' work. Through their advocacy work and as players in multi-actor negotiations with the State, private sector and other civil society organisations, NGOs are able to have an impact on the accountability and people-orientation of business (Heap, 1998).

## Summary

This Module analysed the concept of stakeholders, detailed out the process of stakeholder analysis, and illustrated the latter with a real example. Further, the Module looked at the relationship between the voluntary sector and varied stakeholders, such as the government and its agencies at different levels of governance, media and private business. While detailing the relationships, the Module provided the details of such relationships and the respective roles and functions of the respective stakeholders in carrying forward a meaningful and positive relationship.

## Recommended Readings

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