

GoI-NGO Collaboration to Improve Efficiency in Agriculture

Amitha C D

Department of Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, Warangal, PJTSAU-HYD

*Corresponding Author: amithachandra12@gmail.com

India is a highly populated and predominantly rural country; non-government organizations and voluntary action have been part of the historical legacy. The term, "nongovernmental organization" came into use in 1945 because of the need for the UN to differentiate in its charter between participation rights for intergovernmental specialized agencies and those for international private organizations. India has many NGOs, about 78,558 actively working NGOs (including Rural development, poverty alleviation, women empowerment, food security and hunger) in India (<https://ngodarpan.gov.in/index.php/search>) their activities including food and agriculture sectors too. Some have done very useful development work. However, like in most developing countries, NGOs in India were involved in different aspects of extension work, mostly as a part of agreement with the government or donor funded agricultural and rural development projects.

Approaches to development in India have undergone a dramatic change. Collaboration between government and NGOs has been one outcome of the greater emphasis placed on participation, sustainability, and democratic processes in India.

Objectives of NGO-government collaboration

NGOs seek collaboration with government for many reasons:

- (i) to access technical or managerial resources;
- (ii) to gain legitimacy or recognition;
- (iii) to adapt a programme to their area;
- (iv) to obtain appropriate solutions to development problems;
- (v) to enhance people's participation in government programmes; and
- (vi) to promote greater accountability and transparency, and promote reforms in public systems.

Government agencies work with NGOs to:

- (i) enhance people's participation in their programmes;

- (ii) to extend coverage of programmes to areas and groups that are poorly served by government staff;
- (iii) to test and replicate innovative approaches; and
- (iv) to achieve greater cost effectiveness. Therefore, behind a NGOs' interest in working with the government, or conversely, the government extending an invitation to NGOs, lies a certain degree of convergence in their development objectives and certain needs.

NGOs and government converge on development objectives

The following list contains the basic premises that motivate governments and NGOs to collaborate with each other. These represent the broad rationale that underlies collaborative behavior.

1. Collaboration facilitates the generation and replication of innovations and alternative approaches to development.
2. Collaboration is an efficient means of improving the delivery of development programmes and services to rural communities.
3. Collaboration has the potential of inducing system/ institutional reforms such as reorienting departments towards bottom-up planning and implementation.
4. Collaboration is an effective means of improving people's ability to place demands on public systems and services.

GOI-NGO Collaboration to improve efficiency of extension

The majority of NGOs are small and horizontally structured with short lines of communication and are therefore capable of responding flexibly and rapidly to clients' needs and to changing circumstances.

NGO's concern with the rural poor means that they often maintain a field presence in remote locations, where it is difficult to keep government staff in post.

NGO's main concerns has been to identify the needs of the rural poor in sustainable agricultural development. They have therefore pioneered a wide range of participatory methods for diagnosis and, in some contexts, have developed and introduced systems approaches for testing new technology. NGO's rapport with farmers has allowed them to draw on local knowledge systems in the design of technology options and to strengthen such systems by ensuring that the technologies developed are reintegrated into them. NGOs have also developed innovative dissemination methods, relying on farmer-to-farmer contact, whether on a group or individual basis one of the main strengths of NGOs has been their work in group formation. This has been in response to perceived needs at several levels:

(1) To meet the technical requirements of certain types of innovation. Thus, Action for World Solidarity in India worked with grass-roots organizations to achieve simultaneous action in an integrated pest management programme

(2) To manage "lumpy" assets. In Bangladesh, NGOs have helped to organize landless labourers to acquire and operate water-pumping technology

(3) To manage common property resources. Many examples exist of formal and informal associations, often supported by NGOs, which manage irrigation water. In other cases, NGOs have supported group efforts in soil and water conservation, whether on private land or on a micro-watershed basis involving both private and common land. They have also helped in managing common grazing and forest land in a sustainable fashion in relation both to technology and the creation of a capacity to make demands on government

The factors and constraints that hinder healthy collaboration between Government and NGOs.

- Contesting Departmental domain (technical superiority, resource control)

- NGOs preserve autonomy and seek budget parity
- NGO capacity - mismatch between expectation and reality
- Weak management structure to effect change
- Transfers and other factors that make individuals and inter-personal equations critical
- Infrequent and ad hoc consultation with NGOs
- Weak NGO networking for working with government

Case Study I

NGO-Organized Agricultural Services

The Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation (BAIF) was established in 1967 by Manibhai Desai. Now, this NGO is renamed as the BAIF Development Research Foundation. The foundation and its associated organizations presently offer a range of extension and agricultural-related services to rural families in 45000 villages in 12 states in India. BAIF is unusual in that it maintains a small research programme that helps support many of its extension activities, particularly, in the area of livestock development, as well as land and water management. Most of the funding for these different extension activities comes from government contracts to provide specific services to farmers.

NGO's are boon for rural development

Case Study II

Aluvelamma w/o Late Venkateshappa, is a member of Saraswathi Mahila Sangha in Malakanahalli village of Malur Taluk, Kolar District. A widow with three children, life was indeed difficult for her especially feeding her family on her irregular wages as a daily wage worker. She says that "My fortune has been changed" due to a program of HUF, NABARD and MYRADA Watershed Development Program that supported landless families like me to improve livelihoods by providing financial support. She decided to carry out and bought a high breed cow on 08-10- 2012 costing Rs. 35,000. She received Rs. 10,000 as grant from NABARD, a loan of Rs. 15,000 from Sanghamithra and put in Rs. 10,000 on her own.

Impact: In 2016, the yield was 18 litres of milk per day (Rs. 20 per liter from dairy and Rs. 4 supporting).

References

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