

## **Chapter I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

“Service is the Rent we pay for the privilege of living on the Earth”

Eldon Tanner

The human propensity to do voluntary work, particularly at the times of distress and contingency without expecting anything in return is basically rooted in the physical structure of the human body itself. In other words, it can be said that the tradition of voluntary action is as old as humanity. Philanthropists, missionaries and laymen had shown kindness to their fellow human beings, especially at the times of distress and contingency. In traditional and civilized societies, people used to believe that it was their duty to help others in times of need. Ranging from help extended to the people who need it as a part of charity work to self-help programs, voluntarism today is manifested in various forms. This virtue of voluntary action is expressed through an organized form in NGOs. In other words, it can be said that NGOs have the spirit of voluntarism.

#### **1.1 What are NGOs ?**

Non Governmental Organizations is an organization which is neither a part of the government nor a for-profit organization. NGOs are flexible, independent, secular, democratic and non-profit people’s organizations that work for uplifting the economically and socially marginalized groups or communities. It comprises with a small number of members who have high motivation, and concern themselves with the issues of the people or community. They are generally low paid and usually comes from the youth sections of the society. The term ‘NGO’ was used by the UNO to point out the difference between its members who are sovereign nation states, and the organizations who collaborate or receive grants from its agencies for undertaking and implementing the developmental projects and programmes. However, the term is now widely spread and all institutions except the direct government departments are loosely described as NGOs.

NGOs consist of those private groups who have scientific, philanthropic religious, cultural and technical or economic orientation. “The Economic and Social Council of the United

Nations by adopting a resolution on February 27, 1950 defined the non-governmental organisations as ‘any international organisation which is not established by inter-governmental agreements’ ” (Agarwal 2011:223). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are called by different names at different parts of the world. They are called as third sector organizations, community based organizations, non-profit organizations, charitable organizations and voluntary organizations. In India, NGOs are often referred as not-for-profit institutions. They are officially defined as those organizations which are not-for-profit, self-governing, non compulsory and also do not distribute any surplus that have been generated. They have to be registered under the Societies Registration Act, Cooperative Societies Act, Public Trust Act and the Companies Act by having a general body, executive council, chief executive, paid staff and volunteers.

NGOs play an active role in the developmental work and also in bringing change in the society. They are playing a leading role in the fields of education, health, conserving environment, small scale industries, drinking water, organizing forest management groups or upliftment of women etc. They undertake a number of activities such as removing the sufferings, promoting the interests of the poor, protecting the environment, providing basic social services, undertaking community development programmes and promoting human rights. They vary in their objectives and methods. There are some NGOs who act primarily as lobbyists. There are others who primarily conduct programmes and activities. The NGOs facilitate participation of the people in the decision making process. They also mobilize the people for getting their support to monitor the developmental plans and policies. They enable and empower the people with a view to make them effective instruments of good governance and agents of social change.

## **1.2 Evolution**

NGOs which is also referred as ‘voluntary organisations’ function independently outside the governmental system, having service as their primary motive. The term ‘voluntary organisations’ is synonymous with the term ‘NGOs’. The history of voluntary associations can be traced back to the Paleolithic period. However, it emerged as a concept only in the twentieth century, more particularly after the Second World War. Missionary zeal, war and calamities, socio-economic discriminations and ideological interest are the main factors for the growth of voluntary agencies.

“Human society is a product of voluntary association influenced by environmental determinism. The voluntary agencies have a parallel evolution with the evolution of human society and its cultural matrix. Risk-management, collection of food and biological and psychological needs enforced a kind of voluntary union among the primitives. As the group was moving in search of food, common interest developed. It was further strengthened by kinship organizations. When the tribes settled down finally society was born. Thus, voluntary association was the corner stone on which the whole edifice of early social action was built” (Bhose 2003: 24).

When the society advanced in science and technology and with the rise of complexities in society, the need for voluntary association also became more active. With the emergence of political economy, lineage kingdoms also became a necessity and when the lineage kingdoms integrated into bigger states, social insurance had remained the primary concern before the state. At this stage, kinship obligations, i.e., serving the kinsfolk and commitments of lineage heads started to increase. During this period, the service to humanity was more related to economic activity and social security. When the state started to control the economic resources and all the risk-management activities, human service became more ascribed to the state. It imposed an obstacle to the process of evolution of voluntary organizations. However, the Kinship institutions continued their service to the local people with mutual assistance. The aggressive competition for resources created the situation of war among them. In such circumstances, those who are fittest, they survived and those who are less fit, they struggled to exist. For this i.e. to survive they required assistance and compassion. Such kind of environmental determinism encouraged and promoted the growth of voluntary associations.

### **1.3 Theories of Voluntarism**

There are several theories regarding the origin of the voluntary sector put forwarded by western scholars. These theories have originated from various disciplines ranging from Economics and Political Economy to Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology.

The contract failure theory, which is an economic theory, explains the reason of the production of particular kinds of goods by voluntary sector rather than by the private sector. It

explains that when the consumers are unable to evaluate accurately the adequacy or quality of the goods, they use to choose voluntary organizations as suppliers rather than the profit-making firms. The manager of a for-profit firm may supply inferior quality products and they pocket the extra earnings they made. However, the opportunity to do so does not exist in the case of non-profit firms as they are prevented by law from generating the additional profit. Therefore, the consumers lose their trust on for-profit firms and they try to protect their interests by sponsoring voluntary associations. This theory does not seem to be applicable to the Indian situation as most of the voluntary organizations are set up to meet the needs of the downtrodden and vulnerable sections of the society.

“The second economic theory, the subsidy theory, argues that nonprofit organizations benefit from a variety of implicit and explicit subsidies, such as exemption from taxes. Thus, once set up, a part of the financial burden shifts to the government, a prospect which acts as an incentive for setting up a voluntary association. This theory explains the phenomenal growth in the number of voluntary organizations as a result of the abundant availability of funds, both foreign and domestic (mainly governmental), which began to characterize the voluntary scene from the late 1960s onwards” (Chandra 2005:11). This theory can be applicable to the Indian situation as voluntary organizations here receive even their initial funds either from the government or from foreign funding agencies.

The exchange theory views a voluntary association as a benefit exchange group. The organizer of the group offers a set of benefits to the members and in return receives benefits from them. For becoming a member, one may have to pay a subscription. The organizer has to devote all his time and energy to recruit members for obtaining benefits from them and also has to deliver benefits to continuously retain them. Fulfillment of much cherished goals or monetary compensation is the benefit of the organizer. This theory treats the organizer as a political entrepreneur. The organization can sustain only when there is a mutually satisfactory exchange of benefits both to the members and the organizers. The organizer must receive sufficient membership support so that he can continue his work of providing the benefits. When the benefits or profits continue to decrease, the organization gradually weakens and closes down. “This theory offers a framework for understanding why some organisations thrive and others wither away. The benefit exchange perspective also affords a more balanced view of

organization and particularly of the organizer (entrepreneur): he needs to be seen neither as a pure altruist nor as a crass opportunist, but rather as a rational person” (Chandra 2005:12).

## 1.4 Characteristics of NGOs

i). **Voluntary:** NGOs are formed voluntarily. They possess the element of voluntarism. They are organized or built upon the commitment of a few persons.

ii). **Legal Status:** NGOs have a legal status. They are registered under several Governmental Acts like Societies Registration Act, Public Trust Act and a few under Trade Union Act. They are also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India with a view to obtain funds from abroad.

iii). **Independent:** NGOs are independent in the making and implementation of plans and programmes. They do not have any hard and fast rules as in government institution.

iv). **Flexible:** NGOs are flexible in their administration. They are not bound by time consuming regulations and bureaucratic obstacles.

v). **Quicker in decision making:** NGOs are quicker in decision making. They take quick decisions in response to any situation and to the needs of the community. As the decisions are taken quickly, their services are delivered to the people on time.

vi). **Non-profit oriented:** NGOs are non-profit institutions. All the benefits or gains from economic projects are not distributed to the members or stake holders. On the contrary, they are re-used for the fulfillment of the objectives of the organisation.

vii). **High motivation:** The members and staff of the NGOs are highly motivated. They are greatly inspired to work for the cause of the poor and downtrodden. They work hard for the achievement of their objectives for the benefit of the target groups.

viii). **Freedom in work:** The workers of NGOs enjoy maximum freedom in their field work. They enjoy freedom to organize the community and also carry out the developmental schemes. “Such freedom becomes a source of motivation to accomplish the task inspite of their less remuneration. They are not pinched by their bosses for petty mistakes” (Bhose 2003:40).

ix). **“Value driven:** NGOs are driven by social values and humanitarian principles and hence they try to promote a value based society” (Bhose 2003:40).

x). **People-centred:** People are the centre of all the activities of NGOs. They make plans and programmes for the people and implement them through the people.

## 1.5 Different Types of NGOs

NGOs come into existence with a variety of purposes. They also differ with one another in terms of size, members, organizational structure, orientation, level of cooperation, funding, functions, operation level, goals etc. NGOs can be broadly classified in the following types-

### 1). Types of NGO by orientation

a). **Domestic charitable organisations with little participation by the beneficiaries-** Such NGOs undertake activities with a view to fulfill the needs of the poor and also undertake relief measures like distribution of food or clothing, housing provisions, transport etc.

b). **NGO with participatory orientation-** This includes those NGOs with self-help projects where the local people participate and cooperate in its implementation. The local people contribute them with tangible and intangible goods like land, labour, cash, material etc.

c). **NGO with service orientation-** Such NGOs devise certain programmes like family planning, health, roads, communications, education etc. and the civil society members participate in the implementation of these programmes or in receiving its services.

d). **NGO with empowering orientations-** Such NGOs play a facilitating role in the empowerment of the people. They promote and strengthen their awareness in their own potential with an objective of controlling their lives, access to credit, training and other inputs which are necessary for undertaking employment generating activities.

### 2). Type of NGO by level of operation-

a). **Community based organizations-** Such NGOs emerge out of their own initiative. For example, women’s organizations, sports club, religious or educational organizations etc.

b). **City-wide organizations**- They are created for helping the poor. For example, Rotary or Lions Club, Association of Community Organisation, Chambers of Commerce and Industry etc.

c). **National NGOs**- National NGOs are those which operate at the National level like YMCAs/YWCAs, professional organizations etc.

d). **International Relief and Development Organisations**- Such organizations act like NGOs, however they are established and mandated by international treaties or secular agencies. For example, Ford or Rockefeller Foundation, Mercy Corps, IRC International, Water and Sanitation Centre, CARE etc.

### 3). **Other types of NGOs**-

a). There are several issue based NGOs like Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, Transparency International etc. Amnesty International works for the impartial protection of human rights. Greenpeace works on the issue of environmentalism and peace. Human Rights Watch investigates the incidents of human rights abuses in different parts of the world. They try to bring the attention of the international community to these abuses and also try to pressurize the government and different international organizations. Transparency International works on combating global corruption and also criminal activities arising from it.

b). There are some quasi-autonomous non-government organizations which call themselves as NGOs, however they are a network of the government standards agencies for 147 countries. For example, International Organisation for Standardisation. (ISO)

## **1.6 Funding of NGOs**

NGOs whether big or small they need money for its existence and for carrying out its work. “The amount of budget differs from NGO to NGO. It may be a few thousands in the case of a small NGO and may run into crores for large organizations” (Chandra and Trollope 2015:125).

Following are the main sources of funds for NGOs:

## **1. Members contributions**

Membership contributions are almost universal in the NGOs. However, it is not sufficient for carrying out a meaningful activity. If the membership fee is so high, then very few people will join the NGO as a member. If it is too low, then it will be difficult to undertake projects of public welfare and the very purpose for which the NGO is created will be defeated. Then, it will ultimately let the NGO to depend on public donations or government grants.

## **2. Public donations**

Public donations are the major source of funds for new and old NGOs. For raising funds from the general public, it is necessary for an NGO to build an identity. Here, building identity means becoming a legal entity. It should get registered according to law. The aims and objectives of the organization become a part of the Memorandum of Association submitted at the time of the registration. However, every donor whom the organization will approach may not have the time and willingness to go through this legal document. Therefore, it would be useful if the organization keeps a sort of manifesto where it explains the aims and objectives it wants to achieve and also their importance to the community. If the organization has a website, then it should publish its manifesto on it. Through this, the donors can properly assess the validity of its projects and also its impact on the political, social and economic condition of the community. They will also be able to go forward of developing a long-term partnership with the organization. After properly clarifying the main goals and areas of activity, the need is to design projects by assessing the requirements of the community. Then the organization can contact the potential donors to become partners in the execution of the project.

NGOs can also raise funds by organizing some religious or social events. In the Western part, marathon races and fund-raising dinners are organized. Some NGOs also organize a second-hand market. Volunteers collect unwanted goods like books, clothes, furniture etc. by going from door to door. Then they sell these goods at a fixed price or at no price. People pay the price by treating as donations. In India, religious events can also attract substantial donations. Sometimes, famous dancers and singers agree to perform without any fee and the money collected by selling tickets goes to the NGO.



### **3. Government Grants**

Government grants is another source of fund for NGOs. The Central Government ministries provide funds to various NGOs for specific project. Certain conditions need to be fulfilled for getting these grants-in-aid. The new NGOs rarely get funds. The websites of the ministries contain full details of government schemes disbursing money to NGOs. The State Governments also launch their own schemes for allocating funds to NGOs.

### **4. Funds from Foreign Agencies**

NGOs can also get funds from foreign agencies. Some private foundations of America and European countries grant funds to organizations who are working in developing countries like Africa, China, India and Latin America. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation and The National Endowment for Democracy are the most prominent foundations based in America. Aga Khan Development Network of Switzerland and Compagnia da San Paolo of Italy are other such agencies.

Several books and directories can be found in the market containing the names, addresses, phone numbers and E-mail addresses of such agencies. They also contain information about the projects and programmes for which these agencies provide grants. However, for getting grants from foreign agencies, NGOs need to be registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs and they have to comply with the rules and regulations of Foreign Contribution and (Regulation) Act.

### **5. Funds from Commercial Activities**

There are some NGOs which undertake commercial activities to make profits. These profits are then used in solving social and economic causes. Manufacturing and selling Ayurvedic medicines, herbal products, books, gift items etc. are the popular commercial activities of NGOs.

### **6. Funds from Big Companies Under New CSR Law**

In the year 2013, the Indian Parliament enacted a new Company Law by amending the old Law. Here, it has been mentioned that the companies who have a net worth rupees 500 crore

or make sales of rupees 1,000 crores or more have to contribute 2 percent of their income on the social welfare schemes. This is known as CSR. According to this law, the companies can spend money on the projects carried out by them. They can also donate it to some NGOs for their specific projects or programmes. The NGOs can approach such companies registered under CSR for funds. They will receive funds if they succeed in convincing the management.

Thus, fund raising is a difficult task for NGOs, especially at the very first stage. Moreover, big donors always select such organizations for funding who have a long history of success in the execution of different programmes. But with this one should not get demoralized. For running an NGO, one needs to engage himself in it with a clear and open mindset and also with a willingness to improve his skills.

### **1.6.1 Tax Exemptions**

While raising funds, the NGOs must know all the rules and regulations applicable to their income and also the exemptions given to them. Certain tax exemptions have been made on the income of the NGO and also for the donors under the Income Tax Act. The Income Tax Act, 1961 which is an all India Act applies to all the non-profit organizations with regard to tax exemptions. However, certain conditions need to be fulfilled for getting tax exemptions under Section 12 and 12A of the Act.

The organization must have religious and charitable purposes. It has to spend 85 percent from its income in any financial year (1st April to 31st March) for fulfilling the objectives of the organization. The organization has to agree to this condition within these 12 months. However, it has to give full justification of the reason why it has not been able to spend the required percentage of money. Surplus income can also be collected for certain specific projects for a period of 1 to 5 years.

The organization should deposit its fund as mentioned in the Section 11(5) of the Income Tax Act. The organization should not spend its income or property directly or indirectly for the benefit of those founder, trustee, relative of the founder or trustee or a person who has donated more than rupees 50,000 to it in a financial year.

The organization needs to file its annual income return timely and this income should be collected or applied in India. But trust income can be applied outside India without any tax for promoting the interest of international community in which our country has an interest. The accounts of the organization has to be reviewed or audited by a chartered accountant and the report needs to be submitted along with the tax return. The members of the organization should submit an application in the prescribed form before the Income Tax Commissioner within one year from the date of the establishment of the organization.

### **1.6.2 Section 80(G)**

Section 80(G) grants deduction in donations to certain funds, charitable institutions etc. According to this section, the donors donating money to the institutions and organizations which are registered with the Income Tax Department are exempted from income tax on the amount being donated. This section is divided into two sub-sections (1) and (2). The donors who donate to institutions listed under sub-section (1) are able to get full exemption on the total amount of donations given in a financial year. On the contrary, in other case, just an amount equal to 50 percent of the aggregate is exempted from taxes.

The organizations seeking this exemption for their donors have to submit a prescribed form and in the prescribed manner to the Income Tax Commissioner. The organizations and funds are later granted exemption certificate after considering at the highest level. The National Defence Fund set up by the Central Government, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, the Prime Minister Relief Fund and National Children's Fund etc. are some of the names listed under this section.

### **1.6.3 Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act**

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) is another important law in the voluntary sector. It was enacted in the year 1976 during the period of emergency. Since then, it has been amended several times. It was lastly amended in the year 2010 and it came into force from 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2011. Several voluntary organizations are receiving foreign fund and the total amount of money received runs into billions of rupees. Some of the provisions of the Act are very strict and binding. Again, changes have also been made from time to time. Following changes have been made in the new Act –

1. Provision for single bank account has been deleted and now provision for multiple bank accounts has been included in respect of utilization of funds in multiple locations.
2. Consultancy income has been kept outside of FCRA.
3. The expenditure on administration should not be more than 50 percent of the foreign currency. Rules 3, 4 and 5 contain detail information of the list of such administrative expenses. However, the Act has exempted the expenses on rentals, vehicles and salary for attaining the welfare objectives of the organization from this list.
4. Earlier, there was a clause for penalty for those who make false statements. Now in the new law, the maximum year for imprisonment is reduced to 6 months.
5. Individuals who have received more than rupees 1 lakh of foreign fund should inform the Ministry of Finance.
6. Organizations adopting political nature are not allowed to take foreign fund. However, the meaning of political has not been defined clearly in the Act. It has just mentioned that those who habitually involve themselves in activities like Rasta Roko and Jail Bharo will be considered as political. Section 49 of the Act specifies provision for the Parliament to decide whether an organization is political or not.
7. Foreign funds should not be used for speculative investment which includes land.
8. If the organization renews the FCRA registration after every five years, then it would result in avoidable administrative control.
9. If the organization has not done any reasonable activity for three years, then the FCRA registration will be liable to be cancelled. However, the meaning of reasonable activity is not clearly defined in the Act.

### **1.7 Three Roles of NGOs**

NGOs undertake different activities depending upon the purpose for which they are established. Generally, following are the three functions or roles of NGOs -

1). **To disseminate information-** NGOs have the ability to communicate at all levels from the grassroot level to the top levels of government. They can facilitate communication in both upward and downward i.e. from people to the government and from the government to the people. They facilitate active participation of the people and use to recruit both experts and

highly motivated staff. All these enable them to reach and disseminate information more effectively to the people.

2). **Harbingers of change and innovation-** NGOs act more quickly than the government within a specific time and place for which they would be supporting a particular project. The state structures are criticized for being corrupt and ineffectively performing welfare and resource management functions. However, NGOs are more accountable, responsive to social issues and committed to bring about social change. They can search for new needs, work in new areas, unveil social evils and give attention to unattended and unmet needs.

3). **Training and technical assistance-** NGOs can expose their functionaries to the processes of training and a good capacity building which can bridge the gap between community and administration. The development of technical assistance and training capacity can get disseminated to the government while preparing implementation of the plans.

In other words, it can be said that NGOs play two kinds of role – advocacy and service delivery. In the developing world, NGOs mostly play these two kinds of role. Service delivery generally describes the providing of primary health care facilities, providing non-formal education, helping people during natural disasters, riots, conflicts and providing goods and services to the needy. NGOs are seen delivering different types of services. This role of service delivery is of three forms. Firstly, the NGOs act as an implementing agency by delivering goods and services to the people. Many of the NGOs are seen organizing health camps for poor, distributing clothes and materials during natural disasters, riots and conflicts, providing artificial limbs to the handicapped etc. Secondly, NGOs also try to strengthen the local people by providing them training for various purpose. They also work for solving their problems through their cooperation. Training for Self Help Groups by NGOs can be cited here as an example. Thirdly, NGOs can encourage the people to pressurize the government for getting better services for themselves from the government agencies and also for making them more responsible and accountable.

Empowerment and participation are the two concepts closely associated with the service delivery role of NGOs. “In the context of service delivery by NGOs, empowerment means to deliver the service in such a way that it can act as a catalyst for other developmental changes. It

also leads to the participation of the beneficiary and his active involvement instead of passivity. He has a role in decision-making instead of always carrying out the decisions taken by others” (Chandra and Trollope 2015:96).

“The origin of the concept of ‘participation’ was in part a reaction to the over-interference of the state. The state itself made all the plans and projects and created a large bureaucratic cadre to implement them. The local populace had no say or participation in making the plans and implementing them. A number of wasteful projects were selected for the benefit of the corrupt politicians and locally influential persons. These projects did not involve people in the process of design or execution. At this stage some NGOs came forward and opposed this model of development which was imposed from above and was resulting in wasteful expenditure. After much deliberation, a view emerged that development can be better fostered through community participation in which ordinary people are mobilized to establish projects that serve the local community well” (Chandra and Trollope 2015:96, 97).

At the international level, the service providing NGOs are considered as second-rate NGOs due to the temporary effect and benefit of their work. The first-rate NGOs are those which can influence the thinking of the masses and the policies of the government. They are considered as first-rate because of their long lasting impact.

Advocacy is another role played by NGOs. Advocacy means advocating arguments for or against an issue or idea. NGOs engaged in advocacy work first need to carry out a campaign for changing the thinking and attitude of the people. On the other hand, they must discuss with the government for bringing change in the laws and policies in order to achieve the desired objective. For example, NGOs started to campaign against the killing of girl child in the womb itself. They succeeded in influencing the people that girls are the assets of the family and the country if they are given proper education. They also convinced the government for imposing ban on doing gender tests by medical practitioners.

Another advocacy role of NGOs is the empowering the weaker sections of the society. Through the advocacy role, NGOs are trying to challenge the status quo. The working of NGOs reveals that they are not influenced by vested interests and power holders. They work without any fear and take risks politically, mentally and physically. The agitations against illegal mining,

polluting the rivers, private electricity companies overcharging the consumers etc. can be cited as examples of advocacy role of NGOs. Through advocacy role, the self-respect and self-confidence of weaker sections of the society can be enhanced.

The advocacy role of NGOs has not remained limited only to a particular region or country. At the international level also, NGOs are playing several advocacy role against various issues like global warming, saving glaciers, controlling carbon emission etc. Such kind of NGOs were born mostly in the USA with a loose federal structure and spread their network in different countries. In the federal structure of these NGOs, each unit has been found depending heavily on a leader who is charismatic and carries out the work dynamically and with a vision. These organizations carry out their work according to a common beliefs and values. Their structure is decentralized and internal democracy is very high.

At present, the scenario of NGOs is undergoing rapid changes all over the world. It is increasing rapidly in number, size and activities. However, the reasons for the emergence and growth of NGOs are not same in every country. "Tocqueville, the French social thinker, observes that if the English regard association as only one of several "powerful means of action", the American appears to regard association as the "only means." He viewed America as a "nation of joiners", and suggested they are more addicted to associations than the English. The propensity of Americans to form associations is often attributed to the individual-centered American culture" (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:33).

In Western countries, NGOs are considered as social welfare organizations. In the United States, they are called as nonprofit organizations. The agencies come out to assist the victims of complex modern social processes like industrialization, urbanization and immigration. However, United States has lately become a nation depending largely on the voluntary sector for carrying out a number of public activities. In Europe also, industrialization is one of the main cause for the rise of NGOs.

In Canada, the history of NGOs can be traced back to twentieth century when the movements led by the missionaries and the relief work began after the Second World War. Starting from 1940, a number of relief and refugees' organizations, which were mostly of the branches of American and British associations, were established in Canada.

Both French and German have less enthusiasm with regard to forming associations, which shows the weak tradition of voluntary activities in these countries. While, Norwegians take active part in voluntary activities. They become members of several organizations simultaneously. Organizations in Norway always act as interlocutors between the members and the government. “In Scandinavia too, voluntary organizations work closely with government in decision making relating to public policy” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:34).

In many erstwhile communist countries, NGO activity is in an accelerated fashion. In Poland, thousands of voluntary organizations were registered in 1992. By the mid-1992, 6,000 foundations and 11,000 associations were registered in Hungary. During the pre war period, Czechoslovakia had a tradition of voluntarism. In the year 1951, a number of voluntary organizations and citizen action groups had been prevented by the communist government. However, since 1989, an increase in voluntary activities has been noticed in the country. Since then, several non- government, non- profit public-service organizations have appeared. By the end of 1989, over 6,000 foundations and citizens’ associations had been registered in Czechoslovakia.

Switzerland has a very strong and charitable voluntary legacy. In Spain, voluntarism at the beginning was approach based and influenced by missionary work. Sweden’s voluntarism is influenced by people’s movements of the early twentieth century. In the year 1900, voluntary movements for education and civil rights emerged in Sweden.

In Britain, charitable ethics are strong. Until the sixteenth century, charitable activities focused on religious issues. During the medieval period, the rich had to leave their property to the church for the relief of the poor. By around 1600, the functions of the church gradually decreased giving some of the functions to secular trustees in the expanse of education, health and poverty relief. “In the second half of the 1990s, welfare became a central issue for a large number of organizations in Britain” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:35). Japan has a poor record of voluntary activities. The main reason for this is that in Japan government takes the responsibility of all aspects of public life and leaves little scope for philanthropic activities.

The growth of NGOs has also been significant in developing and underdeveloped countries. “During the colonial period, churches and missionaries were active, as the colonial



governments largely left the provision of basic education and health care to church-related organizations” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:35). In countries like Zimbabwe and Kenya, NGOs emerged from missionary activities which were centered around relief, health and education. In Gambia, NGOs have their genesis in international donor agencies.

The activities of NGOs and its spread in countries like Philippines, Brazil, Chile and Argentina is quite impressive. In 1980, the number of NGOs in Bolivia was only about 100, but it increased to 530 in 1992. In Brazil, NGOs acquired some visibility only since the 1970s. Here, NGOs have their genesis in traditional social movements and movements appeared during the period of military dictatorship. NGOs and the state have a confrontational relationship with each other.

Since the achievement of political independence in 1980s, NGOs have been under the control of the government in Arab countries. “A marked change in the attitude of the state is, however, noticeable from the 1980s onward, when the NGOs began to receive acceptance as autonomous and legitimate actors in social life, which is a natural outcome of the developments in the relationship between the state and society. Since the beginning of the 1980s there has been a distinct resurgence of NGO activity in the region, linked directly to the retreat of the state and the revival of the liberal creed. The organizations include traditional ones, mostly with a religious base. There are also humanitarian and development agencies in these countries” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:36). There was also a rapid growth of NGOs, particularly in Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia. Various forms of NGOs are seen in different Arab countries depending on the prevailing typical political situations.

In Arab countries, the prevailing closed political systems have restricted the NGO activity. In countries such as Syria, organizations were taken over by the state. Due to the prevalence of authoritarian and theocratic political systems, the role of NGOs in these countries has not been very significant. They have not been successful in becoming as a force to accelerate the process of social and political democratization in the Arab region. In the Arab region, the state is unable to provide the required welfare services to the citizens and at the same time, the non-state actors are also not able to fulfill these requirements.

In 1949, China prevented the working of foreign missionaries and local welfare, sectoral and cultural organizations in the country. The Chinese Communist Party with a view to control the society, formed mass organizations for acting as a link between the party and society. The emergence of market forces in post-Mao era created space for socioeconomic groups outside the control of the party and thus a number of organizations were formed. In China, till October, 1993, 181,060 organisations were registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. In China, there is a broad range of relationships between the state and NGOs. The state cadres are involved in the activities of semiofficial organizations giving rise to a cross-breed organization. However, China has very few NGOs working in the arena of development. There are also no pressure groups which can raise the voice of vulnerable sections of the society. Thus, NGOs have little advocacy role in China.

For meeting the felt needs of the people, grassroots organizations are formed in Sri Lanka. These organizations are associated with religious institutions, agriculture, irrigation, artisan production and civil society. However, such kind of grassroots organizations became weak later in the twentieth century. From 1950s to the mid-1970s, the activities of NGOs remained marginal. At present, NGOs have a favourable role in the country, especially because of the failure of the government in the economic and welfare fronts. Increase in unemployment, low economic growth, low incomes and poverty are the main factors for the growth of NGOs in the country.

Bangladesh has a strong and powerful base for NGOs. There are enormous number of NGOs spread almost all parts of the country. In a society known for its orthodox nature, NGOs have taken up the activities of empowering women through programs of education, employment and microcredit.

The activities of NGOs in various countries across the world show that their structure and function vary from society to society and within society. They are region specific and time specific. They are also largely determined by social, political, economic and cultural factors. Some societies provide a fertile ground for the formation and growth of NGOs, while some others control their activities and hinder their growth. For example, the states of Arab region are weak and unable to provide welfare services to the citizens effectively. On the other hand, non-state actors like NGOs are also not able to perform this function. In some countries, NGOs and

governments are working cooperatively and have proved to be useful, like in the United States. Generally, two factors help in shaping voluntary activities in a country: the legacy of voluntary activity which provide vigor and strength to voluntary efforts and the significance of the state which has a powerful influence on the activities of NGO.

## **1.8 NERSWN**

North East Research and Social Work Networking popularly known as NERSWN is a non-governmental organization of Kokrajhar district. It is a not for-profit, secular, gender-just and non-political organization which was set up in the year 2004. The organization was registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. NERSWN works for promoting equitable health and also with Internally Displaced Persons for helping them to restore their livelihood. It also works for ensuring equitable rights of the marginalized women, for achieving child centered quality education, ensuring rights and protection of children and also for promoting livelihood of the poor. It also strives for peace, justice, advocacy, research and networking.

## **1.9 NEDAN FOUNDATION**

NEDAN FOUNDATION is an NGO which is registered under Public Charitable Trust Act. It has basically emerged through a common vision shared by trained Social Work Professionals to work for the poorest and voiceless ethnic communities living in the far-flung villages of North East India. Presently, NEDAN is working directly in the North East region particularly at Bodoland Territorial Council, Assam. Its main vision includes building a society marked by development, equality, peace and respect for human rights for all sections. It is committed to empower youth, women and girls on various issues such as human rights, trafficking in women and children, livelihoods, gender, sexuality, reproductive and sexual health, HIV/AIDS, environment. Its project area and base is at Kokrajhar, BTAD. However, it also works in other North East region through network partners.

## **1.10 Review of Literature**

M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana and Harpreet Kaur, (2012) in their book, “Public Administration in Theory and Practice”, have discussed about the meaning and definition of

NGOs. They have also discussed about the role of NGOs in India. They have also discussed about the role of NGOs in the era of globalization.

Dr. H.O. Agarwal, (2011) in his book, “Human Rights”, has discussed about various functions of Human Rights NGOs like mobilization of public opinion, collection of information, providing of direct service to the victims, dialogue with governments and international bodies, legal assistance, filing of writ petitions, communication to the Commission on Human Rights, processing of information and providing of human rights education. He has also discussed some of the leading International NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. He has also discussed about the role of Human Rights NGOs in India.

Prof. B.L. Fadia and Dr. Kuldeep Fadia, (2018) in their book, “Public Administration” has said that although NGOs have been quite successful in bringing to the attention of the government some of the burning issues like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, ill-health, disparities, incidence of bonded labour, exploitation of women, children, tribals, weaker sections, women’s rights, peace, social cohesion etc., in the absence of any comprehensive study about the influence of NGOs on the formulation and implementation of policies in India, it is difficult to evaluate their influence on policy processes.

Patrick Kilby, 2011 in his book “NGOs in India: The Challenges of Women’s Empowerment and Accountability” has discussed about the role of Indian NGOs on women empowerment through Self-Help Groups. He has selected 15 NGOs of Southern India for case study and found out that from the perspective of poor women, empowerment is primarily linked with the improvements in their status, the ability to make their own choice and act on them. He has also found out that the nature of accountability of NGOs to the women groups with which they work has played a key role in securing a strong empowerment.

Nimai Das and Rajeev Kumar, 2016 in their report “Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Healthcare Sector of India” published by Public Health Foundation of India has said that the primary focus of NGOs in the health sector are establishing healthcare institutions, fulfilling health and social needs of groups like women, elderly and vulnerable local communities, dealing with specific health issues which include alcoholism, managing health finance and administration, promoting health rights, and also performing preventive health

programs. They said that in India, the non-governmental organizations working in the health sector are spread in both rural and urban areas with a primary focus on providing curative, preventive and rehabilitative care services through their established healthcare institutions and community level health camps in targeted areas.

Inger Ulleberg, 2009 in his book “The Role and Impact of NGOs in Capacity Development: From Replacing the State to Reinvigorating Education”, has said that capacity development has become the centre of attention in the development discourse. In public sectors such as education and health, NGOs have been playing the role of main service providers. The NGOs have traditionally assumed a gap filling role by replacing the role of the government on the ground, especially in remote rural areas. They take up the activities of provision of basic education where the government is lacking the capacity to do so or does not consider it as a priority. They also provide a large part of educational services and help to reinforce government efforts in achieving the objectives of universal primary education.

Syeda Hameed in his article “A Commitment to the Voluntary Sector”, published in Yojana magazine, 2011, Vol. 55 has said that the voluntary sector are facing many challenges and difficulties. She realized that highly committed people in this sector have to work with a very limited resources and it makes their task even more difficult. Voluntary organizations in India have certainly proved their courage and strength by working in the remotest corners of the country and also by reaching across the terrains that had not been touched by governmental schemes. She has also discussed about the National Policy on the Voluntary Sector. She considered the Policy as a testament of the commitment to encourage, enable and empower an independent and effective voluntary sector.

Mohammed Asif in his article “Role of NGOs in India”, published in Yojana magazine, (2011), Vol. 55 has said that NGOs have significantly influenced the development of laws and policies on several important social and developmental issues such as the right to information, juvenile justice, ending corporal punishment in schools, anti-trafficking, forests and environment, wildlife conservation, women, elderly people, people with disability, rehabilitation and resettlement of development induced displaced people etc. He advised the NGOs to play the role of ‘game changer’ to pro poor development through leadership on participatory research, community empowerment and search for development alternatives.

Jomon Mathew and Joby Verghese in their article, “Non Governmental Organizations in India” published in Yojana magazine, 2011, Vol. 55 have said that in India NGOs work in various fields with a view to influence socio-cultural and economic life of people. They perform a variety of activities which basically benefit the public as they do not have any commercial interests or profit motive. He has said that though the benefits of NGOs reach to crores of Indian population, there is lack of public awareness about the very necessity of such non profit motive organizations. He has realized that a healthy linkage between the government and NGO is the requirement of the time and advised that the NGO sector in India, should properly be recognized and extensively researched.

N Chatterjee and Mohd Ashraf Dar in their article, “Role of NGOs in Rural Development” published in Yojana magazine, 2011, Vol. 55 have discussed about the role of CAPART(The Council for Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology) in facilitating the process of development in rural India through non- governmental organizations(NGO). They said that CAPART has been serving as a catalyst for developmental initiatives in rural areas by strengthening and encouraging NGOs, VOs and CBOs to contribute in the betterment and development of rural areas. It has been implementing many innovative development projects under different schemes through a strong collaboration between government and non-government organizations to reach all the rural areas specially the backward areas.

Mathew Cherian in his article “Non Governmental Organizations and the Ageing in India” published in Yojana magazine, 2011, Vol. 55 has said that NGOs also work in the field of ageing. Such NGOs are trusts and religious associations running homes for destitute older persons. He has discussed about the conditions of people in the old age such as, the biological frailty, coupled with disease and disability in old age, constantly reminding them of the risks inherent in stepping out of their homes or even remaining confined to their homes. Alzheimer’s disease is another disease of the old age. The symptoms of the disease is seen in the memory problems, serious problems in thinking, judgement and the ability to carry out daily activities. Women are also affected by a range of preventable conditions however different from those of older men such as post-menopausal reproductive health problems. NGOs like Alzheimer and Related Disorders Society of India (ARDSI) works in the field of dementia and runs memory

clinics and a home in Kunnankulam, Kerala. Another NGO called Help Age India runs dementia daycare centres in both Patna and Kolkata.

G Srinivasan in his article “NGOs in the Healthcare Sector” published in Yojana magazine, 2011, Vol. 55 said that the voluntary health programme in India can be catalogued into specialized community health programmes, integrated development programmes, health care for special group of people, government voluntary organization and health work sponsored by Rotary, Lions clubs and chambers of commerce, campaign groups and health researchers and activists. He said that an NGO working with the communities of grassroot level considers communicable diseases and reproductive health as a big problem, while the government continuously sponsors programmes that are target-driven, prepackaged and might have little to do with the local requirements and needs. He advocated that for a country having a large number of population, the primary health concern continues to remain in the absence of affordable and holistic health care facilities. It is because of this reason that the voluntary organizations have taken up the role and responsibilities in the health sector.

R. Sooryamoorthy and K. D. Gangrade, 2006 in their book “NGOs in India: A Cross-Sectional Study”, have discussed about the voluntary action and the role of NGOs. They have also discussed about the Indian tradition of voluntarisms. They have also discussed about the partnership between NGOs and government in Kerala.

Joel S. G. R. Bhose, 2003 in his book “NGOs and Rural Development: Theory and Practice”, has discussed about the various rural problems like poverty, casteism, women’s exploitation, rural unemployment, unremunerative agriculture, lack of basic amenities, denial of information etc. and the important role played by NGOs in rural development. He has also discussed about various specialities of NGOs’ interventions in rural development like reaching the unreached, building hopes, facilitating the element of protest, building awareness, gender awareness, political awareness, facilitating Panchayati Raj, liberation education, capacity building, involving people through Participatory Rural Appraisal, community organization, organizing SHGs, community based programmes, empowering, NGOs’ networking and advocating and influencing policy.

Suresh Chandra and Anne Karen Trollope, 2015 in their book “Non-Governmental Organizations: Origin and Development”, has discussed about the voluntary work in India at different periods of time. He has also discussed merits of NGOs and also the shortcomings in their working.

Puran Chandra, 2005 in his book “NGOs in India: Role, Guidelines and Performance Appraisal”, has discussed about the emergence and role of NGOs in India. He has also discussed about the role of NGOs on the protection of children’s rights and also on development. He has also discussed about rural development through NGOs and also the challenges faced by them.

P.V. Baiju, 2015 in his book “NGOs and Participatory Development”, has discussed about the concept and application of Participatory Rural Appraisal. He has selected 8 NGOs of Wayanad district of Kerala for his study. He said that these NGOs have applied participatory approach in their various programmes like income generation programmes, in the planning of projects, agriculture development activities and women empowerment programmes.

From the above literature review, it has been found that NGOs are the very life force of the civil society and they are playing a very important role in bringing positive change in the society. They undertake various activities for the protection and promotion of human rights such as mobilization of public opinion, collection of information, providing direct service to the victims, dialogue with the governments and international bodies, legal assistance, filing of writ petitions, communication to the Commission on Human Rights, processing of information and providing of human rights education. They have been quite successful in bringing to the attention of the government some of the burning issues like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, ill-health, disparities, incidence of bonded labour, exploitation of women, children, tribals, weaker sections, women’s rights, peace and social cohesion etc. NGOs also work in the health sector by establishing healthcare institutions, fulfilling health and social needs of groups like women, elderly and vulnerable local communities, dealing with specific health issues such as alcoholism, promoting health rights, performing preventive health programmes, managing health finance and administration. They also take up the activities of providing basic education where the government lacks the capacity to do so or does not consider it as a priority. They have also influenced significantly the development of laws and policies on several important social and



developmental issues. However, they have to work with rather limited resources despite having highly committed people. All the above literatures have not discussed specially about the role of NERSWN and NEDAN Foundation. So, by studying the working of these two NGOs, such gap will be fulfilled and a new topic will be contributed in the literature.

### **1.11 Objective of the study**

- 1) To study the working of NERSWN and NEDAN Foundation for the rural development of Kokrajhar district.
- 2) To study their working for child protection
- 3) To study their working for women empowerment
- 4) To study the challenges faced by these NGOs.

### **1.12 Hypotheses**

- 1). The working of NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION has brought a positive change in the rural areas of Kokrajhar district.
- 2). The working of NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION has brought consciousness among the people.

### **1.13 Significance of the Study**

This study is of enormous significance. Through this study, the working of NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION in once conflict affected area like Kokrajhar has been assessed. In Kokrajhar district, children are the victims of trafficking, child labour, child marriage and school drop outs. Here, the NGOs have a vital role to play at the grassroot level. Thus, through this study, the role played by these two NGOs for the protection of children has been found out. It has also been studied the works done by these two for the rural development of Kokrajhar. It has also been known about the works done by them specially for women. The challenges faced by these NGOs have also been pointed out. This study would encourage the government to support and cooperate with them in their work. It is also very significant as it would contribute a new topic in the literature.

## 1.14 Methodology

The Kokrajhar district has been selected as a study area with regard to the working of NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION. This study is a combination of descriptive, exploratory and explanatory research along with qualitative aspect. With regard to data collection it has been mainly collected from primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources include books, magazine, journal articles and net sources.

Primary data has been collected through survey where individual interview and group interview has been undertaken. Direct observation method has also been used during the time of data collection. Cluster sampling method has been used for selecting the respondents.

The organizational structure of NERSWN consists of 6 members in the Governing body, 1 Chairman-cum-Director, 1 Executive Director, 1 Administrative-in-charge, 6 Project Manager or Coordinator, 45 Field Staff, 1 Accountant and 1 Finance Officer. The NGO has 2 projects for rural development. One is Livelihood and another is Water Governance. In Livelihood project, there is 1 Project Manager, 2 Field Staffs, 10 Community Resource Person. From here, 1 Project Manager, 2 Field Staffs and 5 Community Resource Persons have been the respondents. The project have been implemented in two blocks- Kochugaon and Gossaigaon. In Kochugaon block, it is being implemented in the villages of two VCDC- Balagaon VCDC and Sapkota VCDC and in Gossaigaon block under Satyapur VCDC. From each VCDC two villages have been selected and from each village 10 respondents have been selected. The selected villages include Joharbil No.1 and Padergaon from Balagaon VCDC, Matiapara and Sapkota No.1 from Sapkota VCDC and Silpul and Haspas from Satyapur VCDC. Thus, 60 beneficiaries have been interacted. Water Governance has 10 Field Staffs, 1 Advocacy Officer, 1 Project Manager. From here, 5 Field Staffs, 1 Project Manager have been the respondents. Child Protection has 11 Field Staffs and 1 Project Manager. From here, 1 Project Manager and 7 field staffs of the field visited have been the respondents. 7 clusters have been selected and from each cluster, one village is selected and from each village, 10 respondents have been selected. Out of the 10 respondents, 5 respondents belong to childhood period and the other 5 belong to adolescents period. The selected clusters and villages include Jomnaguri from Bangaldoba cluster, Choraikhola P.1 from Choraikhola cluster, Chakrashila P.1 from Chakrashila cluster, Matiapara No.2 South from Hasrabari cluster, Panowari Muslim village from Panowari cluster, Sapkota No.1 from Sapkota cluster and Haspas

from Gossaigaon. In the case of women vendors, 1 Executive Director and 1 Administrative-in-charge have been the respondents. 5 members from Kokrajhar Aijw Falangi Afad and 5 members from Gossaigaon Aijw Falangi Afad have been the respondents.

NEDAN FOUNDATION has 5 members in the Governing Body, 1 Chairman-cum-Director, 6 core members, 4 coordinators, 1 Administrative Officer, 1 Programme Manager, 1 Accountant and 42 Field staffs. The projects of NEDAN which have been studied include 1). I Partner which has 5 staff - 1 Programme Manager, 1 Caretaker, 1 Coordinator, 1 Councillor and 1 Accountant. From here, 2 respondents have been interacted which include the Programme Manager and the Coordinator. 2). Child Protection and Education – The project has 13 Field Facilitators, 1 Director, 1 Coordinator, 1 Accountant, 1 Advocacy Officer. From here, 1 Director, 1 Coordinator and 7 Field Facilitators of the fields visited have been the interacted. The project is being implemented under three blocks- Kochugaon, Dotma and Titaguri. NEDAN is working for three ethnic communities under this project- Bodo, Adivasi and Bengali Muslim. It is working for two communities in Kochugaon- Bodo and Adivasi, in Dotma for Bodo and Bengali Muslim and in Titaguri for Bodo, Adivasi and Bengali Muslim. For the study, from each block one village from each community have been visited. From each village, 10 respondents have been interacted and out of this, 5 belonging to childhood period and the other 5 belonging to adolescents period. The villages which have been visited include Kochugaon Bazar- Adivasi and Baganpara- Bodo from Kochugaon Block, Nowerbhita- Bengali Muslim and Sonapur-1- Bodo from Dotma Block, New Basbari- Bodo, Duramari- Bengali Muslim and Mwinaguri- Adivasi from Titaguri Block. So, total 70 respondents have been interacted. 3). One Stock Centre- The project has 9 staff which include 1 Councillor, 2 Cash workers, 2 Security Guard, 1 Centre Administrator, 2 Multipurpose Workers and 1 IT Staff. From here, 3 respondents will be selected which include 1 Centre Administrator, 1 Multipurpose Worker and 1 IT Staff.

### **1.15 Conclusion**

As mentioned above this study has been made on two NGOs i.e. NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION. For making a systematic discussion, four chapters have been prepared. In Chapter I, a discussion has been made on the evolution, types, characteristics, theories and funding of NGOs. An overview of various NGOs across the world has also been made. A review of various literatures has been made with an objective of finding out the gap. The objectives,

significance, hypothesis and methodologies for the study of these two NGOs have been described in this chapter. In Chapter II, a discussion on the role of NGOs in India has been made. Voluntary activities in India at different periods of time have been discussed. A short introduction of some top 10 NGOs in India has also been made. In Chapter III, NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION have been discussed. Firstly, a short introduction of both NGOs have been made. Secondly, activities of NERSWN in the areas of rural development have been described. Thirdly, steps taken for child protection by NERSWN and NEDAN FOUNDATION have been described. Fourthly, working of NERSWN for women vendors have been discussed. Working of NEDAN FOUNDATION for women who are the victims of trafficking have also been described. Lastly, the challenges faced by both NGOs in their working have been pointed out. Along with these, similarities and dissimilarities between these two NGOs have been discussed. In Chapter IV, findings from the study have been discussed. A few suggestions have been given for the better working of these NGOs and concluded. Thus, these are the four chapters which have been discussed here.

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