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Government and NGOs/CBOs working together for better cities

Forbes Davidson
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Government and NGOs/CBOs working together for better cities

**Strategies and practical modalities for
increased cooperation in human
settlements between local, state/provincial
and national government institutions
NGOs/CBOs**

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Introduction

This working paper is based on a report submitted to UNCHS in preparation of the UNCHS (Habitat) meeting on governmental/non-governmental cooperation in the field of human settlements, held in The Hague, The Netherlands from 2 to 6 November 1992. This report was complementary to a parallel report on the international dimensions of government/NGO relations. The working paper is based on a number of premises, which are aimed to ensure its relevance. They are:

- The ultimate aim, in line with the Global Shelter Strategy, is to improve living conditions of the urban poor. For the strategies that we examine to be described as "effective" they must be capable of impacting on a *significant scale at city level*. It is difficult to put a hard figure on "significant", but, given the scale of problems we need to look at, say more than 10% of those defined as the urban poor. This point is emphasized because many initiatives which are well publicized and which appear very interesting are found to be extremely limited in their impact. It is important to know whether they are capable of expansion to a large scale, or whether, by their nature they can only be carried out in special circumstances at a small scale. Interventions should also be sustainable. They should not be totally dependent on non-renewable resources such as donations from external institutions.
- Terms such as "Government" and "Non Governmental Organizations" cover an enormous range of actors. In the paper we try to differentiate between main groups in order to be able to be more specific in our recommendations. Of course, when dealing at a global level there are likely to be more exceptions than examples which follow exactly the types we describe. In order to avoid having to apologize repeatedly for making wide generalizations, and littering the text with caveats, the reader should take statements in the spirit intended - trying to draw out significant characteristics which can help point towards practical actions.
- The role of the private (for profit) sector, particularly the informal sector is recognized as the major supplier of shelter and many other services in most countries. It is assumed that improved cooperation between government and NGOs/CBOs

would have a positive impact on in particular the informal sector's role in shelter and services delivery for the urban poor. A more explicit coverage of the private sector role in this paper is, however, limited so as to allow concentration on the main theme. Yet it should be noted that many of the recommendations developed in the paper also apply to the relationship between the government and the private sector.

Summary

Over the last 10 years there has been a growing recognition of the potential of greater involvement of non-governmental organizations in human settlement development. The focus of this paper is on the roles and relationships between three of the main actors, Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based organizations (CBOs), and how they can be strengthened so as to make them more effective. In particular the concern is that the *scale of impact* of cooperation should become much more significant.

The paper first reviews the context of the discussion, including development areas where increased cooperation is important. Section two looks in more detail at the main actors, especially their attitudes and capabilities. Section 3 reviews the experience of implementing a number of broad strategies to improve relationships. From this, the main factors influencing the relationships are analyzed, in particular the constraints which operate and which hamper cooperation at a larger scale. The most important constraints relate to attitudes, institutional framework and capability, especially in terms of management. Relationships of Government with CBOs and NGOs are then examined in greater depth in section 4, at different levels of government.

The main areas of recommendation provided in Sections 5 are:

Policy

- The policy framework, with the influence of the Global Shelter Strategy and UNCED, is very supportive of stronger cooperation. Much more effort is required, however, to turn this into effective action, for example through the development of effective policy instruments.

Attitudes

- A major effort is required to change attitudes, especially amongst politicians and mid-level and field staff in Government towards NGOs and CBOs. Likewise, an effort is required to change the attitude of NGOs and CBOs towards the government. These efforts will require considerable resources, including time, to be effective and must be integrated with capability building.

- Efforts to improve cooperation must be directed to all partners, not only to NGOs.

Institutional framework

- There is a strong need for effective decentralization in government to enable it to relate to NGOs and CBOs at the appropriate level.
- Programmes require review to ensure appropriate roles for NGOs and CBOs.
- NGOs require improved access to financial resources in order to bring their operations to a significant level. However, this should be provided in a manner that does not encourage dependency and/or inflexibility or does not otherwise negatively affect the qualities of NGOs which determine their potential to positively contribute to the situation of the urban poor.

Capability

- Capability building for both government and NGOs is necessary, especially in the areas of strategic management and planning
- A particular focus should be the strengthening of the capability of intermediary NGOs as having a strong potential for building up to a significant scale and achieving sustainability. Stimulus from donor agencies can encourage this.

The paper concludes by linking the broad recommendations to the main actors involved in order to make them as specific as possible.

1

The importance of cooperation

This section explains the approach that is taken in the paper and provides a conceptual framework for examining the experience so far and for recommending strategic areas for improvement. Finally, the significance of increased cooperation between governments and NGOs/CBOs is highlighted in relation to the policy context in the field of human settlements development. Specific attention is paid to key-elements of the Global Shelter Strategy, and key resolutions of Habitat International Coalition (HIC) and United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

1.1

Objectives and approach of the paper

This paper seeks to develop recommendations for improving the effectiveness of Government/ Non-governmental cooperation in providing access to services for the urban poor. To achieve this it provides a framework for reviewing the existing experience of cooperation. It then selects those experiences indicating potentially fruitful directions for development. Key elements of the approach are:

To aim for practical recommendations

Much has been written on the subject of NGOs and CBOs and their increasingly appreciated potential. The paper aims to develop recommendations which can have a practical application.

Scope

In mobilizing the resources and potential of communities in the field of human settlements development, it is felt to be most effective to concentrate on the interface between government and organizations which are either representing a working with communities. Therefore, the paper focuses on the relationships between government at its different levels and NGOs and CBOs. These are, of course, not isolated actors. Linkages at the international level are mentioned, but not elaborated, as that was the theme of a complementary report as explained in the

Introduction. Relations with the private sector, both formal and informal, are also seen as extremely important and justify coverage in their own right. Here they are acknowledged rather than covered in depth. It should be noted, however, that many of the recommendations developed in the paper also apply to the relationship between government and the private sector.

Cases

The issue of scaling up the impact of the work of NGOs and the factors which hamper NGOs/CBOs in their functioning have been dealt with in several studies¹. There is, however, a lack of systematic comparative analyses of various models of cooperation between the government and NGOs/CBOs and of processes of institutionalization of these models. In addition, for comparative analyses of case studies the available case study material often provides too little information. Finally, it should be noted that case material relating to NGOs/CBOs does not always discriminate between rural and urban.

The structure of the paper is illustrated in Figure 1

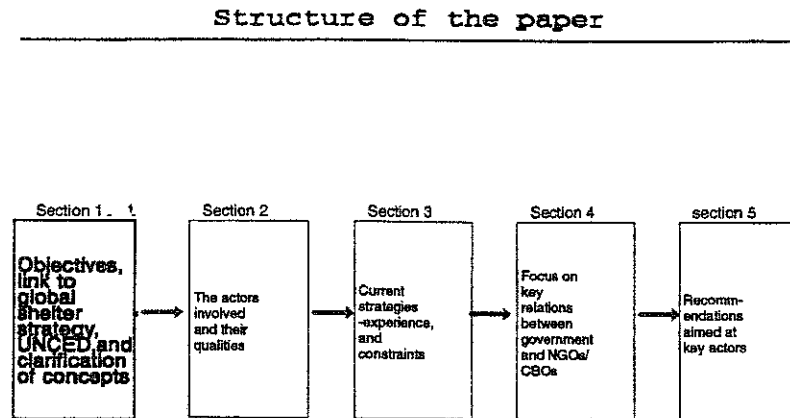


Figure 1 Structure of the paper

1.2 **The benefits of increased cooperation: key criteria**

A number of key criteria can be identified as tests for the significance of improved cooperation.

1.2.1 **Benefit for the urban poor**

The bottom line in the review and the recommendations is that cooperation should result in the urban poor getting increased access to the resources needed to improve their bad living conditions.

1.2.2 **Making a significant Impact**

A basic assumption used in the paper is that improved cooperation is only useful if it can make a significant impact on development affecting the urban poor. It is essential that we can

move beyond the limited impact of isolated projects, which may not be replicable and sustainable. As a gross oversimplification we could say that government projects and programmes often have a scale of resources (finance, manpower, knowledge, legal backing) which offer the potential to make a significant impact, but fail due to inflexibility of approach, lack of an appropriate institutional framework and inappropriate design and/ or implementation. Projects from NGOs, on the other hand often are sensitive and innovative and make good use of resources, but are normally very small in scale. Unfortunately, many of those interesting small projects cannot make the transition to large scale programmes because of their dependence on non-expandable resources, such as the existence of a charismatic leader making intensive local inputs, or a 100% foreign financing. It is therefore extremely important that the key elements of processes introduced are replicable and sustainable.

1.2.3

Sustainability

It is essential that improved cooperation is sustainable. This means that it should not depend on non renewable resources. For example, it should not require external resources over a long period say from an international agency, for its continued operation. Such resources, however, may help in the start up of new modes of cooperation.

1.3

The policy context

Over the last two decades the perception of the role of governments in tackling urban development problems has changed. Initially, the limitations of government's ability to intervene and the meager results of interventions aiming at improving the living conditions of the urban poor stimulated rethinking the roles of NGOs, CBOs and communities. There are numerous examples which demonstrate that NGOs, CBOs and communities themselves have been successful in starting off processes which have contributed to an improvement of the situation of the urban poor. Unfortunately, these interventions have usually been small-scale in nature. It is not clear to what extent the limited scale of these interventions has been crucial in their success.

During the eighties, aid organizations showed a growing interest in the role and potentials of NGOs. NGOs are considered to be important development institutions:

"because (a) they are believed to offer comparative advantages in alleviating poverty, particularly their ability to reach community organizations (Fowler 1987), and (b) it is argued that they foster democratic change by strengthening civil society (World Bank, 1990, p.6). (Fowler, 1991, p.3)"

As a result, progressively more resources have been allocated to stimulate further cooperation between NGOs, CBOs and governments.

More recently, decentralization has had increasing popularity as a policy. Decentralization, involving the delegating of responsibility together with the authority and resources to exercise it to lower levels, has had a checkered history as a policy. This is because the strong logical and managerial arguments that favour it are counterbalanced by the forces of those who do not wish to give up the centralized control of power. At any one time both centralizing and decentralizing forces are operating. However, for the last 10 years the international trend has been towards greater decentralization. This is extremely important when considering the relationships between government, NGOs and CBOs as working with them at a local level in a flexible manner will only be possible if the necessary decisions can be made at that level.

Another important point is the international trend of government reducing its areas of operation. There were already many gaps in the services provided by local governments, ^{development} perennially short of resources, but these gaps are in danger of becoming chasms. The question of the desirability of NGOs, CBOs and the private commercial sector filling these gaps is thus becoming a matter of increasing significance.

A recent trend in local government, still limited in its impact, is for local government to adopt a more flexible managerial style and to become more service orientated, viewing the people as clients. This is progressing well in developed countries where local government generally is well staffed and well funded. It is a much more difficult challenge in the Third World, but perhaps even more necessary.

1.3.1

The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

The Global Strategy for Shelter, promoted by UNCHS, has a wide level of official support. It emphasizes that:

"enabling policies, whereby the full potential and resources of all governmental and non-governmental actors in the field of human settlements are utilized, must be at the heart of national and international efforts" (resolution 13/16 of the Commission of Human Settlements)"

Fundamental to the enabling strategy is:

"the creation on the part of the public sector of incentives and facilitating measures for housing action to take place to a greater degree by other actors. For the most part, the Government's role will be an 'enabling' one, mobilizing the resources of other actors and facilitating their deployment for efficient provision of all types of shelter for all target groups" (UNCHS, 1990a, p.8)."

Thus governments are expected to facilitate the initiatives of NGOs, CBOs, communities and the private sector to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. They are to achieve this by establishing the necessary legal, institutional and financial frameworks, and allocating their scarce resources in such a way as to ensure the optimal mobilization and utilization of the potential and resources of the different actors in the urban setting.

"Ultimately, an 'enabling concept' implies that the people concerned will be given the opportunity to improve their housing conditions according to the needs and priorities they themselves will define" (Ibid. 1990a, p. 8)"

Too often urban projects and programmes have not been in accordance with these needs and priorities because there was no effective mechanism to make them known.

Governments have undertaken a range of attempts to put into practice the enabling strategy in human settlements management. Some attempts have been more successful than others. First efforts often attempted to remove obstacles for people finding solutions themselves. Examples include stopping bulldozing, legalization of land tenure and infrastructure provision. In supporting other needs, gradually the implementation of the enabling approach has stimulated the

development of programmes and projects with more orientation to participatory approaches. Initially community participation in most of these projects and programmes implied no more than expecting people to contribute labour and money. There was no real effort to facilitate people to play a major role in the decision making/planning processes affecting their lives.

Parallel to a growing understanding of the need to really involve people in decision making processes, there has been a realization of the problems involved in managing the interface between governments and communities. This has stimulated a recognition of the role and potentials of NGOs and CBOs to bridge the gap. These changes in the perception of the roles have emerged at different times in different countries such as India, Chile, Philippines, Pakistan and Brazil, and has given rise to a range of policy responses.

1.3.2

The Limuru Declaration

The NGOs themselves have played a very significant role in increasing cooperation with Government. This has been primarily through strategies of lobbying at local, regional, national and international level, and disseminating information on their present and potential roles.

In 1987 in a meeting organized by the Habitat International Coalition, in which representatives from 45 national and 12 international NGOs participated, the Limuru Declaration was formulated to stimulate governments:

"to recognize that appropriate support for individual households and the community based organizations which they form, and the NGOs with whom they choose to work in their efforts to improve shelter and environmental conditions, represents the most innovative and effective strategy to reverse existing trends." (UNCHS, 1988a, p.111)"

To achieve this, a plan of action was agreed, which is discussed in section 3 on strategies.

In strengthening their position and enhancing their capacity to influence at policy level, the establishment of networks and coalitions among NGOs/CBOs at local, regional, national and international level has played an important role. Networks provide a forum for discussions and exchange of experiences, act

as vehicles for collective action, and as centres providing a wide range of support services to its members. Many of these networks and coalitions are publishing newsletters, journals and books and regularly organize seminars, workshops, and similar events.

1.3.3

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) 1992

The enabling strategy received a further boost at the UNCED conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 when the subject was considered of such importance that a further resolution was passed.

Under the heading "Promoting Sustainable Human Settlements Development", the so-called 'Agenda 21' summarizes the scope and nature of the interventions which are required in the urban environment to achieve sustainable development. It calls for the integrated provision of environmental infrastructure which forms part of the following package:

1. Providing adequate shelter for all.
2. Improving human settlement management.
3. Promoting sustainable land use planning and management.
4. Promoting the integrated provision of environmental infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage, hazardous and solid waste management.
5. Promoting sustainable energy and transport systems in human settlements.
6. Promoting human settlement planning and management in disaster-prone areas.
7. Promoting sustainable construction industry activities.
8. Promoting human resources development and capacity-building for human settlement development.

Source: Prepcom IV, Section 1, Chapter 6 of Agenda 21, pg.3.

In reading this list, those familiar with the development agenda of the last two decades, can only come to one conclusion. Priorities which have been formulated in the past are still on the agenda. To it, new priorities have been added. The result is an extremely complex and interrelated set of interventions which, when taken up in an integrated manner and with the urgent need for tangible results, may ultimately result in a process towards sustainable development. As indicated in Agenda 21 we need to utilize the potential of all possible actors in development in achieving sustainable development.

Extracts from the relevant resolutions which were passed at Agenda 21 are provided in Box 1

1.4 Development areas where increased cooperation is significant

Here we briefly relate a number of key development topics to the need for greater cooperation. Projects and programmes referred to are given full references later in the text.

1.4.1 Support for shelter, neighbourhood and community improvement programmes and income generation programmes

This is perhaps the most important area where community participation has been recognized as an essential element for success. Where it was limited, in a large scale programme such as Kampung Improvement Programme (KIP) in Indonesia, the question of sustainability of the improvements has led to a review of the programme. Most of the cases quoted in this paper deal with improvement. In examples such as Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) in India, cooperation is built into the institutional framework of the programme. It is typically an area of CBO involvement, though in some cases NGOs have also been actively involved.

AGENDA 21: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF MAJOR GROUPS.

Selected highlights on the role of Local Authorities and NGOs.

"Because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and sub-national environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development." (pg. 20)

"Each local authority should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organizations and private enterprises and adopt a local Agenda 21." (pg.21)

"Non-governmental organizations play a vital role in the shaping and implementation of participatory democracy. Their credibility lies in the responsible and constructive role they play in society. Formal and informal organizations, as well as grass-roots movements, should be recognized as partners in the implementation of Agenda 21. The nature of the independent role played by non-governmental organizations within a society calls for real participation; therefore, independence is a major attribute of non-governmental organizations and is the precondition of real participation." (pg.16)

"One of the major challenges facing the world community as it seeks to replace unsustainable development patterns with environmentally sound and sustainable development is the need to activate a sense of common purpose on behalf of all sectors of society. The chances of forging such a sense of purpose will depend on the willingness of all sectors to participate in genuine social partnership and dialogue, while recognizing the independent roles, responsibilities and special capacities of each." (pg. 17)

"Non-governmental organizations, including those non-profit organizations representing groups addressed in the present section of Agenda 21, possess well-established and diverse experience, expertise and capacity in fields which will be of particular importance to the implementation and review of environmentally sound and socially responsible sustainable development, as envisaged throughout Agenda 21. The community of non-governmental organizations, therefore offers a global network which should be tapped, enabled and strengthened in support of efforts to achieve these common goals." (pg.17)

"To ensure that the full potential contribution of non-governmental organization is realized, the fullest possible communication and cooperation between international organizations, national and local governments and non-governmental organizations should be promoted in institutions mandated, and programmes designed to carry out Agenda 21. Non-governmental organizations will also need to foster cooperation and communication among themselves to reinforce their effectiveness as actors in the implementation of sustainable development." (pg.17)

Source: Prepcom IV (1992) , Section III, Chapters 1 to 9, of Agenda 21.

Box 1 Excerpts from Prepcom IV, UNCED 92 Agenda 21

1.4.2 Promotion of support to grass-roots Initiatives

The flexibility and motivation of NGOs has made them very suitable to facilitate the establishment of CBOs and to support CBOs in their activities. This has been recognized in several countries such as the Netherlands where some municipalities fund support to CBOs through an NGO. Local government staff are also able to support CBOs and facilitate their establishment, provided that an appropriate institutional framework is developed and government staff (through training) are motivated and equipped with skills to establish and work with CBOs. This is illustrated by Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) and Urban Community Development (UCD) programmes in Andhra Pradesh, India, and the Danida/UNCHS supported programmes in Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia.

1.4.3 Joint planning and implementation of human settlements programmes

The importance of facilitating community participation in planning and implementation is highlighted several times in the paper. It is extremely important if participation and popular support is to be effective in the long run. It requires support to community groups which can be by an NGO or local Government. In addition, the official planning process must be adapted to make it possible. Positive examples include KIP in Surabaya, Indonesia. The nowadays much advocated action planning approach also requires an effective mechanism of community participation.

1.4.4 Assistance to poor households in negotiating access to land and finance

The role of this particular type of support to poor households is one best supplied by NGOs. This is because they often have to negotiate with government, and thus need third party support.

1.4.5 Supporting the role of women

The special role of women in community based development has been increasingly recognized during the past ten years. This recognition is not only about equality of treatment, it is also about more effective planning, implementation and management of projects. NGOs/CBOs can play an important role in this, as they are normally more flexible than government, and themselves tend to have more female members. For the long term, however, it is essential that the institutional framework of government supports women's roles through procedures and rules. An example is in India where an NGO, Joint Women's Programme has successfully persuaded Delhi Development Authority to modify their rules so that land titles are given in joint names instead of in the name of the husband only.

1.4.6 Equitable sharing of powers, responsibilities and resources

This is the ideal in any political system with socialist ideals. Its implementation, however, is far from easy. The nature and scale of cooperation between governments and NGOs/CBOs is an indication of moving towards this objective.

1.4.7 Advocacy, housing and other rights issues

A special role of quite a number of NGOs (including organizations representing CBOs), especially at large city or national level, is to try to influence policy. In this they differ from most political parties in that they tend to concentrate only on relatively narrow issues. They thus offer a means of having a well informed and flexible pressure on key elements of policy. In this they can be supportive or antagonistic to government efforts. Government and NGOs working together cannot always be on a harmony model, but NGOs can exert valuable and well informed pressure for necessary changes. They require a suitable institutional framework for this to be possible.

2

Key actors and their qualities

This section reviews the definitions and qualities of the main actors from the government and non governmental sides as a base for discussing their relationships in Section 4.

For analysis to be clear, and recommendations to be effective, it is important to make them as specific as possible. This is difficult in the context of recommendations which seek to be applicable internationally, but we believe that they can be made much more realistic and thus practical by going beyond the broad generalizations of Government, Non-Governmental Organization and Community Based Organization. The main actors at various levels and their characteristics are described below. Figure 2 indicates the main actors that are dealt with. The figure also introduces symbols which are used throughout the paper.

2.1

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Definition CBOs are defined as any type of organization, formal or informal, which is based on a group of people living or working together and who associate to pursue common interests. They are characterized by being local in focus, and being directly accountable to their constituents.

Objectives CBOs are set up with many different objectives - normally they deal with some common local interest of people. They may be set up specifically to help provide or improve services, or they may be adapted for this function.

Activities and location CBOs may have a wide range of activities including sports, health, religion and employment. Our concern is with those involved in human settlements development. Normally a CBO is based in a limited geographic area, where people are living, but may also relate to a work place or type of work, for example a pedal taxi association. CBOs are fixed in their area of operation. They can expand or intensify what they

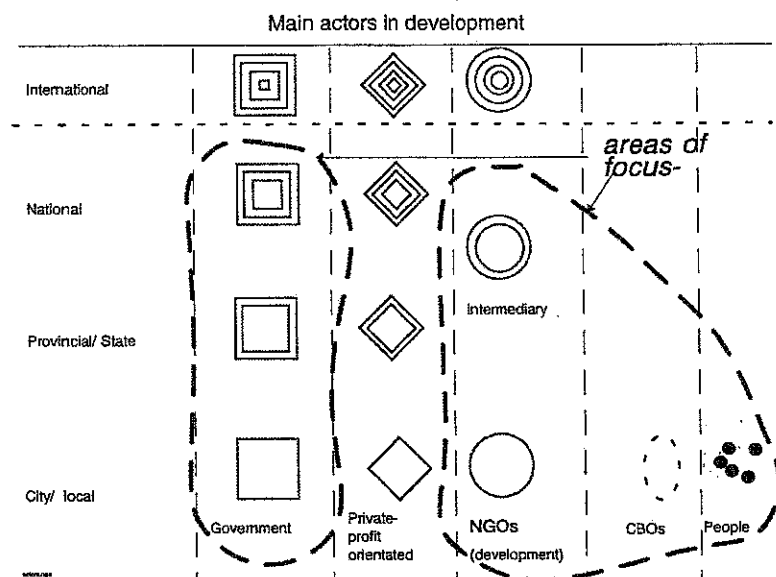


Figure 2 Main actors

do, but normally not where they do it. This characteristic is important as it makes for a logical relationship to local government which is also based on defined areas.

Financial capacity Typically CBOs are financially weak, though they normally collect membership fees and sometimes regular collections are made for services provided. Strengths include knowing members personally with social pressure helping ensure payments. Flexibility in case of hardship is possible.

Technical capacity Normally CBOs have some practical skills, but tend to lack those needed to be involved actively in discussions of local planning and development.

Organizational capacity CBOs are often weak in organizational skills -the capacity to run meetings and keep records, especially in forms accepted by governmental agencies.

Political effectiveness the skills of CBOs vary in this area, but they are often weak in expressing priorities in an effective manner.

2.2

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Definition Cernea (1988, p.9) in discussing the term NGO writes that it

"Offers such a broad umbrella for a kaleidoscopic collection of organizations that attempts at simple definitions are quickly rendered meaningless."

At the risk of being meaningless we define Non-governmental organizations as associations established to pursue developmental objectives on a non-profit basis. Large and intermediary NGOs which operate at national or major city levels may form a service to smaller NGOs for example by providing information, training or other support. Organizations representing CBOs, so-called apex-bodies of CBOs, are also considered to be NGOs.

Objectives Typically NGOs are associations of people, often professionals who provide support to groups of the population in need of assistance. Intermediate or umbrella NGOs often provide support to branches or other NGOs or advice to Government rather than being involved directly in the field.

Activities and location Bowden (1990), writing about the results of a major study on experience of working with NGOs in Asia suggests a classification into Consulting, Welfare, Development and Advocacy. The different types of NGOs -are illustrated in Figure 3. The focus in this paper is on NGOs with a development focus, with a particular concern for urban poor².

Korten (1987b) identifies three orientations and generations of ideas:

- *Generation one*, relief and welfare, which he considers of limited importance as a development strategy.
- *Generation two*, local self reliance - dating from the early 70s. Problems include conflict or competition with government rather than cooperation.
- *Generation three*, sustainable systems development. This involves trying to get the institutional supports right, and ensuring access to resources.

"Efforts by PVOs (refers to Private Voluntary Organizations - referred to in this paper as NGOs) to confront these realities in collaboration with government, and a wide range of other local and national institutions-both public and private-toward development of more supportive policies, programmes and institutions-represent a Third Generation of PVO (NGO) development strategy. Different orientations can appear in one PVO's programmes" (Korten, 1987b, p.25)"

An example is given of the Development of People's Foundation, Mindanao, Philippines. Korten argues that generation 1 and 2 approaches are still necessary, but the third generation must be strongly developed. The concept is very useful in that it helps to define the direction that needs to be taken if NGOs are to make a significant impact. This view is echoed in different terminology by HIC in its Limuru declaration, and by John Turner (Turner, B (1988) pp.169-182)

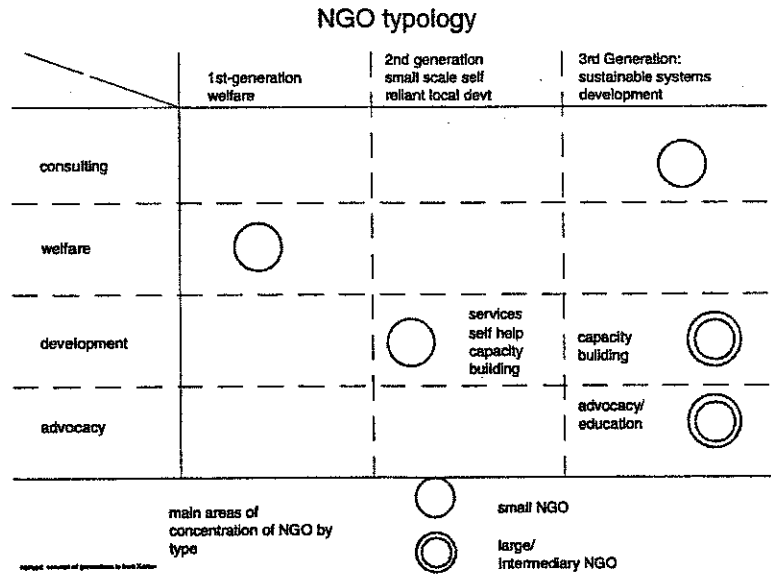


Figure 3 Types of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Location of activities The scale of coverage of NGOs often goes beyond the local level. This is especially the case with large and intermediary NGOs which often operate at major city, provincial

or national levels. They also often have links with international NGOs.

Financial capacity NGOs are often active in raising funds for development projects, though they may have limited reserves themselves.

Technical capacity NGOs often are staffed by professionals, sometimes part time. Technical capacity in specialized areas is normally a strength, especially as it is also usually linked to a high level of commitment. Korten argues, however, that the development of competence required for what he describes as Third Generation approaches will require considerable support.

"Commitment is essential to effective performance in a catalyst role, but it is no substitute for technical competence. .But when PVOs(NGOs) position themselves to be systems' catalysts, their technical weaknesses are more difficult to hide." (Korten, 1987b, p.28)"

Organizational capacity and culture The professional background of NGOs does not necessarily mean that organizational capacity is high. There is much variation in capacity. In terms of culture, they tend to be flexible and horizontally structured, except in the case of the larger organizations.

Political effectiveness Ability to raise funds and develop political support varies greatly.

2.3

Local Government

Definition "Local Government" here refers to elected or appointed city or district government. It is the level of government with direct contact with the population.

Objectives Local government normally has the statutory obligation to ensure service provision for its residents. It may do this directly or it may achieve its objectives through cooperation or partnership with private and non-governmental actors. Local Government is having to re-assess its role from direct provision of services to enabling their provision.

Location and scale of activities. The boundaries of local government concern are clearly and legally defined. They may not, however,

always reflect the changing realities of urban growth, resulting in difficulties of service provision and taxation.

Financial capacity Typically, local governments are under-funded and have only limited capacity to raise their own revenues.

Organizational capacity and culture Local government is often set up to administer an area rather than being actively involved in management of development. The culture is typically bureaucratic, with a concern to keep to the routine, rules and regulations and not to make mistakes.

Political effectiveness Local government is in a good position to tap political support at the local level. However, it typically has poorly articulated local political response and is often heavily constrained by control from higher authorities.

2.4

State or Provincial Government

The characteristics are somewhere between central and local government, depending on the size and constitution of the country concerned. A particular concern is where state or provincial government, which is by definition at some distance from communities, takes too direct a role in detailed planning and development. This makes it very difficult to facilitate participatory planning and development.

State/provincial level is often involved in the development and supervision of programmes, which are often too rigid to allow local flexibility in implementation.

In some cases services of provincial government are deconcentrated to be based at a local level. In this case they are in many ways operating in a similar manner to local government, but lack influences from locally elected representatives. Decentralization means more than shifting power from the centre to the province. This is particularly the case when provincial government is appointed by the centre. Only at a really *local* level can the enabling strategy work.

2.5 Central Government

Objectives and activities Central Government is concerned with policy, guiding distribution of resources and providing regulatory frameworks. As far as possible it should decentralize detailed regulation.

Location of activities Central government has a nation-wide scope of activities, but often works through other levels of government in dealing with urban development. Exceptions include the setting up of special development agencies.

Financial capacity Central governments are normally the strongest financial actors, though they may lack flexibility.

Organizational capacity and culture Capacity is often *relatively* strong. It normally is a bureaucratic style of organization, which makes it difficult to operate in a flexible development-orientated manner. The culture is of hierarchical administration, not management.

2.6 Conclusion

The broad policy framework and the rhetoric often supports closer and more effective working together of different government levels and NGOs. However, the characteristics of the main actors are critical in understanding the actual relationships between them, and providing clues as to what might be the most effective approach to making a more productive relationship in practice. The following section reviews the experience of implementing a number of strategies aimed at improving the relationships, and identifies the main constraints that have been encountered.

3

Strategies of supporting cooperation: Experiences and constraints

This section reviews the main strategies of supporting increased cooperation. It also reviews cases which indicate new directions and identifies the major constraints which limit their application.

3.1

Criteria for judging success

In reviewing some of the main approaches which have been attempted so far, we use the criteria outlined in section 1.

- The strategy should result in significant improvement in living conditions of the urban poor.
- There should be an impact at a significant scale.
- The improvement should be sustainable.

3.2

Stimulating a participatory oriented attitude among the staff of public authorities and with NGOs/CBOs

Achieving sympathetic attitudes towards cooperation is a precondition for any further steps in successfully operationalizing the enabling strategy. It includes the acceptance of the basic premises of the enabling strategy by the actors involved, a willingness to cooperate, and a recognition, understanding and acceptance of the roles and responsibilities. Stimulating this must be an important part of any strategy to increase cooperation between Government and NGOs/CBOs.

In particular, NGOs have played an active role in this area. The Limuru declaration discussed in section 1 includes a strategy to implement the proposed policy. The main components of this plan can be summarized as follows:

- to start a media campaign to stimulate worldwide attention for the housing problems of the urban poor and to highlight the potentials of NGOs in addressing these problems;
- to improve partnerships between NGOs and international agencies;
- to identify institutions which can diminish the present gap between local NGOs and donor agencies, and act as an intermediary between donor agencies and local NGOs.
- to investigate the possibilities for the right of appeal at international level for those evicted or threatened with eviction (UNCHS, 1988, p.114-115).

The HIC project for the Year of the Shelter for the Homeless, in association with Habitat Forum Berlin, and funded by UNCHS is another good example of an initiative by NGOs to stimulate recognition of the achievements and potentials in the improvement of the living conditions of the urban poor. Twenty cases were finally selected and have been documented (Turner, 1988). Other major efforts have been made by organizations such as the Mazingira Institute in Kenya and The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in Buenos Aires and London.

In general, however, this strategy of developing strong information programmes has been pursued insufficiently, especially at national and sub national levels. Very few well-targeted, comprehensive, nationwide training and information programmes have materialized. This strategy has been pursued only at a limited scale in support of the implementation of a specific programme or project.

3.3

Strengthening of the institutional framework

It is important that an institutional basis exists which supports, or at least allows cooperation between the government and NGOs/CBOs.

The decentralization of decision-making, especially on the spending of budgets, is one of the most crucial elements in the enabling approach. This is because it allows low levels of government, who are closest to the population, to have meaningful discussions and make decisions. Unfortunately, its

implementation may run against the vested interests of certain government staff at higher levels who feel that they will lose power. Naturally they then give resistance, though not always openly.

The delegation of decision making does not only apply within government. It is the essential element when private sector, NGOs or CBOs are involved. The new roles and responsibilities require the clarity of an institutional framework if they are to operate.

The development of a clear institutional basis includes:

- The removal of legislative barriers which hamper the establishment and functioning of NGOs and CBOs,
- the allocation of financial resources to back the new way of working between governments and NGOs/CBOs,
- the process by which programmes and projects are formulated, and
- the establishment of new decision making structures and procedures.

Below these different actions will be looked at in more detail.

3.3.1

Legislative and financial support to NGOs/CBOs

Legislative and financial support are largely interdependent. It is often necessary to have a change in legislation to achieve the legal basis which is necessary for formal sector financial organizations to be able and willing to finance programmes. An example of this is the Community Mortgage Programme in the Philippines (Box 10) where legislative innovation allows CBOs, often with help from NGOs, to access loan funds for land purchase and servicing.

A

Legislative support

This is perhaps one of the most important categories of action as it requires only limited resources to implement, and has the potential to have a positive impact on a large number of beneficiaries in a relatively short period of time. Legal changes, are, unfortunately, amongst the most difficult, given the conservative nature of legal systems. The resources necessary for legislative change include a high level of commitment and

energy including the willingness to take risks and spend political capital. An example is the effort put in by NGOs active on Housing Rights concerning questions relating to eviction. Recent efforts by UNCHS, the World Bank, OECD and NGOs on practice related to relocation also falls into this category (UNCHS 91b). Legislative support can itself be divided into a number of types of action:

- *Permissive* This category refers to the removing or amending of laws and regulations which currently restrict Government working with NGOs and CBOs. Often, conditions are imposed which are hard for NGOs and CBOs to meet, for example on minimum capital or equipment for contracts. In Indonesia, NGOs can work for the government as consultants, albeit being restricted to the following options:

1. indirectly as sub-contractors for registered consultants (registered as a company, a so-called *P.T.*)
2. directly as non-profit foundations (*yayasans*) which are only entitled to very low billing rates, and
3. directly through an established consultancy wing (registered as *P.T.*) as part of their organizational set-up.

- *Promotional* Refers to situations where changes are made which positively promote the roles of NGOs/CBOs and encourage governmental institutions to cooperate. The Community Mortgage Programme in Philippines already referred to is such a case. Others include FUNACOM (Box 3). Many countries have legislation which encourages the formation of cooperatives, by providing concessional funding, for example Egypt and India. Cooperatives in Egypt, however, tend to be limited to middle income groups. In Bombay, cooperative legislation was used for low income relocations in Dharavi where high density buildings were found necessary. Where there is large scale concessional funding to cooperative and housing associations, as in the Netherlands and United Kingdom, these organizations tend to themselves become bureaucratic and remote from their members.

- *Obligatory or conditional* In these cases, government is obliged to work with and/ or consult NGOs and CBOs. Examples of this in Western countries include the obligation of governmental agencies to consult residents associations and sometimes particular NGOs in decision making procedures.

Designing legislative supports potentially satisfy the criteria set for assessing means of improving effective working relations. They can make a real impact at a large scale and are sustainable. The same process that makes the changes difficult to start also tends to make them long lasting.

B

Financial supports

Development NGOs and CBOs are perennially short of money, so at first sight financial supports might be seen to be one of the most critical areas for government to improve its efforts to make NGOs more effective. The case of RIO (Box 2) is an example of government financing a support service by an NGO.

Governmental support to professional organizations assisting community based organizations in The Netherlands

In the management of the urban environment, community participation is well-established in the Dutch context. Developing community based organizations and stimulating their participation in urban development receives a high priority in the policy framework. For this reason the Dutch government facilitates the establishment and functioning of professional organizations specialized in supporting community based organizations

A good example of such an organization is the Rotterdam Institute for Support to Community Based Organizations (RIO). Basically this is an NGO, which receives a major part of its funding from various departments of the municipality of Rotterdam.

Rio employs around 248 people, many of whom are placed with one of the 43 CBOs in Rotterdam (one CBO for each neighbourhood) to professionally assist these in their activities. The support provided by RIO to a particular CBO is determined on the basis of the population-size, the amount of construction activities and the specific nature of the problems in the neighbourhood.

Box 2 Case of RIO, Rotterdam, Netherlands

A critical issue here is that of dependency and its potential to compromise the essential qualities of independence and flexibility of NGOs and CBOs. It is very important that sources

of funds from Government or from International NGOs and donors should not be used to "buy" the NGOs and CBOs and coopt them to the agenda of the government or the donor. Financial supports are likely to be most effective when they involve, for example, access to sources of finance normally restricted to government or individuals. The Cooperatives mentioned above are examples of this.

Thus, although finance is important, how it is given is a very sensitive issue. It should be combined with efforts to improve technical and managerial capacity. Garilao, a senior officer in a Philippine NGO which channels private sector funds, writes:

"If First World resource agencies are interested in contributing to democratic stabilization in developing countries, they must look beyond the traditional role of resource transfer. They must be prepared to play a role or invest in the capacity-building of their local indigenous partners". (Garilao, 1987, p.119)"

In building up a significant scale of impact, the critical issue is improving the effectiveness of NGOs and CBOs. In some cases this may mean making existing NGOs/CBOs bigger, in other cases it may mean stimulating the establishment of many NGOs/CBOs.

3.3.2

Establishing an institutional basis: policy, programmes, projects, process and procedures

P5
PPPP

Government organizations are normally bureaucratic in nature, and are based on regulations and procedures. To cooperate with NGOs/CBOs often is against the culture of the governmental organization. It is normally outside the rules as to what *should* be done. It can even be outside the rules as to what *can* be done. On the side of NGOs, which are normally more flexible in operation, cooperation with government may be against their culture. Improvement thus requires change in both institutional aspects (regulations and mechanisms to allow or require cooperation) as well as in attitudinal aspects. A vital pre-condition to allow local government to be able to discuss and make agreements with NGOs and CBOs at the local level is that there is sufficient *decentralization* of decision making with sufficient local control over financial resources to make it effective.

A major area where it is necessary to reform the institutional framework is in the *policy development and planning processes*. In terms of policy development, it is important that NGOs and CBOs can contribute so that their experience and insight at the grassroots level may be made available. In the planning process, it is extremely important that all groups have an involvement from the start of the process, so that they are committed to the objectives and to the approach used. Roles and responsibilities should be decided on the basis of the strengths and potentials of the parties.

Specific areas for involvement are:

- Involving NGOs/CBOs in discussions on policy matters
- Establishing coordinating bodies in which NGOs/CBOs are represented and which have a decision making power

Another particularly important area is in major governmental programmes. The *processes* to be followed are often specified in considerable detail. If these exclude, or do not specifically encourage, participation of CBOs and NGOs, then it is unlikely that lower levels of government will innovate in this area. An example is the very large scale Kampung Improvement Programme in Indonesia which is remarkable for its scale of coverage and benefit to low income groups. However, the programme was government implemented and in some cases actually undermined the existing CBOs (Suhandjaja, 1991, p.356). More positive experience is reported in Surabaya, Indonesia, where NGOs and CBOs have been involved in priority setting.

In India, the large scale Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) programme (supported by UNICEF, and implemented through all three levels of government) works specifically with small, slum-level CBOs, and with women slum leaders. It includes a strong training component which works on awareness and capacity building of all actors. It has developed an institutional basis but there is still some dependence on international funding, and developing capacity building of the scale necessary is proving difficult.

A solid institutional basis for the implementation of the enabling strategy is indispensable. However, in most cases only limited steps have been undertaken to institutionalize forms of cooperation. In spite of the existence of NGOs, in many participatory programmes the role of NGOs has usually not been well specified, or else there have been no mechanisms created to

facilitate a more direct involvement. Exceptions to this include the Community Mortgage Programme in Philippines (see box 9), FOSIS in Chile, and Funacom in Brazil (Box 3).

A Municipal Program to support low-income households in self-management in Sao Paulo, Brazil (FUNACOM)

Background and concept:

This program is basically a reaction to the incapacity of the government in Brazil to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. The growing autonomy of municipalities in Brazil following a new constitution in 1988 and the demands of the strong social movements in Sao Paulo, finally prompted the municipal government of Sao Paulo to launch the FUNACOM in 1990. It is based on the principles of community participation and self-management. Financially the FUNACOM program is linked to FUNAPS, a municipal fund for house construction in favor of families in poor housing conditions, which was restructured in 1989.

Low-income households can acquire finance for construction materials, land, infrastructure, skilled labour and technical assistance provided that they are organized in autonomously functioning organizations with a legal status, which represent a group of between 20-200 families. The money is directly channelled to so-called community associations, which have contracted a Technical Assistance Team (TAT). TATs may consist of staff from NGOs, Universities, or Architectural offices, and are expected to assist the community associations during all the project phases.

Procedure:

Having established a community association (CA) and having contracted a TAT, the CA is expected to develop a draft project proposal which has to be approved by the concerned regional office of HABI, the municipal authority responsible for low-income housing programmes. Next the proposal has to be finalized and submitted to the FUNACOM-coordination team. Upon their approval, a request for finance is sent to the Funaps council. Finally, upon approval of this financial request, the CA signs a contract with the FUNAPS. This implies that the community is responsible for management of the project implementation.

Source: Denaldi (1992)

Box 3 Case of Funacom, Brazil

3.3.3

Strengthening organizational and technical capacity of NGOs/ CBOs

Many NGOs and CBOs are small, and centered round charismatic leaders. For the enabling strategy to have significant impact CBOs and NGOs will have to expand their operations on a sustained basis, and inter-relate more effectively with government. It is necessary to develop well-functioning planning

bodies which can represent the community and which can bring together the ideas of community members and crystallize these into coherent community action plans. This will require them to develop improved organizational management and planning skills, including those of effective communication.

Though many of the small projects undertaken by NGOs can be considered as pilot projects, too few efforts are undertaken to realize a scaling up of successful pilot project approaches. Moreover NGOs perform their activities to a large extent in isolation of public programmes/projects, which would give the potential of wide impact.

The more NGOs move their attention in the direction of influencing policy and planning (Third Generation NGOs), the more they will require skills in strategic organization, planning and action planning. A number of specialized NGOs are involved in the area of improving skills of smaller NGOs. These include El Taller, an international network providing training. Recently the Netherlands government funded an international training programme for Indonesian NGOs at IHS, Netherlands.

Facilitating training is a crucial element in the strategy to support cooperation. It is also essential that when technical support is given to NGOs, it is carried out in a manner which allows experience to be gained. Experience shows that NGOs are of great importance in providing the support to start up CBOs and during their initial phases of development.

3.3.4

Strengthening capacity of Local Government to work with NGOs and CBOs

It is not only the role of Government to help develop the capacity of NGOs and CBOs, there are several examples of very active NGOs which are in fact helping to develop the capacity of local Government. In India, the All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIILSG) is active in many states. In Brazil IBAM, an NGO, provides training and consultancy services to local government (Box 4)

Governments with support of International organizations have recently undertaken some very useful initiatives in this area. One example is the UNCHS/DANIDA-sponsored training programmes for community participation in Bolivia, Sri Lanka

The Brazilian Institute of Municipal Administration (IBAM)

IBAM is a large NGO which started in 1952 and is involved in the field of technical assistance to local governments and urban development. IBAM also provides services to a number of foreign countries.

The activities of IBAM can be divided into four main categories:

- providing training to governmental staff
- carrying out a multitude of consultancy projects
- undertaking research activities
- preparing publications (periodicals, newsletters, books and manuals).

Source: Cities, vol. 8, no. 2, p. 153-155

Box 4 IBAM Brazil

and Zambia. (UNCHS, 1991a) (see Box 5)

3.4

Role in research and training

Throughout the Third World an increasing number of NGOs are involved in training and research activities on behalf of governmental authorities. Their explicit orientation towards the needs and priorities of the urban poor and their wealth of experience in working with the urban poor, have made many NGOs valuable sources of ideas and information on how to respond more adequately to problems of the urban poor. On the basis of their experience and good relations at grassroots level, they are often very suitable organizations to carry out research and training activities for the government.

The most common examples are of NGOs being requested by government to carry out training activities aiming at community building and organization. The involvement of SPARC in Bombay in assisting in resettlement through enumeration and community training is a good example (see Box 6).

Several NGOs have developed into major research and training institutes, carrying out a multitude of training and research activities for governmental agencies. Examples are Cordillera, a Chilean NGO which aims at improving urban management through training of local government staff and CBOs, IPADEL in Peru, IBAM (Box 4) and AIIISG (mentioned above).

Training for community participation: the case of Zambia

Relevance of the case study:

The case of Zambia illustrates central government taking positive steps to develop local government capacity to develop and support CBOs in settlement upgrading.

Background and concept of the programme:

The training programme for Community Participation in Improving Human Settlements in Zambia started in 1984 as part of an international programme implemented also in Sri Lanka and Bolivia under sponsorship of UNCHS/DANIDA. The programme aims at promoting the principles of community participation in human settlements development and developing the administrative and operational capacities within governmental authorities to handle participatory orientated policies and programmes. The method used is to combine classroom based training with the development and implementation of actual upgrading programmes. The success of the programme is that the outputs are not just trained staff, but that a whole administrative and financial system has been developed, and a large number of programmes developed in the field.

The importance of addressing the role of NGOs:

In upgrading activities in Zambia, in addition to governmental authorities and communities, also NGOs play a role. Supported by funding from donor agencies/international NGOs, NGOs in Zambia have initiated several projects in low-income settlements in the field of health, water supply, education and road development. There have however been cases of conflict between programmes of Government and NGOs, indicating the need for training on this subject on both sides. So far the programme has not addressed the issue of co-ordination between NGOs and Government activities, though it is likely to develop in this direction.

Source: Davidson (1991)

Box 5 Training for Community Participation, Zambia

3.5

Constraints

From the cases reviewed above, constraints can be identified in three main groups. These are:

- *Attitude* In many cases the people who have to implement policy changes are not sufficiently sympathetic or convinced that

SPARC is an NGO which started out as an organization with a particular concern for the situation of the pavement dwellers in Bombay. Over the years SPARC developed a special methodology in working with this community towards an improvement of their living conditions.

Based on SPARC's experience in successfully working with the urban poor, in 1987 the State Government approached the NGO to provide support in preparing the resettlement of the households living within 30 feet of the three major railway tracks in Bombay, which according to the Railway Authorities should be kept free. SPARC was requested to conduct the enumeration of these households, but they also insisted on also being involved in the planning and implementation of the resettlement (Daswani and D'Cruz (1990), pp.31-36).

Methodology of SPARC

Key elements of the methodology developed by SPARC in working with the urban poor are:

- *1. Locate the central features of the crisis as identified by the community facing it.
2. Understand how the state perceives that crisis.
3. Share the insight with the community and debate the formulations of elements necessary for a solution.
4. Create an information base from participatory research.
5. Initiate professionals to take part in formulating alternatives with communities.
6. Initiate a campaign for change:
 - mass demonstrations
 - publication of information
 - workshops
 - negotiate meetings with the government.*

Sparc, 1990, p.95

The formation of community based organizations is seen as crucial in mobilizing the poor in their struggle to achieve better living conditions. SPARC concentrates its efforts particularly on women, not only because they are affected most by housing problems, but also because their involvement is crucial in effectively mobilizing the urban poor for change.

Source: Sparc (1990), Sparc (1988), Daswani and D'Cruz (1990).

Box 6 Sparc, Bombay

working together with the "other side" is worth while.

- *Institutional Framework* Much more requires to be done on implementation of decentralization, the review and reform of restrictive legislation and the review of policy and planning processes to ensure the possibility of participation by NGOs and

CBOs. Programmes require to be reviewed to ensure that their procedures encourage participation. In addition supportive measures, such as access to finance, are required.

- Finally, *Capability* on both Government and NGO/CBO sides requires considerable investment of resources to improve their performance, especially in terms of strategic management and action planning.

4

Key areas for increased cooperation at different government levels

This section examines the relationships between different levels of government and NGOs and CBOs. It reviews what appears to be the best possibilities of effective cooperation and goes on to examine what conditions are necessary for cooperation, based on the constraints identified in section 2.

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4.1

Focus for cooperation

The main focus in operational terms will be on the relationship between local government and either CBOs or NGOs. It is at this level that actual improvements have to be achieved and where main bottlenecks in past efforts were observed. This is illustrated in the following quotation relating to environmental problems:

"in Third World cities, the most serious environmental problems in terms of present impact on human health have little to do with levels of resource consumption. They have more to do with government failures to control industrial pollution and to ensure that city-dwellers have the basic infrastructure and services essential for health and a decent living environment". (Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1991, pp.352-353)"

At the same time experiences from the UN Water and Sanitation Decade have shown that in order to achieve sustainability, community involvement is a prerequisite and should be directed towards assuming responsibility for improving their living environment. The main purpose of CBO and NGO involvement at this level would be therefore to mobilize this collective effort. Whether the focus is on improving the capacity to work directly with CBOs, as in the cases of the Community Participation Programme in Zambia, or UBSP in India, or on working through NGOs as an intermediary, depends very much on individual circumstances and capacities. There is no evidence to suggest

that one approach is intrinsically superior to the other. Figure 4 indicates the choices related to working with CBOs and/or NGOs and includes the option of working directly with people a local level. This last option requires a very decentralized and open system.

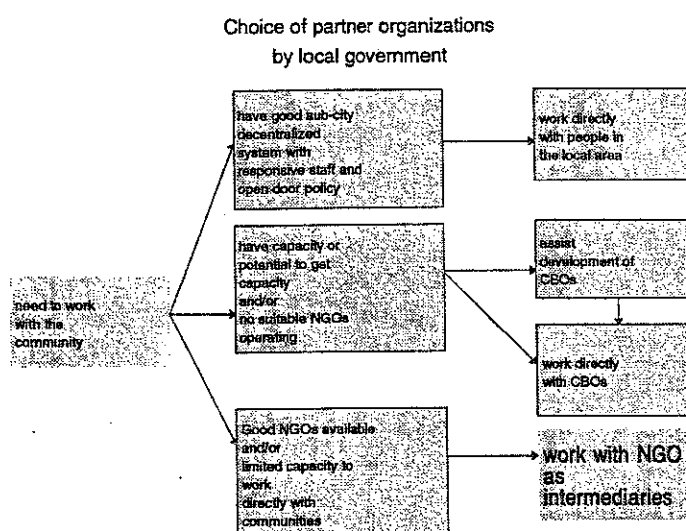


Figure 4 Choices for local government

4.2

Relationships between the actors

The focus of the paper is on the relationships between the main actors and how they can best be improved. Figure 5, Figure 6 and Figure 7 illustrate the areas of overlapping interest and thus potential relationships between the main actors. From the rather complicated picture of Figure 7 we focus in particular on the areas which have the most strategic relevance given the concern with scale of impact - these are:

A. Relationships at local level.

- The relationship between local government, NGOs and CBOs. These are the linkages which directly facilitate grass-roots participation.

B. Relationships which facilitate local efforts:

- The relationship between provincial or state government and large and intermediary NGOs;
- The relationship between Central Government and large and intermediary and international NGOs;
- The relationship between higher and lower levels of government.

The way that these actors inter-relate is examined in detail in the following sections with the aim to determine where efforts can be directed most strategically so as to achieve a significant impact from the desired improved cooperation. A basic assumption is that it is important to be realistic rather than idealistic as to the starting points. At each level specific types of government and NGO/CBO are discussed.

4.3

Local Government level

Figure 5 indicates overlapping areas of interest of local government, NGOs and CBOs. There are three basic models as discussed in section 4.1 above. In the first, local government deals directly with citizens. This is an attractive model, but requires a very decentralized sub-city system, and requires a lot from staff. In the second, the link to the community is via CBOs though in some cases these have to be developed. This too requires capability of staff to work with CBOs, and a reasonably decentralized structure. In the third, links to the community are via NGOs playing an intermediary role. This model demands less of the local government, and conversely more of the NGOs. The advantages are that NGOs can compensate for often limited capacity of local government in this area, and being more flexible, demand less of a change in ways of local government working.

The strategic choice to be made by local governments, as to whether to involve NGOs and/or CBOs as intermediaries in

development processes, has in itself its flaws. It leaves the question unanswered which party should be assigned the responsibility of initiating the establishment of CBOs. It is too optimistic to expect that "traditional" organizations at community level will automatically transform or expand their area of operation into assuming responsibility for development processes at neighborhood level. Even if so, it would bring with it the inherent danger of being affiliated to specific categories of people and determined by political, class, caste, religious or other considerations. In many cases such social organizations at local level do not even exist. When we are serious about initiating development processes at community level, CBOs must be developed and be centered around development issues. Whether the local government itself assumes this responsibility or NGOs are used as intermediaries is a strategic choice depending on local conditions. An example of working with CBOs in the absence of suitable NGOs is given in Box 7.

We now examine the relationships between government, CBOs and NGOs under the headings of *attitudes, institutional framework and capability*.

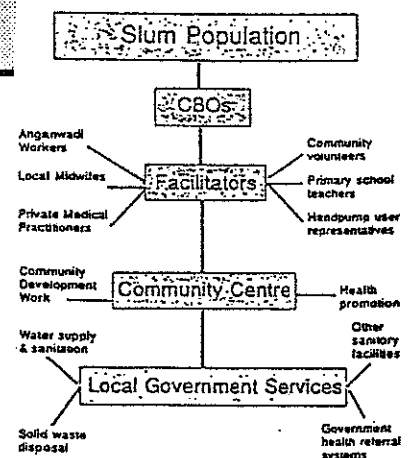
The Kanpur-Mirzapur environmental project, India

Kanpur-Mirzapur is a major integrated environmental improvement programme in India. The project encompasses a wide range of interventions, including innovative forms of sewerage treatment, and recycling of tannery wastes. Community participation is an important feature, but is confined to those interventions which have a direct impact on the living conditions of the urban poor. They relate to improvements in the industrial environment, water supply and sanitation facilities, health interventions and employment generation for women.

The central focus in community participation is sustainability of the interventions. The mechanism for participation is illustrated in the organigram. As an intermediary level there is a community centre staffed with community workers from the municipality which each serves a population of about 125,000 people. If a well operated and effective NGO had been available and willing to assume a similar role and no adequate governmental infrastructure had been there, the NGO may have been involved as an intermediary.

Haskoning, 1991, pg 4.

The organigram presented below gives an overview of the different interrelationships



Box 7 Case of Kanpur-Mirzapur, India

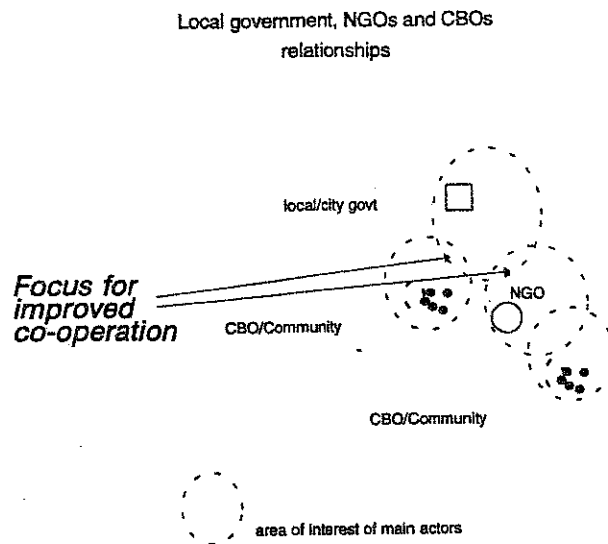


Figure 5 Linkages local government NGOs and CBOs

4.3.1

Attitudes

Attitudes from the government side can be either that NGOs and CBOs are a good thing, and can be a help. Probably more often, especially at the field level, views may be that CBOs are duplicating the role of local councilors, and that NGOs are working in areas which are really the role of government. More negatively, NGOs may be seen as interfering political activists. From the side of NGOs, local government is often seen to lack capacity and credibility.

As stated earlier in this paper, it is not useful to try to state that all NGOs or CBOs or Local Governments are the same. There are highly political NGOs which are opposed to Government actions and there are incompetent and corrupt local governments. The issue is to get beyond the stereotypes, and encourage both sides to consider rationally how they can best work together and build on each other's strengths. This is essential if scale of impact is to be achieved.

One of the main factors playing a significant role is *lack of information* on both sides concerning the role and abilities of the other. There is very little information available on positive examples of roles of local government and NGOs and particularly on their ways of working together. Examples have already been given at an international level, but much more effort is required to ensure dissemination, and efforts must be mainly targeted in-country.

4.3.2 The Institutional framework

This has been largely described in section 3. *Decentralization* is the key to a supportive institutional framework at the local level. In a decentralized situation it is possible for local government to develop its own regulations to allow improved cooperation. It is especially important also that where local government is implementing national or state designed *planning processes, programmes and projects*, that these allow for or encourage wider participation.

The three models described at the start of this section have different implications for government structure. For example, in options one and two, effective working, especially in larger cities is likely to call for the setting up or strengthening of sections specialized in working with the community - for example an urban community development department, as in Hyderabad, India (Cousins and Goyder, 1986).

At the level of major cities, coordination and integration of programmes becomes very difficult, and can only be resolved by modifying institutional and financial systems. This is difficult even within government system between different agencies. It is even more difficult when working between systems. An example of an attempt in this direction is the "Urban Poverty Platform" being set up in Bangalore, India (Box 8)

4.3.3 Capability

Working together with NGOs or CBOs requires additional skills and qualities of local government staff. What is required for local government is awareness, management and skill training combined with the development of practical field experience. The UNCHS/Danida supported programme of the

A Coordinating platform at city level: the proposed Bangalore Urban Poverty Alleviation Project

Presently the co-ordination of activities of Governments, NGOs/CBOs and private sector does not exist at city level. As a result the various actors in urban development work in isolation from each other, and advantages of joint efforts to improve living conditions cannot materialize.

An innovative idea to achieve more and better co-ordination between governmental interventions and NGO/CBO activities and to create a forum to facilitate joint planning of integrated urban development, has evolved in Bangalore.

The first initiatives started in 1990 when the NGOs in Bangalore and the Netherlands Habitat Committee (NHC) jointly started a pilot project with the aim to coordinate Dutch development aid with support activities of non-development organizations related to Habitat. This was based firstly on the concepts that concentrating support activities will strengthen the impact of each individual project. Secondly, that an integrated approach of combining activities in the field of research and training with the actual implementation of development projects would be most effective.

Inspired by this idea, the local NHC-coordinator in co-operation with the Secretary for Urban Development Karnataka (State level), the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) (National level) and the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS, The Netherlands) formulated the Bangalore Urban Poverty Alleviation Project. In addition to developing new procedures for strategic and participatory oriented slum upgrading, the project envisages the establishment of the Bangalore Urban Poverty Platform.

This platform will be an inter-institutional board comprising of state and local governmental organizations, NGOs, community representatives and the press. It is primarily meant to be a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas, and to stimulate joint efforts to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. Out of this board the Urban Poverty Working Committee will be composed, responsible for coordinating all activities.

Central government has stimulated the establishment of the necessary institutional framework, and is seeking funding for programmes to be managed through the platform. Also in anticipation of this project HUDCO in co-operation with IHS has taken the initiative to invite staff from governmental agencies and NGOs involved in Bangalore to participate in training activities at the Human Settlements Management Institute, the training division of HUDCO in New Delhi and Bangalore.

Source: HUDCO (1992)

Box 8 Bangalore Urban Poverty Alleviation Project

Government of Zambia cited above is a good example of this in relation to supporting Government/ CBO cooperation.

Better working together (and more effective performance generally) require a more action orientated management style that is concerned with results at a relevant scale, and not just the avoidance of mistakes, or developing nice, small but insignificant projects.

On the NGO side, training is also necessary in similar areas, but with different emphasis to that for government staff. Some training should be organized for both groups together.

To summarize, improved cooperation at the local government level requires effective decentralization and a significant effort in awareness building, training and experience gaining opportunities.

4.4 Provincial or State level

The relationships at this level are illustrated in Figure 6. Here the main focus is on the relationship between State or provincial government and larger or intermediary NGOs. However, in some countries this is also a level on which international NGOs and development agencies may interact. In general, there will be little interaction with small NGOs or CBOs.

4.4.1 Attitudes

At state or provincial government level, thinking is more policy orientated and more strategic. Its degree of independence depends very much on the country in question. It is difficult to generalize about government attitudes at this level, but they are likely to have more senior, better educated staff with potential to act in a positive manner to improve relationships. They are likely to require information and training to make them aware of the possibilities of working with NGOs and how to do so.

A crucial task of state or provincial Government will be to support and stimulate local government. This may take a considerable culture change for those state/ provincial governments which are used to a paternalistic approach to local government.

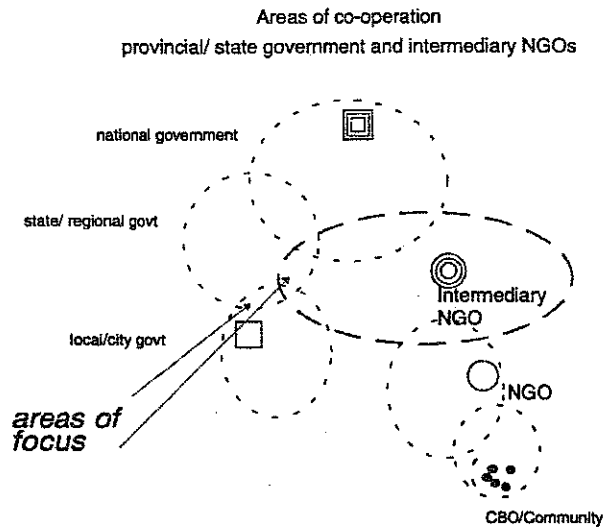


Figure 6 Linkages of intermediate NGOs

The large/ intermediary NGOs will be the natural partners at this level, especially those that have developed a strategic outlook. They can contribute by providing inputs to policy and planning development, carrying out research, disseminating information and carrying out training.

NGOs may be suspicious or even contemptuous of government, but they need to cooperate if they are to have a significant scale of impact.

4.4.2

Institutional framework

The comments made above on decentralization also apply at the state/provincial level. In most cases the necessary laws and financial procedures are likely to be in place. The critical issue is to develop a strategy and a political will to operationalize them. The Bangalore example already referred to, provides one potential model of setting up a platform with the potential of increasing policy level inputs and improving coordination of inputs from different actors.

4.4.3 Capability

Typically Provincial or state government is seen as superior in a chain of command, rather than as being supportive to lower levels of government. Provincial or state government will have to train key staff on how to work in a more supportive way with local government -facilitating and providing training opportunities. In addition they require to develop the capacity to work in a positive way with the larger or intermediary NGOs. These activities demand a high level of professional and managerial competence. Specialized NGOs can play a role in providing training and consultancy services.

On the side of large and intermediary NGOs, training in strategic planning and management is needed to help them manage their own objectives and to interact more effectively with government. They also require to develop a high level of competence.

4.5 National Government level

Government level Government and large and intermediary NGOs working at this level have as their main concern policies and the development of programmes for implementation at lower levels. It is at this level that international pressures are aimed. The first step is that the appropriate national policies should be in accordance with the enabling strategies outlined in the Global Shelter Strategy and Agenda 21. Following this there comes the series of actions necessary to support working relationships. This practical level of changing attitudes developing the appropriate institutional framework and facilitating capability building is the most difficult to achieve.

4.5.1 Policy

Policy statements are perhaps easier to make than are the actions necessary to implement them. Nevertheless, they are an important foundation. UNCHS is continuing to implement an important programme of international and national high level discussions on this subject, and there are good examples of enabling policies in Sri Lanka, Philippines and India. Some relevant points from the most recent Indian policy document are

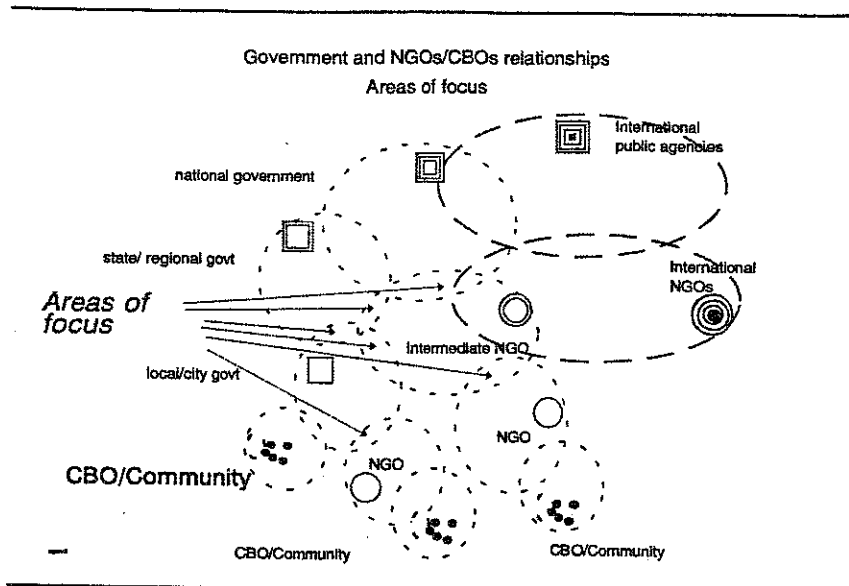


Figure 7 Relations of all levels of government with CBOs and NGOs

given in Box 9.

4.5.2

Attitudes

Central government has two roles related to attitudes. The first relates to its own staff and the second relates to its role in supporting changes at lower levels of government. Central government at the highest levels is likely to be sympathetic, at least at the level of rhetoric. In some cases, for example India, Central government has been very strong in promoting the role of NGOs and CBOs. Again considerable efforts will be necessary from international organizations to promote the arguments for cooperation as there is likely to be much private skepticism, especially at middle and lower levels. Again, substantial exposure to positive international experience is necessary, together with specialized training.

4.5.3

Institutional framework

Central government has the key role in relation to the changes in legislation and financial systems identified. It has the responsibility to introduce reforms relating to decentralization. Central government also is the key actor in providing legislation and guidelines on *planning processes* and in developing

Increased Emphasis on the Role of the Community in the New National Housing Policy for India

The new National Housing Policy for India, published in May 1992, embodies a clear commitment to cooperation between Government and CBOs/NGOs. The commitment to create an enabling environment also featured (in somewhat different form) in the 1988 National Housing Policy. However, the 1988 policy did not promote such an active role for communities and community organizations as has been embodied in the new policy, which is also more specific in many of its commitments to cooperation with all the various actors in the shelter system.

The document begins with one of the basic objectives of the policy: "to create an enabling environment for housing activity by various sections..." (2). The approach to cooperation with "various sections" is then elaborated in other parts of the document. The section on *Role of government, Private Sector and the Community*, for example, begins by a recognition of the need to work together:

"The magnitude of the housing task calls for the involvement of several agencies including the government at different levels, the cooperatives, the community, and the private sector. The Government will devise and implement strategies which will enable the various agencies to complement the efforts of one another and to ensure the most efficient utilization of resources..." (4.10.1)

That section goes on to commit the central and state governments "to encourage...voluntary agencies in efforts to upgrade shelter, extend basic services, augment incomes and promote environmental conservation" (4.10.1) and subsequently to promise "preferential" assistance to promote such activities:

"The Housing Policy recognizes group-based or cooperative activity or community associations as the principal form of housing activity in many rural settlements and large urban areas...and hence the cooperatives and other community-based organizations will be encouraged to take up various shelter-related activities, especially for slum-dwellers and the rural poor, assisted through preferential allotment of land, access to finance and fiscal support..." (4.10.2)

In the section on *Slums and Squatter Settlements in Urban Areas and Housing for the Urban Poor*, the policy embraces the idea of local involvement in management of shelter services, pledging the central and state governments to "ensure proper maintenance of amenities through community involvement and decentralized institutional arrangements" and to "integrate the provision of physical amenities with basic services including maternal and child welfare services and health care, structured on community participation and involvement of voluntary agencies and management by local bodies" (4.3.1). This idea is further supported in the section on *Infrastructure*, which calls for government action to secure "community support in the design, installation and the upkeep of services within the framework of the Urban Basic Services strategy and rural development programmes" (4.5.2).

Under the heading of *Housing Finance*, the "Government recognizes the need to make an in depth assessment of the role of informal credit network and community based savings systems for housing and to devise ways of establishing its links with the formal credit institutions to enhance access of the rural and urban poor to housing finance." (4.7.13) in addition, the policy commits the government to supporting the cooperative housing movement by providing "assured access to institutional finance to supplement internal resources" (4.7.14).

Box 9 Excerpts from National Housing Policy for India, May 1992

programmes for improvement of conditions for the urban poor. A good

example of an innovative programme conceived by central government is the Community Mortgage Programme in the Philippines (Box 10), referred to above.

4.5.4 Capability

On the government side capability is required to support lower levels of government and to interact effectively with NGOs (including organizations representing CBOs). Support of lower levels of government will demand skills in communication; planning and management of training, and appropriate design of programmes to allow development of local experience. Working with NGOs at a policy level will require new skills in planning and developing policies with partners outside the government system.

Also for NGOs, at this level capability becomes highly critical. Korten writes on the importance of what he calls "strategic competence" if NGOs are to achieve what he describes as Third Generation goals dealing with policy change.

"Commitment is essential to effective performance in a catalyst role, but it is no substitute for technical competence. But when PVOs (NGOs) position themselves to be systems catalysts, their technical weaknesses are more difficult to hide. Some of the most important of the organizations with which they work will be large, influential, and staffed by highly credentialed professionals. Needless to say the PVO which presumes to help such organizations become more effective must be guided by more than good intentions. . . technical competence (of Staff) must be balanced with social, political and managerial skills." (Korten, 1987b, pp.28-29)

To summarize, the role of Central Government is critical to the support and strengthening of lower levels of government and thus is a key role in an enabling strategy. It must also develop its own capacity to be able to operate in this manner. In this it needs to receive international stimulus and support.

The large and intermediary NGOs who work at this level must themselves develop a strong competence, with help from Government, Private Sector or International agencies.

Community Mortgage Programme, Philippines

The Community Mortgage Programme (CMP) is an example of how an institutional basis for co-operation between the government and NGOs/CBOs can be developed both administratively and financially. The programme was started only in 1988, and therefore is still too early for firm conclusions on the impact of the programmes. Against a background of many failures in providing access to housing for the lowest income people in the cities of the Philippines, in 1988 the CMP was initiated as a new and innovative response, founded on the potentials and limitations of the actors involved in urban development. CMP is a national program, a sub-program of the Unified Home Lending Program. It is basically a financing scheme which facilitates inhabitants of slum and squatter settlements to own the plot they occupy (or to acquire a new plot in case resettlement is inevitable) and to subsequently facilitate infrastructure development and home improvement. To be eligible for the CMP, slum and squatter communities have to form community based organizations and register these with the Securities and Exchange Commission and get accreditation from the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP). Their legitimacy allows the CBOs to play their role as envisaged in the CMP.

Procedure

The CBOs have to choose an originator from a list of accredited originators with the National Home Mortgage and Finance Corporation (NHMFC). This list consists of around 100 organizations: National Housing Authorities, NGOs, Local Government Units, Private Developers and Civic institutions. Being primarily loan originators (processing of loan documents and guarantors of the loan), the originators are in fact expected to facilitate the whole implementation of a CMP-project. This includes: supporting the establishment of CBOs, providing information on CMP-procedures to the community, assisting the community in their negotiations with the landlord, supporting the community in the formulation and implementation of the project, initiating income generating projects, etc. The originators receive from the NHMFC only meager originator fees.

The community has to develop an agreement with the owner of the land, after which a request for a loan should be submitted to the NHMFC. Upon approval, the land is registered in the name of the CBO. Later on the ownership can be transferred to the members of the CBOs. In a similar way loans can be requested for the subsequent phases of the program: infrastructure development and home improvement.

Source: Lazaro (1991)

Box 10 Community mortgage programme, Philippines

5

Recommendations and conclusions

This section summarizes the main recommendations arising from the review. Recommendations are made by NGO type and government level, as it is important to define as clearly as possible where responsibilities lie.

5.1 Recommendations

The recommendations given below are organized by concerned actor. For each case, they look first inward (at what has to be done to improve the effectiveness of the organization itself in this area, and second outward at what they can best to related to others. Actions relate broadly to:

- policy
- attitude
- institutional framework
- capability

5.1.1 Small NGOs/CBOs

Looking inward NGOs should improve their performance by:

- improving their knowledge of and contacts with local government
- improving the professionalism of their organization by getting training in management, finance, strategic planning and communication in addition to developing and improving their existing technical skills. They need to develop a strategic organizational view.
- linking with other NGOs/CBOs to form networks which can provide complementary specializations.

5.1.2 Large and Intermediary NGOs

Looking *inward* they seek to improve their own performance by:

- Developing clear longer term strategies of action which take into account the aims of significant impact on the urban poor and sustainability of action.
- Improving knowledge of and contacts with local government, provincial government and where appropriate National Government.
- Improving their own organization to achieve a high level of competence and accountability.
- Developing staff's management skills, especially in areas of strategic planning, communication and training, in addition to improving their specialized technical skills.

Looking *outward* they should seek to improve the performance of other organizations, particularly smaller NGOs, but may also have a role in training and improving the performance of governmental organizations. The main means are:

- Working with government on policy, planning and programme development.
- Working to improve the management and planning capacity of smaller NGOs and CBOs.
- Improving the fund raising capacity of smaller NGOs/CBOs.
- Stimulating the improvement of the technical capacity of smaller NGOs/CBOs.
- Advocacy - attempting strategically to influence opinion and policy in a positive manner.
- Communication - promoting the dissemination of information.

5.1.3 Local Government

Looking *inward*, there is generally a need to aim to improve its own performance in the following areas:

- Review of policy relating to relations with NGOs and ensuring that policy is supportive.
- Take full advantage of opportunities for decentralized decision making.
- Try to decentralize operations through developing appropriate structures for involving community and CBOs within the city,

and give sufficient authority to sub districts local implementation teams to allow them to cooperate.

- Organize or take advantage of training opportunities in the areas of strategic management, participative action planning and working with CBOs and NGOs.
- Review organization culture and take steps to make the organization more service orientated.
- Try to minimize transfer of staff who are involved in building and maintaining local community contacts.
- Improve information flows - share experience with other local governments and NGOs.

Looking *outward*:

- Review procedures relating to local planning and development to fully involve NGOs and CBOs. This means ensuring that there should be effective two-way communication and the delegation of certain elements of decision making.
- Try to support NGOs and CBOs by facilitating their access to special sources of finance.
- Try to support by facilitating access to training opportunities.

5.1.4

State or Provincial Government

Looking *inward* the main areas of potentially effective action are:

- Review policy to ensure that it is supportive of effective cooperation -especially in the area of decentralization. NGOs and local government should be involved in this process.
- Review legislation to ensure it is supportive. In particular review the operation of measures aimed at decentralization.
- Review state administrative regulations which encourage over frequent movement of key staff, as this discourages the building up of constructive relationships.
- Review processes or planning and development programmes to ensure participation.
- Organize or take advantage of opportunities for staff training in areas of strategic management and planning, especially related to working with other groups such as NGOs and private sector.
- Encourage working with large and intermediary level NGOs.

Looking *outward*, State or Provincial Government has key roles to:

- Encourage and support local government in adopting more positive relations with NGOs/CBOs.
- Encourage actively development of real decentralization, including providing training support for local government.
- Involve large and intermediary NGOs actively in policy discussion, and in the resultant programme development.

5.1.5

National Government

Looking *inward*, key areas of action will be:

- Review of policy in areas related to urban development and social policy to ensure that the potential roles of NGOs and CBOs are encouraged. In particular to review policy and implementation related to decentralization. Local Government representatives and NGOs should be involved in this.
- Review planning processes and development programmes to ensure they allow or encourage participation.
- Review consultation processes to ensure involvement of NGOs
- Review legislation and financial framework to make it more supportive of cooperation.
- Encourage links with international organizations in these areas.
- Develop capacity of staff in fields of strategic planning and working with non-governmental groups.

Looking *outward*, Central Government has a critical strategic role as it sets the pattern and the example for all other levels of government. Key actions include:

- Making clear statements of a positive policy in this area.
- Providing or ensuring guidelines, information and training support for lower levels of government.
- Stimulate access to training opportunities for NGOs
- Ensuring the administrative and financial framework is conducive, first in the area of decentralization to local government and second in encouraging the role of intermediary NGOs by building them into relevant policy development and planning processes.

- Involving large and intermediary NGOs in relevant policy discussions and programme development.

5.2

Conclusions

The policies of UNCHS and UNCED are clear regarding the importance of cooperation. The problem is in their implementation. It is important to remember that the bottom line of greater cooperation is its significant and positive impact on the urban poor. There is considerable evidence to suggest that programmes work better if they are supported by the beneficiaries. This calls for working together in ways that do not come naturally either for inhabitants of low income areas of cities, or for the city governments. This is the reason of the need of forming Community Based Organizations and linking them effectively with local government. Whether local government can develop the capacity to work directly with CBOs or whether they should work through NGOs depends on each individual situation. In either case, most concerned organizations require the investment of considerable resources to develop the capability and capacity necessary to make a significant impact.

The state of knowledge of Government and NGO/CBO relations and the variety within these types of organizations means that no universally applicable truths or panaceas can be developed. However, it is hoped that the review, analysis and recommendations presented will form a useful basis for discussion during the conference.

Notes

1 For discussion of the issue of scaling-up of NGO, CBO, and community initiatives, see for example Cousins(1991) and Cernea (1989)

2 Classifications of types of NGOs have been made by many authors, eg Korten (1987b) and Bowden (1990), Cousins (1991), Carilao (1987), Clark (1991). Here we take the simplest classification which helps to make meaningful recommendations.

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