

THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY: CASE OF NEPAL

JIN ZHANG 5369417

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Introduction

Nepal is a landlocked mountainous country located at the foothills of the Himalayas. In the past few hundred years, it has experienced a tortuous process of feudal dynasty, family dictatorship, semi-colonization, armed revolution, and finally towards a federal republic, shaping a complex history of socio-political and economic transformation. In this process, especially after the country opened to the outside world in the 1950s, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played a crucial role in shaping the country's development trajectory, especially in the era of globalization.

This paper will discuss the **historical evolution** of NGOs in Nepal, their **positive and negative impact** on the country's development, and analyse how they use **Community-based Conservation model** to achieve eco-tourism and sustainable development in protected area. As one of the least developed countries in the world with a per capita GDP of only US\$1,000, Nepal provides us with a unique case to see what role NGOs are playing or will play in the development process of a country that requires continuous external assistance.

引言

尼泊尔是一个位于喜马拉雅山麓的内陆山地国家。在过去的几百年里，它经历了封建王朝、家族独裁、半殖民化、武装革命，最后走向联邦共和国的曲折过程，形成了复杂的社会政治和经济转型历史。在这个过程中，特别是在 20 世纪 50 年代该国对外开放之后，非政府组织（NGO）在塑造该国的发展轨迹方面发挥了至关重要的作用，尤其是在全球化时代。

本文将讨论尼泊尔非政府组织的历史演变，它们对该国发展的积极和消极影响，并分析它们如何利用社区保护模式实现生态旅游和保护区的可持续发展。尼泊尔作为世界最不发达国家之一，人均 GDP 仅为 1000 美元，为我们提供了一个独特的案例，让我们看到非政府组织在一个需要持续外部援助的国家的发展进程中，正在发挥或将发挥什么样的作用。

Historical Evolution of NGOs in Nepal

The NGOs in Nepal have a relatively short history, landscape in Nepal began to evolve in the late 1950s and early 1960s, coinciding with the end of the autocratic Rana regime and the onset of development aid flows. With the inception of a planned economy and support from international agencies, NGOs started playing a more visible role in various sectors like health, education, and community development. However, due to the strict control of social activities by the Panchayat regime at that time, the development of NGOs in Nepal was very slow. The number of NGOs increased from 10 in 1960 to only 37 in 1987 (ADB 2005).

After the establishment of parliamentary democracy in 1990, the Nepalese government made a fundamental change in its management of NGOs, which was to allow foreign capital to enter directly

without the need to go through government fund. With the accelerated pace of globalization, international NGOs poured in in large numbers, and local NGOs in Nepal also sprung up. Backed by global funding and ideas, these organizations have begun to play an important role in Nepali civil society, often filling the vacuum left by and under-resourced government.

尼泊尔非政府组织的历史演变

尼泊尔的非政府组织历史较短，尼泊尔的格局在 20 世纪 50 年代末和 60 年代初开始演变，恰逢拉纳独裁政权的结束和发展援助流动的开始。随着计划经济的开始和国际机构的支持，非政府组织开始在卫生、教育和社区发展等各个领域发挥更显著的作用。然而，由于当时 Panchayat 政权对社会活动的严格控制，尼泊尔的非政府组织发展非常缓慢。非政府组织的数量从 1960 年的 10 个增加到 1987 年的 37 个 (ADB 2005)。

1990 年建立议会民主制后，尼泊尔政府对非政府组织的管理进行了根本性改革，允许外国资本直接进入，而无需通过政府基金。随着全球化步伐的加快，国际 NGO 大量涌入，尼泊尔本土 NGO 也如雨后春笋般涌现，在全球资金与理念的支持下，这些组织开始在尼泊尔民间社会扮演重要角色，往往填补了政府资源不足留下的空白。

Current situation of NGOs in Nepal

In the era of globalisation, NGOs in Nepal have proliferated. The Social Welfare Council (SWC) reported that from 1977 to 2014, Nepal registered 39,759 NGOs. A significant portion of these NGOs primarily focused on community and rural development, with youth service coming next. In the same timeframe, 189 international NGOs (INGOs) from 26 distinct nations made their work in Nepal. The US topped the list in terms of registrations, with UK and Germany following suit (Karkee & Comfort 2016).

Today, there are more than 50,000 NGOs registered in Nepal, ranging from small grassroots organisations to large international entities, working across various sectors, including health, education, livelihoods, environment, and disaster management, making the country known as the homeland of NGOs (Adhikari, Upadhaya, Wijethilake & Adhikari 2023). They have more than 400,000 active members and affecting more than 20% of the country's budget funds (Pyakurel 2019).

尼泊尔非政府组织的现状

在全球化时代，尼泊尔的非政府组织数量激增。社会福利委员会 (SWC) 报告称，从 1977 年到 2014 年，尼泊尔注册了 39,759 个非政府组织。这些非政府组织中很大一部分主要关注社区和农村发展，其

次是青年服务。在同一时期，来自 26 个不同国家的 189 个国际非政府组织 (INGO) 在尼泊尔开展工作。美国在注册数量方面名列前茅，英国和德国紧随其后 (Karkee & Comfort 2016)。

如今，尼泊尔注册的非政府组织超过 50,000 个，从小型草根组织到大型国际实体，涉及卫生、教育、生计、环境和灾害管理等各个领域，使该国被称为非政府组织的故乡 (Adhikari、Upadhaya、Wijethilake 和 Adhikari 2023)。他们拥有超过 400,000 名活跃成员，影响到该国超过 20% 的预算资金 (Pyakurel 2019)。

Positive impacts on Development

1. Poverty alleviation: NGOs in Nepal have played a vital role in poverty alleviation through various income-generating activities, financial support plans, microfinance programs, and skills development initiatives (Acharya 2003). These efforts have helped marginalized communities improve their livelihoods.

2. Education and healthcare: NGOs have made significant contributions to improving access to education and healthcare in remote and underserved areas of Nepal. They have built schools, clinics and provided basic services to communities, most notably the long-term community support activities in Khumbu Region through the Himalayan Trust established by Edmund Hillary, the first ascent of Mt. Everest (Kazi 2003).

3. Women's empowerment: Many NGOs in Nepal work to empower women through vocational training, leadership development and advocacy activities to help improve gender equality and women's participation in decision-making processes (Atteraya, Gnawali & Palley 2016).

4. Disaster response and preparedness: NGOs played a vital role in relief and preparedness efforts in Nepal. Their expertise and rapid mobilization were demonstrated during the 2015 earthquake, when they provided immediate relief and long-term recovery support, including cultural heritage reconstruction (Suji, Limbu, Rawal & Baniya 2020) and community recovery.

5. Political supervision: NGOs are instruments of human empowerment. They are promoters of the development and democratization of a vibrant democratic civil society, sought to establish independent power centres to curb the abuse of central and local power. They play an important role in empowering humans and act as political watchdogs to some extent (Bhandari 2014).

6. Natural environment management: Nepal is in the foothills of the Himalayas and has huge altitude range and species diversity. Currently, Nepal has established 12 national parks and 6 nature reserves to maintain its unique ecological environment, and most of them are managed by NGOs (Stevens 2013).

对发展的积极影响

1. 扶贫：尼泊尔的非政府组织通过各种创收活动、金融支持计划、小额信贷计划和技能发展计划在扶贫方面发挥了重要作用 (Acharya 2003)。这些努力帮助边缘化社区改善了生计。
2. 教育和医疗保健：非政府组织为改善尼泊尔偏远和服务不足地区的教育和医疗保健做出了重大贡献。他们修建了学校、诊所并为社区提供基本服务，最引人注目的是通过首次登顶珠穆朗玛峰的埃德蒙·希拉里 (Edmund Hillary) 建立的喜马拉雅信托基金在昆布地区开展的长期社区支持活动 (Kazi 2003)。
3. 赋予妇女权力：尼泊尔的许多非政府组织通过职业培训、领导力发展和宣传活动赋予妇女权力，以帮助改善性别平等和妇女参与决策过程 (Atteraya、Gnawali 和 Palley 2016)。
4. 灾害响应和准备：非政府组织在尼泊尔的救灾和准备工作中发挥了至关重要的作用。他们的专业知识和快速动员能力在 2015 年地震期间得到了体现，当时他们提供了即时救援和长期恢复支持，包括文化遗产重建 (Suji、Limbu、Rawal & Baniya 2020) 和社区恢复。
5. 政治监督：非政府组织是赋予人类权力的工具。他们是充满活力的民主公民社会发展和民主化的推动者，寻求建立独立的权力中心，以遏制中央和地方权力的滥用。他们在赋予人类权力方面发挥着重要作用，并在一定程度上充当政治监督者 (Bhandari 2014)。
6. 自然环境管理：尼泊尔位于喜马拉雅山麓，海拔高度范围大，物种多样性丰富。目前，尼泊尔已建立 12 个国家公园和 6 个自然保护区，以维护其独特的生态环境，其中大部分由非政府组织管理 (Stevens 2013)。

Negative Impacts on Development

1. Operational opacity: Providing funds to Nepal through NGOs has always been the main method of international aid. However, the operational transparency problem is always difficult to improve (Tanaka 2011), which may cause the funds to be used elsewhere, or even involve illegal and criminal activities.
2. Interference in internal affairs: Nepal has a dangerous geographical location, located in the buffer zone between China and India. Some NGOs may use economic assistance to put their own interests above the country's sovereignty to achieve their geopolitical goals. The most recent example is the US\$500 million aid plan of the Millennium Challenge Corporation of US (Shrestha 2023), which once caused a strong response in Nepal.
3. Lack of Coordination: The proliferation of NGOs has sometimes led to issues of duplication, competition, and a lack of coordination among organizations working in similar sector (Dhakal 2007). This may lead to waste of resources and unnecessary management costs.

4. Cultural Insensitivity: Nepal is a multi-ethnic and multi-faith country, and the NGOs may inadvertently overlook or ignore local customs, traditions and cultural sensitivities, leading to friction with communities (Hunaiti 2023).

5. Dependency: Nepal is a resource-poor country that requires long-term blood transfusions. Long-term reliance on NGOs for development assistance may hinder the self-reliance and sustainability of beneficiary communities and have a negative impact on the future of the country.

对发展的负面影响

1. 运作不透明：通过非政府组织向尼泊尔提供资金一直是国际援助的主要方式。然而，运作透明度问题始终难以改善（Tanaka 2011），这可能导致资金流向别处，甚至涉及违法犯罪活动。

2. 干涉内政：尼泊尔地理位置危险，位于中国和印度之间的缓冲区。一些非政府组织可能利用经济援助将自己的利益置于国家主权之上，以实现其地缘政治目标。最近的例子是美国千年挑战公司的 5 亿美元援助计划（Shrestha 2023），曾在尼泊尔引起强烈反响。

3. 缺乏协调：非政府组织的激增有时会导致重复、竞争和从事类似行业的组织之间缺乏协调的问题（Dhakal 2007）。这可能导致资源浪费和不必要的管理成本。

4. 文化不敏感：尼泊尔是一个多民族、多信仰的国家，非政府组织可能会无意中忽视或忽略当地的风俗、传统和文化敏感性，导致与社区产生摩擦（Hunaiti 2023）。

5. 依赖性：尼泊尔是一个资源贫乏的国家，需要长期输血。长期依赖非政府组织提供发展援助可能会阻碍受益社区的自力更生和可持续性，并对国家的未来产生负面影响。

Case study: Community-based Conservation, Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) by National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)

1. Background of NTNC

Nepal is one of the most ecologically complex countries in the world. Due to extreme changes in altitude and climate, the flora and fauna show a wide diversity. However, early conservation efforts were mainly strictly managed by the military, which resulted in serious impacts on community life. Because once the boundaries of protected areas are delineated, residents are deprived of their traditional rights to use the natural resources in national parks and protected areas and have to leave their traditional residences. Their community culture and traditional customs will be destroyed, and they will eventually go to the government's fierce conflicts with community residents.

These contradictions mean that there is a need for an independent third-party professional organization that can not only protect the rights and interests of residents but also make protection

measures effective. Against these unique backgrounds, the Nepali government established the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) in 1982, an autonomous NGO that works on behalf of the government in the field of nature conservation.

2. Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP)

The ACAP project was launched in 1986. It is the first and largest protected area in Nepal and the largest project of NTNC. The ACAP area is a classic example of ecological diversity. In an area of 7,629 square kilometres, its altitude spans from 800 meters to 8,000 meters. It is home to more than 100,000 residents, as well as 1,226 plant species, 105 mammal species, and 518 bird species. species, 40 species of reptiles (Prajapati, Huettmann, Ghale, & Regmi 2020), and 23 species of amphibians.

These unique features make the region the most popular travel destination in Nepal, and tourism has become a pillar industry of the local economy. But at the same time, the soaring number of tourists has also put huge pressure on the already strained local forests and water resources, and the disposal of tons of waste generated by the hotel industry every year has also become a significant problem.

案例研究：国家自然保护信托基金（NTNC）的社区保护，安纳普尔纳保护区项目（ACAP）

1. NTNC 的背景

尼泊尔是世界上生态最复杂的国家之一。由于海拔和气候的极端变化，动植物呈现出广泛的多样性。然而，早期的保护工作主要由军方严格管理，对社区生活产生了严重影响。因为一旦划定了保护区的边界，居民就被剥夺了使用国家公园和保护区内自然资源的传统权利，不得不离开传统的居住地。他们的社区文化和传统习俗将被破坏，最终将走向政府与社区居民的激烈冲突。

这些矛盾意味着需要一个独立的第三方专业机构，不仅可以保护居民的权益，还可以使保护措施有效。在这些独特的背景下，尼泊尔政府于 1982 年成立了国家自然保护信托基金 (NTNC)，这是一个代表政府在自然保护领域开展工作的自主非政府组织。

2. 安纳普尔纳保护区项目 (ACAP)

ACAP 项目于 1986 年启动。它是尼泊尔第一个也是最大的保护区，也是 NTNC 最大的项目。ACAP 地区是生态多样性的典型例子。面积为 7,629 平方公里，海拔从 800 米到 8,000 米不等。这里有 100,000 多名居民，以及 1,226 种植物、105 种哺乳动物和 518 种鸟类。物种、40 种爬行动物 (Prajapati、Huettmann、Ghale 和 Regmi 2020) 和 23 种两栖动物。

这些独特的风貌让这一地区成为尼泊尔最受欢迎的旅游目的地，旅游业也成为当地经济的支柱产业。但与此同时，游客数量的激增也给当地本已紧张的森林和水资源带来了巨大压力，酒店业每年产生的数吨垃圾的处理也成为一大难题。

3. Community-based Conservation model

In order to solve these multi-faceted problems, NTNC pioneered a community-based conservation model (Baral & Stern 2011). Here's how ACAP has been achieving sustainable tourism through these approaches:

3.1 Local Participation and Decision-Making:

3.1.1 Community Committees: ACAP formed local conservation committees in villages across the Annapurna region. These committees have significant decision-making powers, and their input is paramount in any project or initiative implemented in the area.

3.1.2 Participation in Revenue Collection: Local communities participate in collecting the Annapurna Conservation Area Permit (ACAP) fees from trekkers. A significant portion of this revenue is plowed back into the region for various conservation and development projects (Ghimire & Upreti 2011).

3.2 Local Capacity Building and Employment:

3.2.1 Training Programs: ACAP initiated various training programs, from guiding to lodge management to handicraft production. By equipping locals with the necessary skills, ACAP ensured that they directly benefited from the tourism industry.

3.2.2 Promotion of Local Guides: Instead of relying on guides from outside, ACAP promoted the use of local guides who were familiar with the region's culture and ecology (Baral & Stern 2010). This not only ensured employment for locals but also enriched the experience for trekkers.

3.3 Promotion of Local Products and Culture:

ACAP encouraged lodges and restaurants to use local produce, which not only reduced transportation costs and related emissions but also provided a market for local farmers. To give tourists an authentic experience, ACAP promoted cultural programs where local communities showcased their traditions, dances, and music.

3.4 Infrastructure Development with Local Involvement:

ACAP worked on developing trekking trails, bridges, and rest stops. The manpower for these projects was sourced from local communities, ensuring direct economic benefits (Schuett, Dahal & Nepal 2016). The infrastructure was built keeping in mind local architectural styles and using local materials, ensuring it blended in with the environment and culture.

3.5 Education and Awareness:

ACAP set up programs in schools to educate the younger generation about the importance of conservation. And information centres and signages were established to educate tourists about the region's biodiversity, and culture, and how they can minimize their impact (Magditsch & Moore 2011).

3. 以社区为基础的保护模式

为了解决这些多方面的问题，NTNC 率先采用了以社区为基础的保护模式 (Baral & Stern 2011)。

ACAP 通过以下方法实现可持续旅游业：

3.1 当地参与和决策：

3.1.1 社区委员会：ACAP 在安纳布尔纳地区的村庄成立了当地保护委员会。这些委员会拥有重大的决策权，他们的意见对该地区实施的任何项目或计划都至关重要。

3.1.2 参与收入收集：当地社区参与向徒步旅行者收取安纳布尔纳保护区许可证 (ACAP) 费用。这笔收入的很大一部分被重新投入该地区用于各种保护和发展项目 (Ghimire & Upreti 2011)。

3.2 当地能力建设和就业：

3.2.1 培训计划：ACAP 发起了各种培训计划，从导游到旅馆管理再到手工艺品生产。通过为当地人提供必要的技能，ACAP 确保他们直接受益于旅游业。

3.2.2 推广当地导游：ACAP 不依赖外部导游，而是提倡使用熟悉该地区文化和生态的当地导游 (Baral & Stern 2010)。这不仅确保了当地人的就业，还丰富了徒步旅行者的体验。

3.3 推广当地产品和文化：

ACAP 鼓励旅馆和餐馆使用当地农产品，这不仅降低了运输成本和相关排放，还为当地农民提供了市场。为了让游客获得真实的体验，ACAP 推广了文化项目，让当地社区展示他们的传统、舞蹈和音乐。

3.4 当地参与的基础设施建设：

ACAP 致力于开发徒步旅行路线、桥梁和休息站。这些项目的人力来自当地社区，确保直接的经济效益 (Schuett、Dahal 和尼泊尔 2016)。基础设施的建造考虑到了当地的建筑风格并使用了当地的材料，确保其与环境和文化融为一体。

3.5 教育和意识：

ACAP 在学校设立了项目，教育年轻一代保护的重要性。并建立了信息中心和标牌，以教育游客了解该地区的生物多样性和文化，以及如何最大限度地减少其影响 (Magditsch & Moore 2011)。

4. Evaluation

The success of ACAP's community-based conservation model lies in the empowerment of the local communities. By making them active participants and beneficiaries, ACAP ensured that conservation and sustainable tourism weren't just externally imposed ideas but were integrated into the community's daily life (Sanjay 1997). The results of this successful collaboration between NGOs, local communities, and the central government have not only improved the environmental degradation in the area (Nyaupane & Thapa 2006) but also directly benefited residents from tourism. The Annapurna region still remains a top travel destination in the world but has shifted to a more sustainable approach.

4. 评估

ACAP 社区保护模式的成功在于赋予当地社区权力。通过让他们成为积极的参与者和受益者，ACAP 确保保护和可持续旅游不仅仅是外部强加的想法，而是融入社区的日常生活中（Sanjay 1997）。非政府组织、当地社区和中央政府之间的成功合作不仅改善了该地区的环境恶化（Nyaupane & Thapa 2006），还让居民直接受益于旅游业。安纳普尔纳地区仍然是世界上最受欢迎的旅游目的地，但已经转向了更可持续的方式。

Conclusion

Nepal is an underdeveloped country with scarce resources and a large population. It has long-term and continuous need for external assistance. Its special geopolitical background makes its domestic political situation often unstable, and the government often finds it difficult to achieve anything in terms of national economy and people's livelihood. Therefore, the existence of NGOs effectively fills these gaps. Despite some negative aspects, NGOs have made substantial positive impacts on poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, women's empowerment, environmental management and disaster response.

As Nepal continues to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, NGOs remain essential partners in advancing development goals, promoting social justice, and building resilient communities. Their role in shaping the country's future will continue to evolve, influenced by changing global dynamics and local needs. Researchers and policymakers should monitor and assess the contributions and challenges of NGOs to ensure their continued effectiveness in Nepal's development journey.

结论

尼泊尔是一个资源匮乏、人口众多的欠发达国家，长期持续地需要外部援助。其特殊的地缘政治背景使其国内政局时常不稳定，政府在国计民生方面往往难以有所作为。因此，非政府组织的存在有效地填补了这些空白。尽管存在一些消极的方面，非政府组织在扶贫、教育、医疗、妇女赋权、环境管理和灾害应对等方面产生了实质性的积极影响。

随着尼泊尔继续应对全球化带来的挑战和机遇，非政府组织仍然是推进发展目标、促进社会正义和建设有韧性的社区的重要合作伙伴。它们在塑造国家未来方面的作用将继续演变，受到不断变化的全球动态和当地需求的影响。研究人员和政策制定者应监测和评估非政府组织的贡献和挑战，以确保它们在尼泊尔的发展进程中继续发挥作用。

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