

Role of NGOs in Economic Development of Rajasthan

Dr. Sachin Gupta¹

Abstract

Poverty decline has been confirmed as the most vital Millennium Development goal by the Government of India. It has been one of the major objectives of planned development in India. Since Independence Indian government formulated a lot of economic strategies for planned economic growth with two objectives viz., social justice and ensuring economic growth with equity. Non Government Organisations (NGOs) are non-profit organisations constituted with a plan to promote the marginalised and poor, unprivileged, underprivileged, indigent & oppressed groups. NGOs contribute dynamically in various social and economical matters and work on their own, in conjunction with individual governments or with worldwide organisations. These groups were expected to show that how village and original resources could be used and how human resources, local knowledge and rural skills, grossly underutilised at present could be used for their own growth. Over the last two decades NGOs are functioning basically to eradicate poverty. NGOs are playing very major role in uplifting the poor with their pioneering programmes. Through this the study researcher made an effort to explore the role and their performance of NGOs in eradication of poverty and economic growth of the Rajasthan State.

Key Words: *Non-government organization, Economic development, Poverty eradication.*

Objectives of Study

Despite certain attempts made to study different aspects of NGOs, there remain certain very pertinent gaps. In order to fill the gaps, the present study was undertaken. With this background the present study has been formulated with the following objectives:

- To review the present scenario of NGOs in economic growth of Rajasthan.
- To explore the efforts made by the NGOs in alleviating poverty in Rajasthan.
- To analyse the impact of the reforms undertaken by NGOs.
- To evaluate the role in the overall development of the State's economy.

To assess overall position of NGOs in India, secondary data has been composed from various published websites and sources.

¹ Assistant Professor, School of Management Studies, JECRC University, Jaipur

Significance of Study

The present study is a considerable attempt to study the role of NGOs in economic growth of Rajasthan state which will be helpful to analyse lacunae in the developing economy like India. Further, it can be helpful to investigate some untouched areas of state where potential for development exists and rectification of the flaws in the present system. The study will also prove helpful in empowering the poor by generating employment avenues and making the state independent. The study may also be equally significant for all those interested in undertaking similar studies in the context of other aspects of NGOs because certain methods and approaches evolved and employed should be helpful in carrying out further studies of parallel nature.

Introduction

According to the report Report on 10th IFAD/NGO Consultation, Pune, India, 2000, "Empowerment is the ownership of the development process by the people themselves. All development stakeholders – government, private sector, banks, NGOs and other members of civil society – must recognise the capacity of the poor to develop themselves as free, responsible and self-reliant groups and communities and create the environment for individuals to come together and organise themselves".

NGOs are enormously working and helping government, institutions and the rural poor in the fight against poverty. They have played progressively major role in the development sector as innovative and Grassroots Driven Organisations with desire and capacity to pursue participatory and people centred forms of development and to fill gaps left by failure of government in meeting needs of their poorest citizens. NGOs because of their situation and interface with local people can be very efficient in bringing transform and change since they are able to address issues that governments are often not able to grasp. That is because these organisations work at the grass roots level they are able to sense the necessity of issues and prioritise into the problem solving mode at a faster pace. Empowerment of the rural poor and community mobilisation are the keys to sustainability and these processes can take wide periods of time to be assimilated. Vanitha Vishwanath's (1993) study evaluates and compares the role of two NGOs i.e Integrated Development Service and Gram Vikas in promoting women development. She found that Gram Vikas is working more effectively than Integrated Development Service. This is because that Gram Vikas programmes are designed in such a way that they yield quick results and are sensitive to the immediate needs of the people.

NGOs are often able to reach segments of rural populations that governments do not target as priority. They often find their way into remote rural areas to identify the poorest segments of communities, purposely seeking out those who are in general expelled from development processes because of their isolation, their vulnerability and their lack of assets. NGOs engage the poor in capacity-building activities as a major component in their project and programmes whether literacy programmes or extension of agricultural or credit handling, these activities lay the foundation for creating organisations and local

groups that can then link with other groups having general interests. NGOs are known for their role in developing new initiatives, new programmes or components of programmes, new mechanisms and approaches, etc., to address development issues and problems. Various NGOs, with their characteristics and generally flexible organisational structure which comprise organisational freedom and participatory structures are able to experiment on new institutional mechanisms and on different approaches that add worth to projects. S. Mohanan (2000) points out that NGOs have been playing a very important role in country over last quarter of the century in sphere of social development. He states that NGOs are a powerful tool in poverty alleviation and development. He considers that the role of NGOs is more significant and pronounced in the sphere of micro credit.

NGOs possess a widespread knowledge of local conditions of state. NGOs with long-term experience in the target area of state can help provide a baseline data and information on the local infrastructure and economy, the existence of self-help organisations and the major obstacles to growth and development.

Missions of NGOs

Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are launched with a variety of purposes. Based on local demand and region NGO targets and objectives can be observed. The goals and missions with which the NGOs are established and conducting their operations in Rajasthan are:

- Supporting the poor and suffering people of State as well as exercising self-control through utilisation of own resources.
- Effective utilisation of local leadership for welfare and development of State.
- Coordinating deprived and poor ones through creation of co-operatives and thus assist in the social and economic growth.
- Proper development on Health and Nutritional issues.
- Acting as associate of government and not as opponent.
- Generating alternatives to overcome hurdles and special social problems besides taking essential steps to awake the general inhabitants.
- Creating positive attitude of society of state, eradication of superstition and belief against development and bringing in poor ones in the main stream of growth and development.
- Giving priority to poor people in loan scheme by connecting them directly in production process and thus creating scope of an extra income in family which steadily leads to self-sufficiency.
- Continuing support and assistance towards poor so that they can generate own investment by saving at an increasing rate from growing income.

- Creating attentiveness and developing leadership for landless and relatively less facilitated ones.
- Serving out people in coping with the changing societal and economical environment.

NGOs Activities to Eradicate Poverty

The NGO have taken some noteworthy initiatives to handle the poverty situation of state considering certain aspects are as below:

- (a) Fast economic growth achievement process of the State.
- (b) Human Resource development of Rajasthan State.
- (c) Specific and definite target setting for poor.

Employment

The economy of the people is related to Employment to eliminate poverty of masses Jan Shakti, Adhikar are consistently working in this area. In the past decade there is a marked increase in employment rate.

District Poverty Initiatives Project

Rajasthan District Poverty Initiatives Project was launched in July 2000, with assistance of Non government organisations in seven poorest districts of Rajasthan namely Churu, Dausa, Dholpur, Jhalawar, Rajsamand and Tonk. The project aims at improving the levels of economic activity, productivity and of targeted 1,00,000 BPL families of 7039 villages of seven selected district of Rajasthan. Project is being implemented through Non Government Organisations and allowing them to select and implement the sub-project of economic/social benefit. These sub-projects may be of land based, social services, infrastructures or income generating in nature.

Long term goal of project is to reduce poverty in 7 selected districts in state. The project development objective is to improve economical opportunities, living standards and social status of poor in the selected villages of these districts. Presently, District Poverty Initiative Project (DPIP) is implementing in 7 districts of Rajasthan namely Baran, Churu, Dausa, Dholpur, Jhalawar, Rajsamanad and Tonk.

'Jan Mangal Sansthan' is a non-government voluntary organisation working on rural and tribal development issues in and around Jaipur, Udaipur, Ajmer, Bhilwara & Jhalawar districts in Rajasthan.

Lakshya, non-governmental organisation's basic objective is provide assistance to people who are unemployed, poor and handicapped. To coordinate with the different schemes of government and to support them. This is a non-profit organisation working towards goodness of society and all the members of organisation are self motivated and hard working for improvement of society and overall growth of state and country. Their aims are as following:-

- Economic aid.
- Marriage of daughters of the needy.
- Imparting education to the poor children.
- Providing medical aid and therapy to the weak and the poor.
- Economic aid for social and religious works.
- Providing ration for the old and the disabled poor's.
- Providing employment for widows and unemployed.
- Spreading consciousness for literacy and anti intoxication.
- To conduct health programmes so that awareness for health can be created in women and organise camp with department for Aids, T.B., Cancer, maternity center and eye camp.
- Promote the computer education and provide hostels for SC, ST and OBC.
- To take over creative programmes for youth welfare like education, health and removal of illiteracy.
- To develop interest in Indian cultural and high standards and develop them.
- To contribute in removal of illiteracy using national education mission.

Humanitarian and Structural Development of Organisations for Poor

NGOs are playing necessary role for civilized development through joint analysis and seeking solution through diverse workshops and seminars, joint social activities, and application of social and economic projects. Besides they have introduced certain vital concepts like developing small groups, credit based cooperatives, cooperatives and mother welfare society etc. for homeless and landless etc. and thus have strengthened the root of organisational structure for rural poverty. In order to promote and encourage the rural poor to contribute in different economic activities and to enhance their income through generation of employment, several policies, strategies and methods of the NGOs have attracted the attention of some foreign development experts. NGOs generally create employment in two ways. First of all, they offer employment in their own organisation and secondly, they provide loans and management aid to individuals, which create new employment opportunity. Besides they are providing technical and skill development and training amenities to poor women and men in order to get self-employment. So, they are considerably contributing in abolition of poverty by providing the above-mentioned basics.

Micro Credit

Overall economic development is necessary for poverty eradication at both rural and urban levels of state. Besides generation of employment per head income and scheme to boost savings is required so that poverty reduction and sustainable development can be seen for deprived and poor. Microfinance is an additional important sector that NGO's have fully utilised in reaching out to poor. Their roles in this sector, has enormously contributed to alleviating poverty among poor. The rationale of using microfinance to alleviate poverty is as a result of what function microfinance can play and what impact it created on the

beneficiaries. Microfinance has a very significant role to play in development according to proponents of microfinance.

Contribution of NGOs in Economic Development

India has great tradition in philanthropic activities, social service and voluntary work. A large number of charitable trusts and organisations have come up in post Independence period to help poor and weak sections of society. It was felt that the Government alone cannot manage the production and distribution of assets of nation and hence the economy. This led to the concept of Non-government organisations - participation in this sector.

The need was felt to motivate manpower and mobilise the general masses in development tasks. Areas where large-scale peoples' participation was critical for success were identified and a large number of voluntary organisations came up on the scene.

The VII plan envisaged an active role of voluntary organisations. The thrust areas were (i) forestry, (ii) family welfare, (iii) health, (iv) water management, (v) ecology, (vi) education, (vii) women empowerment and many more. These were related to the local problems and often social needs.

From a relief and welfare support during crisis, NGOs have emerged to become "development alternatives," and dominant ones at that, in last couple of decades. NGOs are also regarded as Third Sector, on par, with state and private sector. There are many reasons for large-scale emergence of NGOs as alternatives in developing countries. There are three prominent reasons according to many, for emergence of NGOs First, there is a direct correlation between inefficiency of state in undertaking development and emergence of the NGOs Second, the northern states have had an agenda to promote the private sector and the NGOs seem an appropriate middle of the road means of accomplishing it. Third, many of the NGO's have been critical of the state development policies that have often relied on the hardware technocratic solutions to development. Various roles played by NGOs cannot be negated under the socio-economic concept of the country. NGOs are doing a very important task of uplifting the society through variety of projects and programmes. The dimensions of the programmes undertaken by NGOs are multifaceted starting from poverty alleviation, agriculture, infrastructure, literacy etc. The greatest advantage enjoyed by NGOs in this regard is the flexibility, speed of operation and responding equally to changing circumstances. Voluntary organisation are known for their human touch, education, self reliance and service of the community. Thus non-government organisations are involved in socio economic and human development. They work so as to extend hand to community fixing their priorities, based on the requirement of the local communities.

In India most of voluntary organisations have concentrated on the areas of poverty eradication, removal of illiteracy, population control, women empowerment and development of the rural areas, some of the major areas where the NGOs have played role can be analysed below:

- **Development of Participatory behaviour:** NGOs have played a very important task in developing participatory behaviour from local masses. Initially, local population was slightly dependent on government to provide them with all basic amenities with taking any initiative. Utilisation of funds was never cared for, as at pulling to government, corruption, misuse, and diversion of resources were in general order of the day and out of Rs. One sent to rural masses, only 16 paise use to reach. Incoming of NGOs has altogether changed this attitude and they have encouraged partial participation by local NGOs either in the form of resources or in the form of labour services. This has made people more responsible and conscious and they feel that they own all the resources. Thereby altogether changing the mental attitude of the people.
- **Environment Creation:** NGOs have also played a major role in creating environmental awareness among the masses. Local NGOs identify the total environmental problems and then create the awareness among masses, so that environmental problem may be solved. The NGOs highlight the consequences of different environmental problems to the masses and try to create the mass movement for counteracting these problems.
- **Infrastructure Development:** It is well known fact that today no worth, while integrated rural development is conceivable without the basic infrastructure facilities required for education, health, agriculture, cottage industry etc.

Conclusion

Study established the important roles played by of NGOs in fight against poverty through micro-finance, self-reliance, capacity building and peace building, sustainable community development, and empowerment particularly women's empowerment all aiming at poverty mitigation. NGOs through the micro-finance help members of region to access jobs, income-generation and improve economic condition there by reducing poverty from the poor. And then they would become empowered economically. NGO"s developed the capacities of group of people such as abilities and skills, knowledge, assets and motivates the community to participate in the project to develop the quality of their lives. NGOs act as capacity builders that help the society to attain the empowerment particularly individual empowerment. NGO"s do help out the community to find out their potentials and also mobilise community to be self-reliant. NGOs through some programs and functions, such as microfinance, self reliance and capacity building help community to be empowered, and finally contribute towards sustainable community growth and development. This study revealed that NGOs are functioning for the betterment of the destitute and the helpless people of the Rajasthan state and for the untended population of the society. It was proven that the active and dynamic presences of NGOs are a boon for the overall and social development of the State.

References

1. Banton, (1957), *West African City, A Study of Tribal Life in Freetown*, Oxford University, Press, London.

2. Baruah, B. (2007), Assessment of Public–private–NGO Partnerships: Water and Sanitation Services in Slums, *Natural Resources Forum* 31, pp. 226–237.
3. Davis, M. (2002), How Can We Explain the Formulation of Northern NGOs Approaches to Poverty, *Informed* No. 7, September, Oxford: INTRAC.
4. Fowler, Alan. (1997), *Striking A Balance: A Guide to Enhance the Effectiveness of Non-governmental Organisations in International Development*, London: Earthscan Publication.
5. Ghosh, D.K. (2001), NGOs Intervention in Poverty Alleviation, *Kurukshetra*, March, pp.2-9.
6. Ghosh, S.(2009), NGOs as Political Institutions, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, pp. 475-495.
7. Government of India (2006), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - India Country Report -2005 Released, *Press Note* 13 February
8. Gupta, A. (1987), Bank–NGO–Poor Interface in Backward Regions: Alternatives for Action, *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, 33(3), pp. 662–679.
9. Gurulingaiah, M. (2002), Role of NGO in Empowerment of Tribal Women in Karnataka, *Kurukshetra*, Vol.51, No.2, Dec.Pp.30-33.
10. Inamdar, N. R. (1987), Role of Voluntarism in Development, *The Indian Journal of Public Administration*, 333, Pp.420-432.
11. Mohanan, S. (2000), Micro-Credit and Empowerment of Women, Role of NGOs, *Yojana*, February, pp.21-28.
12. Vanitha, V. (1993), *NGOs and Women Development in Rural South India. A Comparative Analysis*, Vistaar Publications, New Delhi.