

NGO CONTINUUM: AN EVALUATION OF THE NATURE AND ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

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KEYWORDS: Continuum, horizontal axis, vertical axis, legitimacy, quadrant

ABSTRACT

As globalization and international trade impact societies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become increasingly influential in world affairs. They are consulted by governments as well as international organizations like the United Nations which have created associative status for them. In this paper, NGOs are identified in terms of their historical evolution, strategies, fields of operation, legitimacy, and relations with government, through a conceptual framework called "NGO Continuum". NGO Continuum has two axes: organizational (horizontal "X") and spatial (vertical "Y"). organizations located on the horizontal axis are arranged on a scale from fully NGOs, semi NGOs, semi governmental organization to fully governmental organizations. Organizations located on the vertical axis are arranged on a scale from local, provincial, national and regional to international. Organizations on the left side of the vertical axis are defined as non-governmental organizations, while those on the right side of the vertical are defined as governmental organizations. Organizations below the horizontal axis have two quadrants; (-,-) and (+,-). The former quadrant is characterized by having community and grassroots relevance, whereas the latter is characterized by developing the legislative framework within which the former operates. Organizations above the horizontal axis have two quadrants (-,+) and (+,+). Both quadrants are concerned with strategy and policy orientation of global relevance.

المخلص:

صارت المنظمات الغير حكومية قوة مؤثرة في مجتمعات اليوم كما العولمة والتجارة الدولية.

المنظمات الغير حكومية زاد الاهتمام بها من قبل الحكومات والمنظمات الدولية كمنظمة الأمم المتحدة التي

أفردت لها وضعية خاصة في منظومتها الإدارية. هذه الورقة تضع إطار نظري تعرّف فيه المنظمات الغير حكومية وفقا لتطورها التاريخي، خططها الاستراتيجية، ميادين عملها، شرعيتها، و علاقتها بالحكومات. متواليّة المنظمات الغير حكومية تتألف من محورين: محور أفقي (تنظيمي) ومحور رأسي (جغرافي). المنظمات التي على المحور الأفقي تتدرج في ترتيب يحدد طبيعة منشأها من كونها منظمات غير حكومية إلى منظمات شبه حكومية إلى منظمات حكومية. المنظمات التي على المحور الرأسي تتدرج في ترتيب جغرافي يحدد طبيعة مكان عملها على مستوى محلي، ولائي، قومي، إقليمي، وعالمي. المنظمات التي تقع في الجانب الأيسر من المحور الرأسي تعرّف على أنها غير حكومية بينما المنظمات في الجانب الأيمن تعرّف على أنها حكومية. المنظمات التي تحت المحور الأفقي تتألف من ربعين (quadrants) (-، -) و (-، +). أحداتي الربع الأول (-، -) يتميز بمنظمات منشأها ذو طبيعة أهلية بينما أحداتي الربع الثاني (+، -) يتميز بمنظمات تعمل كمنظم لعمل منظمات الربع الأول وذلك من خلال سن التشريعات والأطر القانونية. المنظمات التي فوق المحور الأفقي تتألف أيضا من ربعين (-، +) و (+، +). كلا الربعين يتعلقان بوضع الاستراتيجيات والسياسات ذات الصبغة العالمية فيما يتعلق بعمل المنظمات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متواليّة ، المحور الأفقي، المحور الرأسي، الشرعية القانونية، الربع.

INTRODUCTION

Voluntary organizations or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as they are widely known have recently contributed more to the field of development and relief than ever before. In less developed countries, voluntary organizations engage with local populations and reach remote areas and local communities in ways that are impossible for governments. In 1994 NGOs channeled 10% of official world wide development assistance (ODA) compared with only 0.2% in 1970 (Gordenker and Weiss 1995). Despite the limitations in size and financial resources in the face of large economic and political systems sustained by governments and corporations, NGOs have provided a convincing example of the power of voluntary actions to change society. It is a fact that the power of action arises not only from the size and resources of individual voluntary organizations, but rather from the ability of the voluntary sector to organize the

collective actions of tens and hundreds and even millions of citizens around the world (Hari 1998). This can be achieved through the activity of vast and constantly evolving networks that commonly lack identifiable structures and yet act in concert to create new political and institutional realities.

This paper explains in detail, in reference to a conceptual framework called “NGO Continuum”, the development of voluntary organizations or NGOs, their definitions, their historical evolution, their strategies and fields of operation, their legitimacy, and relationship with the government. NGO Continuum was developed during an internship the researcher spent, under supervision of Dr. Hari Srinivas, in Tokyo Institute of Technology (TIT), Department of Social Engineering in 1998.

Box 1

Definitions of Voluntary Organizations or NGOs

Northern Organizations [developed countries]

‘The definition of a voluntary organization is essentially a statement of an ideal type...key elements of this ideal type are that a body should have a formal organization, constitutionally separate from government, be self-governing, non-profit-distributing...and of public benefit’. Brenton 1985, 9.

‘A non-profit organization [is] a body of individuals who associate for any of three purposes: (1) to perform public tasks that have been delegated to them by the state; (2) to perform public tasks for which there is a demand that neither the state nor for-profit organizations are willing to fulfill; or (3) to influence the direction of policy in the state, the for-profit sector, or other nonprofit organizations’. Dobkin Hall 1987, 3.

‘Voluntary associations [involve]...forms of behaviour that are organized and that are directed at influencing broader structures of collective action and social purpose ... for the purpose of advancing an interest or achieving some social purpose. There is a clear aim toward a chosen form of ‘social betterment’. Van Til 1988, 8.

Southern organizations [less developed countries]

‘Are non-governmental (private), tax-exempt, non-profit, agencies engaged in overseas provision of services for relief and development purposes’. Gorman 1984, 2.

'Non-profit organizations, established and directed by private citizens, with a stated philanthropic purpose that included providing emergency relief and longer-term assistance to developing countries'. InterAction 1985, 2.

'Groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of government and characterised primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial, objectives'. World Bank (1989) quoted in Korten 1991, 21.

'(NGOs) are, in general, private, non-profit organizations that are publicly registered (i.e have legal status), whose principal function is to implement development projects favouring the popular sectors, and which receive financial support'. Pardon quoted in Landim 1987, 30.

'Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or private voluntary organizations (PVOs) are non-profit-making organizations...whose principle aim is to contribute to the alleviation of human suffering and to development in poorer countries...we do not mean either the large private foundations or the private firms in search of profits...(w)e mean voluntary, private organizations that mobilize the enthusiasm and commitment of volunteers to the objective of the relief of suffering, and of development'. Streeten 1988, 1.

'Voluntary Development Organizations (VDOs) represent a distinct class of organizations that depend on energy and resources given freely by their members and supporters because they believe in organizational mission. Exactly how the voluntary organization differs from its government and commercial counterparts becomes clear in answering two questions: What is the organization's central concern? How does it mobilize resources and human energy?' Korten and Brown, no date, 1.

Northern and Southern organizations

'Organizations included under the term non-profit sector have the following basic characteristics...(1) to provide a useful...public or semipublic good or service and serve a specified public purpose of weal...(2) they are not allowed to distribute residual income...(3) are created, maintained and terminated based on voluntary decision and initiative by members or board...(4) value rationality...which implies a deeply rooted set of values...' Anheier 1992), 11.

'Five structural/operational features: formal (i.e institutionalized), private (i.e institutionally separate from government), non-profit distributing (i.e nor returning profits to owners and directors), self-governing (i.e equipped to control their own activities) and voluntary (ie involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation)'. Salamon and Anheier 1992), 11.

'A voluntary agency is an organization established and governed by a group of private citizens for a stated philanthropic purpose and supported by voluntary individual contributions, foundations, educational institutions, churches and other religious groups and missions, medical and commercial associations, cooperative and cultural groups, as well as voluntary agencies'. OECD 1988, 14. Sources: Brenton, M. (1985), *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services*, Longman; Dobkin Hall, Peter (1987), 'A historical overview of the private non-profit sector' in Powell, Walker W. (ed) *The Non-profit Sector: A Research Handbook*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London; van Til, J. (1988), *Mapping the Third Sector: Voluntarism in a Changing Social Economy*, Foundation Center; Gorman, Robert F. (1984), *Private Voluntary Organizations as Agents of Development*, Westview Press, Boulder and London; Interaction (1985), *Diversity in Development*; Korten, David C. (1991), 'The role of non-governmental organizations in development: changing patterns and perspectives' in Samuel Paul and Arturo Israel (eds), *Non Governmental Organizations and the World Bank*, World Bank, Washington DC; Landim, Leilah (1987), 'Non-governmental organizations in Latin America', *World Development* Vol. 15 supplement, Pergamon Press; Streeten, Paul (1988), 'The contributors of non-governmental organizations to development' *Asian Institute of Economics and Social Studies* Vol. 7, No. 1, pp 1-9; Brown, L David and David C Korten, 'Voluntary development organizations: what makes this sector different?' Institute for Development Research; Anheier (1992), 'In Search of the Non-profit Sector 1: The Question of Definitions', Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, Working paper 2, Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies; OECD (1988), *Voluntary Aid for Development: The Role of Non-governmental Organizations*, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris.

Source: Silvina *et al.* (1995)

NGO Continuum:

NGO Continuum determines the key roles and actors of governments and NGOs, as well as the common denominator that links these actors. In order to understand the organizational nature, interrelationship, and actions of NGOs, a double-axis continuum is developed to locate actors within a coherent framework (Fig. 1).

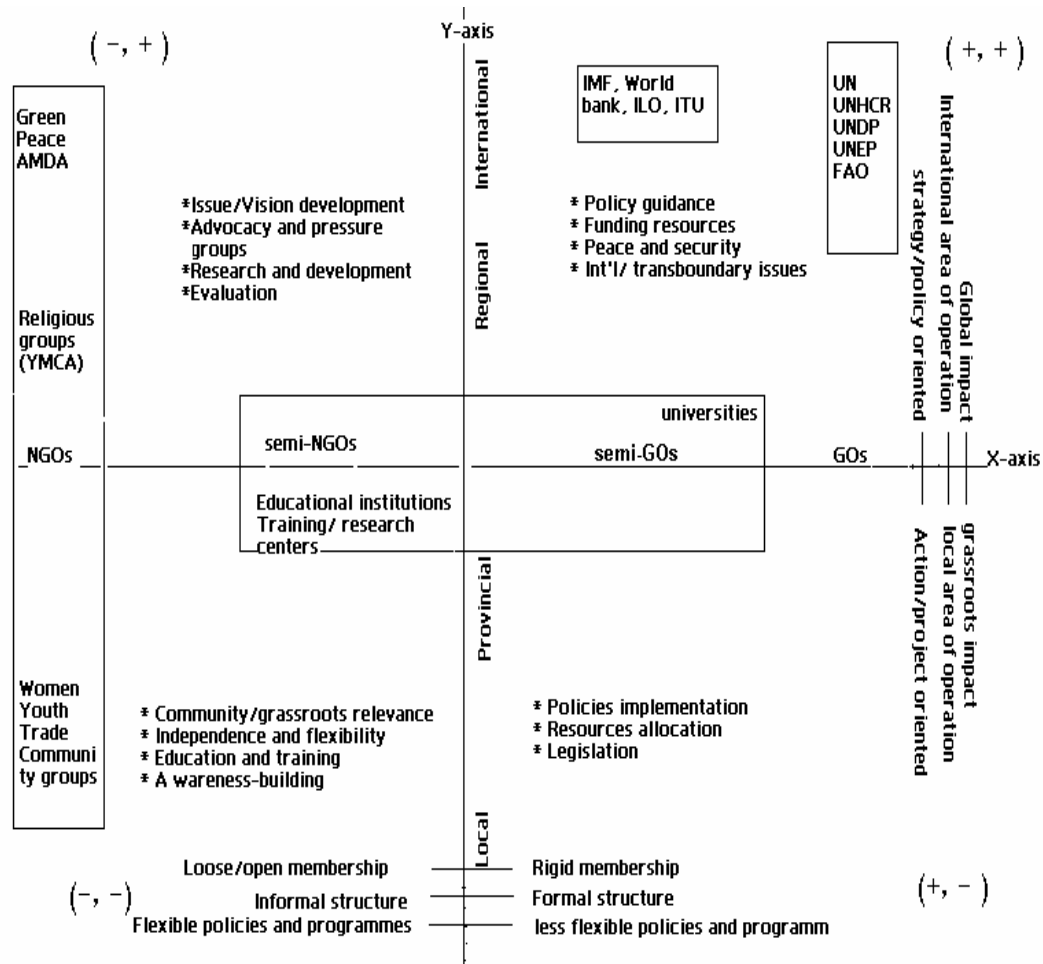


Fig. (1): NGO Continuum

Source: Based on Environmental Partnership Continuum (Hari 1998)

NGO Continuum has two axes. The horizontal axis ranges organizations and identifies their nature on a scale from fully NGOs, semi-NGOs, semi-governmental to fully governmental organizations. The vertical axis ranges these same organizations on a scale from local, provincial, regional to international.

Various factors determine the position of various organizations or actors on NGO Continuum, such as the nature and size of the organization, type of membership, location and range of programmes and projects, sources of funding, and the legal and legislative background of the organization's operation. The continuum can locate different actors and organizations ranging from informal community-based organizations (CBOs) to global organizations such as the United Nations.

1/Vertical Axis (Y): This axis is the spatial axis. It classifies organizations according to geographical dimensions from local, provincial, regional to international. Organizations along this axis can be identified as organizations on the left and right side of the axis.

Organizations on the left side along the vertical axis have an open membership, informal structure and flexible policies and programmes. These organizations are identified as “nongovernmental organizations”. The fact that NGOs are not administered directly by the state leads them to be seen as private institutions. They have been described elsewhere as private associations for collective management or private institutions with social interest (Silvina *et al.* 1995).

The term “NGO” was introduced by the United Nations (Gaussy 1998). It was then adopted for use in humanitarian aid programmes, and subsequently, through media usage, came to be socially recognized. Despite its popularity, the researcher's point of view is that the term “non-governmental organization” is a misnomer, since it does not reflect the reality of such organizations in terms of their nature, activities, and constituencies. The term NGO indicates that these organizations are not administered directly by governments; thus it characterizes voluntary organizations in terms of their legal and institutional form rather than their objectives and policies. In other words, it defines voluntary organizations by what they “are not” instead of what they “are”. Moreover, the term “NGO” conveys a negative meaning because we do not call government organizations “non-private organizations” (Streeten 1998). In Arabic the term for “NGOs” is *Munnazamat Tataweiya*, literally “voluntary organizations”. Therefore the term “voluntary organization” is more precise than “NGO” because it indicates the nature of the organizations.

No definitive judgment has been given as to whether or not NGOs are private; rather, NGOs have been classified as institutions of a third type, neither public nor private. Many definitions reflect the varied perspectives of NGOs (see Box 1). These include definitions drawn from both developed countries (the North) and less developed countries (the South). According to the definitions included in Box 1, there are four major identifying characteristics of organizations called “NGOs” (Colin & Leith 1996):

2/**Voluntary:** NGOs are formed voluntarily without any governmental or legal authority’s interventions, and its members are free to form a small group or a large group, to be beneficiaries or donors.

3/**Independent:** NGOs are independent, in the sense that they are controlled by those who formed or established them.

4/**Not-for-profit:** NGOs are not for private financial personal profit. Though such NGOs may have paid-employees who implement their programmes, the board founders or management are not paid. Also these NGOs may engage in income-generating activities without distributing such income to shareholders or to members.

5/**Not Self-Serving:** NGOs are those whose activities aim directly or indirectly to improve the circumstances of disadvantaged people who are not able to achieve full rights in society. They are involved with public interest issues and concerns.

John Clark divides the historical evolution of NGOs into six schools as follows (Clark 1991, 40-41):

- 1) Relief and Welfare Agencies (RWA); such as Catholic Relief Service and other missionary societies.
- 2) Technical Innovation Organizations (TIO): NGOs which are specialized in specified fields in order to pioneer or improve new techniques towards problems, such as Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, and Asian Medical Doctors Association (AMDA) in Japan. The former is specialized in building the financial capacity of poor people in Bangladesh through credit programmes, while the latter is concerned with provision of medical and health assistance for victims of natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods.

- 3) **Public Service Contractors (PSCs):** NGOs that are contracted and funded by governments and official aid agencies. They implement projects that they are able to perform within their size and capacity, e.g., CARE International.
- 4) **Popular Development Agencies (PDAs):** NGOs which concentrate on social development and self-reliance, e.g., OXFAM, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC).
- 5) **Grassroots Development Organizations (GDOs):** NGOs that are locally-based and whose members are themselves poor and oppressed. Such NGOs attempt to shape and promote a kind of popular development process; they are often supported by PDAs, e.g., The Self-employed Women's Association of Ahmedabad in Pakistan and Rural Workers' Unions of Brazil.
- 6) **Advocacy Groups and Networks (AGN):** NGOs which are primarily lobbying on specific issues such as the environment, education, and human rights through advocacy programmes and which do not have to undertake field projects, e.g., Greenpeace and Freedom from Debt Coalition in the Philippines.

In addition to Clark's classification, David Korten (1990) has identified four generations of NGOs in terms of the evolution of their strategies and fields of operation: Relief and Welfare; Small-scale, Self-reliant Local Development; Sustainable Systems Development; and People's Movements.

A) First Generation: This generation's strategy is concerned with providing direct and immediate services to disaster victims and disaster-vulnerable groups. These services can be food, health care or shelter. Provision of such assistance enables NGOs to maintain direct relations with beneficiaries. The assistance, however, is influenced entirely by available funds and human resources such as staff and administrative capacity of an NGO. World Wars I and II were thresholds for the first generation to expand their international activities. NGOs such as Save the Children Fund, CARE, and OXFAM-UK were created to help victims of these wars. Religious groups, missionaries, and churches in Africa were important agents of colonial governments in providing basic education and health care. Nevertheless, the relief and welfare activities of the first-generation of NGOs ended up creating dependency and passivity on the beneficiaries' side, because NGOs tended to play the performer role, while beneficiaries tended to remain as passive recipients. As a result, a second

generation of NGOs was then created, operating in areas beyond the provision of direct and immediate services.

B)Second Generation: The second generation's strategy is concerned with empowering people to meet their own needs through self-reliant action such as development of committees to carry out measures introducing improved agricultural practices or promoting public awareness. The second generation's strategy is developmental in essence and it aims at sustainability and building the capacity of the beneficiaries. It operates on a community level, and thus establishes a partnership with the community. This strategy assumes that the problem is located within the community itself, because it lacks skills and physical strength in realizing community development. Therefore it emphasizes human resource development and economic resources for gainful employment. The ancient oriental saying: "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish, and you feed him for lifetime," reflects the philosophy of the second generation.

C)Third Generation: The third generation's strategy is to seek changes beyond the individual community in specific policies and institutions at the local, national and global level. This generation works on policy and vision development. The third generation emerged as a complement to the second generation, since the impact of second generation of NGOs depended primarily on the presence of NGOs and availability of donations to strengthen a community. Therefore NGOs need to extend their influence even in their absence through assisting governmental organizations or international agencies in developing policies that sustain and empower communities in ways that strengthen their control over local resources. There is, however, a critical deficiency in third generation strategy which is parallel to a deficiency in second generation strategy; that is, the second generation's strategy requires, at the micro-level, countless replication in thousands of communities, while the third generation strategy requires the same, though, at the macro-level. Furthermore, the unequal distribution of wealth and power at national and international levels is a serious hindrance to realizing the strategy of the third generation. This led academics and practitioners in the field of NGOs to enquire, where should NGOs go from the third generation?

D)Fourth Generation: The fourth generation's strategy is to explore beyond initiatives aimed to change specific policies and institutional sub-systems. The goal of this strategy is to energize a mass of independent and decentralized initiatives in support of a specific social vision. Thus it focuses on communicating ideas and information through mass media, newsletters, school curricula, academic symposiums and seminars, study groups, and social networks of all types in order to promote and energize voluntary action. This can be achieved by people within and without formal organizations in supportive of social transformation. The main actor of the fourth generation is a social movement that is driven not by financial resources or organizational structures, but rather by ideas and visions of a better community and world. These inspire and mobilize independent action by countless individuals and organizations across national and regional boundaries. Such movements rely on social energy rather than money.

Doctor Y. C. James Yen, who energized the literacy movement in China in the 1920s and 1930s, might be a pioneer of the fourth generation. He started this movement with the idea that every person has a right and, indeed, an obligation to be literate. This mass education movement was launched with massive parades and large banners bearing slogans such as "An Illiterate Man is a Blind Man", and involved hundreds of thousands of volunteers including scholars, statesmen, military officers, shopkeepers, students, and others in a national commitment to eradicate illiteracy.

Volunteers taught an estimated five million illiterate workers, in temples, churches, private residences, police stations and whatever space could be made available. Some volunteers, for example students, were recruited for a small transportation allowance. Seventy leading businessmen, college presidents, editors, officials and labour leaders formed a general steering committee. Mass meetings of teachers, shopkeepers and students were held. The Chinese literacy movement was funded entirely by voluntary contributions. Copies of texts and unauthorized printings were used and reused across provinces and towns through out the country. At its peak, Dr. Yen himself might not have been aware of how many classes were in fact being taught or how many schools were operating. This might be considered a sign of poor

management from a programme managerial point of view; however, it could be a sign of the vitality of a powerful idea to spread by its own momentum without central control or monitoring (James 1985).

Across all generations of NGOs, two questions come to mind: what collectivity of people is being represented, and to whom are NGOs accountable? These two questions can be grouped together under the issue of “legitimacy”. Most people might agree that the legitimacy of NGOs rests on a belief that they play an essential role in meeting the needs of people who are not members of the organization. Nevertheless, a few points may help to clarify these two questions (Colin and Leith 1996):

First, two types of NGOs can be identified: participatory organizations and foundations. In the former, the general assembly of an NGO elects the executive committee or management board of the NGO, while in the latter, the founders or a board of trustees select and determine the management committee of the NGO, which, not deriving any financial gain, is accordingly independent in evaluating and judging the performance of the NGO.

Second, the registration and legal processes within which the government administers the NGOs’ presence, require NGOs to be accountable to state departments and the public as well. For example, the NGO Liaison and Support Unit in the United Nations Mission in Kosovo requires NGOs operating in Kosovo to submit an annual report. The Unit makes these reports available for the public at any time during working days (Saif 2001).

Third, NGOs are accountable to their donors through pre-arranged reporting and financial auditing arrangements. Regarding the issue of representation, community-oriented NGOs consider themselves to be representing the cause of a particular community. Other NGOs work to address issues that affect the well-being of the society as a whole and consider themselves to be representing a cause of some kind rather than a particular group of people. Foundations or private NGOs consider their representation to be in the form of interests or common benefits in which the founders believe. For example, some NGOs are conduits for business or market interests, and sometimes even politics. In this case these private NGOs are less accountable internally, i.e., to a board of trustees. However, both types of NGOs are accountable to the public and government through the regulatory processes that NGOs must undertake in order

to conduct their activities. In order to ensure their legitimacy, governance, and system of operation, NGOs need to follow the following guidelines:

- A. NGOs should emphasize their mission and objectives clearly and ensure that their programmes and operations are at all times within these premises. John Clark writes of the importance of the mission statement: The “good NGO” should have a clear “mission statement” which guides all its activities from its field work to its fund raising techniques to its advocacy roles. The mission statement should describe the NGOs development philosophy (along the DEPENDENCE line), define its own potential contribution to this process, and set out its strategy for realizing this potential through its various departments. (Clark 1991, 42).
- B. Work to improve human resource development and training within the organization of managers, administrators, project staff, and board members.
- C. Create better means by which organizations can monitor, evaluate, and review its services and activities.
- D. Finally, networking and alliance-building enable NGOs to identify common interests and concerns, share information, provide support to each other and maximize the use of available resources to achieve common goals.

Here, let us turn to the organizations that are located on the right side along the vertical axis in the NGO Continuum. They are characterized by having formal structures rigid, closed membership, and less flexible policies and programmes. These organizations are identified as governmental organizations and are more concerned with policy guidance, funding resources, and peace and security issues at national, regional, and global levels. Because of their ability to control and reallocate the nation’s wealth, resources, and economic activities, governmental organizations have a natural advantage over NGOs and business sectors in serving and maintaining public order and security. Therefore they tend to exercise legitimate means of coercion (such as taxation) to serve purposes that are difficult for either business or the voluntary sector to meet, like providing national defense, infrastructure, and social welfare.

Governmental organizations frame the legal procedures by which NGOs can become legal entities. Accordingly, NGOs can legitimately enjoy benefits such as tax exemptions, reception of funds from public or foreign donors, and national or international representation (Saif 2001).

The two sides of the Y-axis reflect the relation between governmental organizations and NGOs, which is often rich and complex. These relations can be manifested in the following ways (Streeten 1998):

First, there is a relation between NGO programmes and projects and government policies. If an NGO has a project that tends to improve farmers' capacity to produce better crops and more food, for instance, this aim can be hindered if the exchange rate is overvalued, infrastructure is poor, roads are bad, there is no irrigation system, or research into new seeds is lacking. The situation is rather like this: a salad is okay, but with a rich, oily dressing it tastes much better. A governmental macroeconomic framework is a precondition for the success of NGOs' projects that involve input from outside the area of the project.

Second, NGO projects are often determined or supplied by the government; for instance, the success of projects in the health sector depends on the training or manpower provided by the government. For instance, in the Sudan, the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) was launched by the government and implemented in most regions by NGOs, especially in camps for internally displaced persons.

Third, a large and increasing proportion of financial aid comes directly from donor governments or multilateral banks, e.g., the Swedish government gives 80% of its aid to NGOs. In some less developed countries, NGOs compete with their governments for foreign fund and donations.

Fourth, successful projects of NGOs might be adopted and expanded by governments. In some developing countries such as the Sudan NGOs hand over their projects to the government to secure their continuation (Saif and Sugiman 2001).

Fifth, NGOs exert efforts to influence government policies and decision-making by lobbying, media or even protests. This was manifested in December 1997, when the activist Jody Williams received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). Most of the world's governments signed this treaty; therefore, governments and NGOs are not always adversaries.

The government-NGO relationship is influenced by economic, political, and cultural factors, in the sense that liberal governments have a positive stance towards NGO activities in the field of human rights, empowerment and participation. On the opposite side, NGOs are likely to support the political opposition in its struggle against military and dictatorships. NGOs which are "western" in outlook are not welcomed by some African governments. It would appear that an impetus

for introducing legislation by governments has arisen because of concerns over the behavior of foreign NGOs (Saif and Sugiman 2001). Rwanda's law goes much further than most by requiring NGOs to demonstrate the involvement of the beneficiaries' community in defining its own needs and planning the project before the NGO can be registered (Yaansah 1995).

NGO activities should act as a complement to government programmes, filling gaps in the government's services in such a way as to make these services more relevant to the disadvantaged population. Therefore, the role of NGOs is to collaborate with governments in achieving its projects by sharpening their political analysis in a way that enables them to see how various government policies hinder or facilitate their own development objectives (Clark 1991).

2. The horizontal Axis (X): This axis is an organizational axis, in the sense that it classifies organizations on a scale from fully non-governmental organization, semi-NGO, semi-governmental to fully governmental organization. This axis includes two types of organizations; organizations below and above the axis. Each type has two quadrants.

Organizations below the horizontal axis have two quadrants as follow:

- A. The (-, -) Quadrant: organizations and actors positioned in this quadrant are characterized by (i) having community and grassroots relevance, (ii) having an informal structure, since they have an open and loose membership, (iii) having flexible policies and programmes which are limited to their communities, and (iv) working for building a community's capacity and public awareness through education and training. These organizations include non-governmental and semi-governmental organizations. Community Based Organizations (CBOs), also referred to as people organizations, are a stark example of such. CBOs are distinctive in nature and purpose from other NGOs, because they are membership organizations formed by a group of individuals who have joined together to serve their own interests, such as women's groups, credit circles, and youth clubs (Malen C. 1995). With projects that require participatory development, CBOs play a key role in providing an institutional framework for beneficiary participation. CBOs are often served locally at the provincial or national level, and thus they might work in partnership with national or international NGOs, which play an

intermediary role between CBOs and donor institutions such as governments or international agencies.

- B. The (+, -) Quadrant: Organizations and actors positioned in this quadrant are characterized by: (i) working on development of legal/legislative framework and instruments; (ii) engaging in enacting regulatory processes within which the enforcement and compliance of the legal framework is maintained; (iii) having formal structure and closed rigid membership; and (iv) having less flexible policies and programmes. These organizations are governmental or semi-governmental institutions whose areas of actions and projects are local and have direct impact at the grassroots level. Local governments such as ward offices or state governments and national academic institutions are good examples of such organizations.

Organizations above the X-axis have two quadrants which focus on strategy and policy orientation of global relevance.

1. The (-, +) Quadrant: Organizations in this quadrant are characterized by their work on (i) issue and vision development, (ii) research development, and (iii) monitoring and evaluation. These organizations are mainly non-governmental and their areas of operation are regional and global. Their mode of operation is advocacy and pressure. Greenpeace and religious groups such as Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) are examples of such.
2. The (+, +) Quadrant: Organizations in this quadrant are primarily involved in work on (i) policy development, (ii) funding, and (iii) maintaining peace and security. Because this quadrant covers regional and international areas, the organizations are concerned with international and trans-boundary issues such as conflict resolution, refugees, and trade disputes. Implementation of these issues is made through conventions, treaties, agreements, and so on. The United Nations, UNHCR, and UNICEF are clear examples of such.

Mapping organizations by positioning them on the NGO Continuum helps us to understand the relevant strengths and weaknesses of such organizations. We may further categorize the deficiencies and problems of these organizations as a "lack" (that which is not there), a "gap" (that which is not enough), or a "mismatch" (that which is not convenient or compatible).

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