

DRAFT REPORT

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PARADIGM SHIFTS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND NGOS:
OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS AND RESPONSES

STUDY PARTNERS:

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Paradigm Shifts in Development Cooperation and NGOs

A. BACKGROUND

1. The Genesis of the Study:

This study evolved from an initiative of Misereor to share with its partners the concerns that figured prominently in the International Round Table on Poverty Alleviation in South Asia, convened by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (May 1995).

Starting from the 90's, northern governments and multi-lateral agencies seem to be "discovering" southern NGOs (SNGOs). Particularly in India, this increasing "official" attention could significantly impact the much older partner relationships between:

- * Southern Governments and SNGOs
- * Northern NGOs (NNGOs), SNGOs and organisations of the poor (CBOs).

Misereor wanted to trigger a shared reflection on the nature and directions of these "development cooperation" trends and on their consequences (positive as well as negative) for NNGOs and SNGOs so that they prepared and equipped or at the very least forewarned.

The feedback showed that quite some SNGOs did not share the optimism of the Round Table regarding "collaboration" with official aid as the opening of a "window of opportunities". However, all agreed that funds have the power to shape relations and dictate agendas. Hence the increased attention SNGOs will receive from official aid could have significant implications for:

- * NGO options for the poor
- * the structuring, organisation and ethos of NGOs
- * the (partner) relationships which have thus far nurtured and sustained NGO options for the poor.

This feedback convinced Misereor of the need for a more systematic study of the phenomenon based on information gathered from the ground regarding:

- * how SNGOs actually experienced the development cooperation shifts and their implications for themselves, for their traditional partnership relations and for the poor
- * how they coped (or did not cope) with these changes and with what consequences.

The insights gained could serve as:

- * learning points for SNGOs and NNGOs for planning their own organisation and institution development

- * informing lobbying for influencing development cooperation policies and institutions in favour of the poor and the partnerships committed to their empowerment.

In early 1997, Misereor invited ISI's collaboration in:

- * the documentation and analysis of concrete experiences of 3 NGOs in Karnataka (ADATS, AVAS and ODP) with special reference to relationship with the other stakeholders in development
- * drawing conclusions that could have cross-NGO validity
- * identifying actionable agenda through which NNGOs and SNGOs could strategise responses.

Between June 1997 and June 1998, the study team was constituted, the TOR finalised and the willingness of ADATS, AVAS and ODP to co-partner the study ascertained. The study was formally launched in July 1998.

2. Study Objectives:

- a) to comprehend the nature, magnitude and motives for changes in Development Cooperation policies and instruments (Paradigm Shifts)
 - i) document experiences and perspectives of the three (Misereor identified) NGOs
 - ii) analyse and critique the emerging micro-picture against the macro-frame of development thought
 - iii) validate the micro-macro perspectives with a larger NGO representation
- b) to identify the opportunities and threats these paradigm shifts hold out for:
 - i) the poor, the marginalised and their organisations
 - ii) NNGOs, SNGOs, intermediary agencies (engaged in resource support services, advocacy, lobbying, interfacing and leveraging) and consultants
 - iii) for the partnership relationships and solidarities among various development practitioners
- c) to restrategy NGO responses:
 - i) to legitimise, safeguard and expand NGO spaces
 - ii) to improve their access to (official) development funds, minimising the risks involved
 - iii) to identify areas for organisation and institution development and to decide on desirable outcome of such interventions
- d) to generate data that could:

- i) inform lobbying for influencing development cooperation policies and instruments to more adequately respond to the larger and deeper development questions
- ii) provide a theoretical framework for strategising NGO re-positioning vis a vis the paradigm shifts.

3. Study Design and Methodology:

The study adopted an empirical and exploratory design while facilitating the grass root experiences of ADATS, AVAS and ODP to interrogate development cooperation concepts, policies and institutions. The study objectives and methodology were first discussed with them. They played an active part in collecting and analysing information, in drawing conclusions and in building the larger frame for understanding and strategising NGO responses.

During the next stage the study team facilitated the key personnel of the three NGOs to place themselves within an "NGO TYPOLOGY" matrix, constructed by Alan Fowler ⁽¹⁾.

Fowler proposes that development cooperation - prima facie - is determined by the correlation between two sets of variables: the (real) agenda of aid and the development ideology/praxis of the NGO. By implication, funds will force subservience of the agenda of the giver.

However the framework is more sophisticated than "subserve, get coopted or be pushed out". The reality of development cooperation is much more complex because of the operation of several intervening variables that provide NGOs with options, even within an "subservience" postulate. Such variables include: strategic thinking, organisational competencies, institutional linkages, negotiating skills, visibility, profile, etc. Further, aid polices and instruments are not themselves monolithic. Aid is pulled in different directions by various concerns, compulsions and human agency.

NGOs committed to development perspectives different from those of the aid givers could still find/create/expand spaces in development cooperation if they are adept in managing these intervening variables. However, Fowler warns NGOs that they require high levels of skills, competencies and institutional strengths to work with such variables.

The key personnel of the three NGOs categorised and positioned their own organisations within the typology matrix and tried to understand why, how and to what extent their options were limited and conditioned by their own ideology/praxis vis a vis the development agenda of donors. They identified those variables (internal and external)

They identified those variables (internal and external) that gave them spaces and even new opportunities within development cooperation frames.

This use of typology matrix to externalise, standardise and analyse the experiences and perceptions of a very small sample of 3 NGOs enabled the study to go from case studies and to make statements regarding development cooperation that could be generally valid for any NGO within a typology and with specific strategic management competencies. The micro study served not only to develop a model but also to nuance them pointing to deviations from central tendencies.

During this final stage, the study is facilitating a state level consultation involving senior development practitioners. The findings and conclusions emerging from the interactive processes is to be presented there for critique and validation.

The consultation will, apart from whetting the study report, also identify the learning points for the various actors. It will also recommend OD and ID processes through which such learnings can be internalised and converted into strategic responses - by Misereor, its partners and more generally by the SNGO/NNGO community.

B. THE STUDY CONTEXT

4. The "Discovery" of NGOs:

After decades of "parallel" development interventions on the fringes of development cooperation (by and large the preserve of southern governments and bilateral/multilateral agencies), NGOs are now being pulled to the central stage by bilateral, multilateral and UN agencies, business and industry and their bastions such as the World Bank and WTO, academia and researchers, technical and management professionals, post-Marxists, neo-liberals, citizen groups, feminists, human rights groups and greens.

Under pressure from structural adjustment programmes of IMF/World Bank, the resource poor southern governments are (reluctantly) ceding to NGOs many more of their social welfare/development functions. This emerging scenario is quite different from the earlier picture of southern governments contracting to SNGOs certain aspects of programme implementation like community management. The programmes themselves were designed and managed by the state, with token NGO participation.

The NGO community, despite its heterogeneity, severe limitations and internal contradictions - a divided house in terms of hues, identities, development theories and practices, sizes, locations, competencies, access to resources - is thus gaining legitimacy as the lead agency of the "third sector" in development - the civil society.

5. Overexposure Risks to NGO Best Practices:

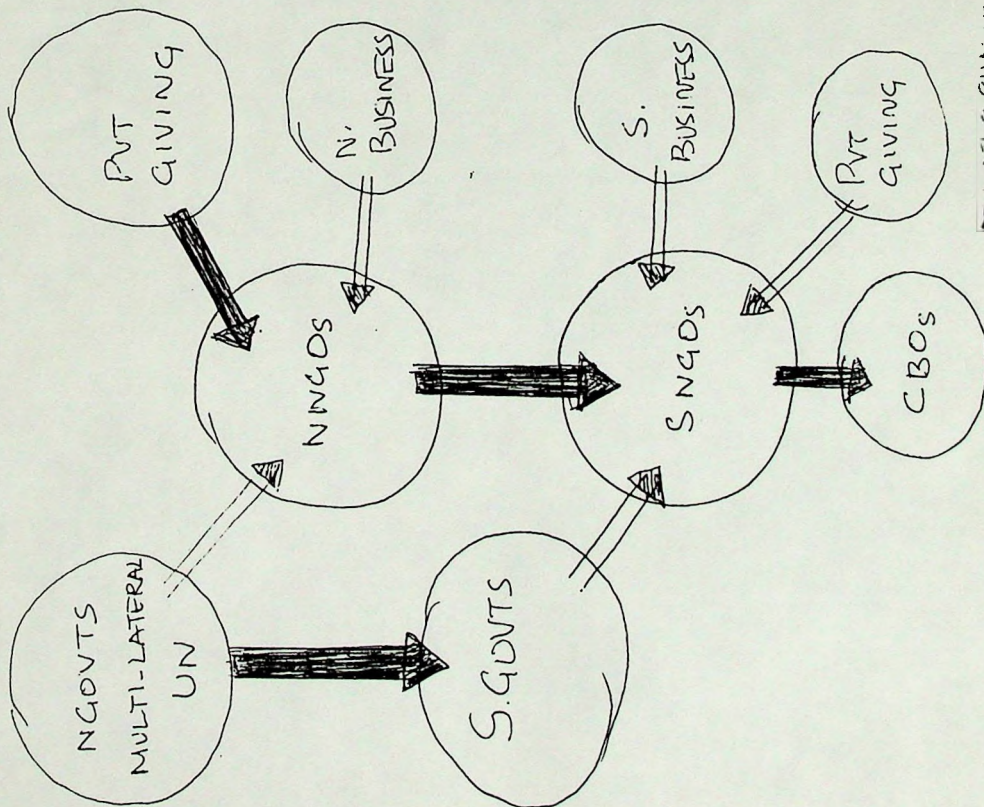
NGOs are not any more endangered by the opposition/cynicism of official and business sectors as by the variety and frequency of their embraces. The million dollar question is: what are the terms of collaboration and the returns. The eagerness to "utilise" NGOs and the NGO enthusiasm to latch on to new opportunities, may push NGOs into modes/scales of operation that compromise the NGO identity.

The NGO signature on development has always been its professed identification with the poor and hence its capacity as an institution to:

- * internalise the aspirations and struggles of the poor
- * serve as the their interface with the state/market
- * give them visibility/voice
- * equip them for responsible development and management of their livelihood resources
- * support their organisations with linkages
- * lobby for them as their representatives
- * demonstrate development alternates.

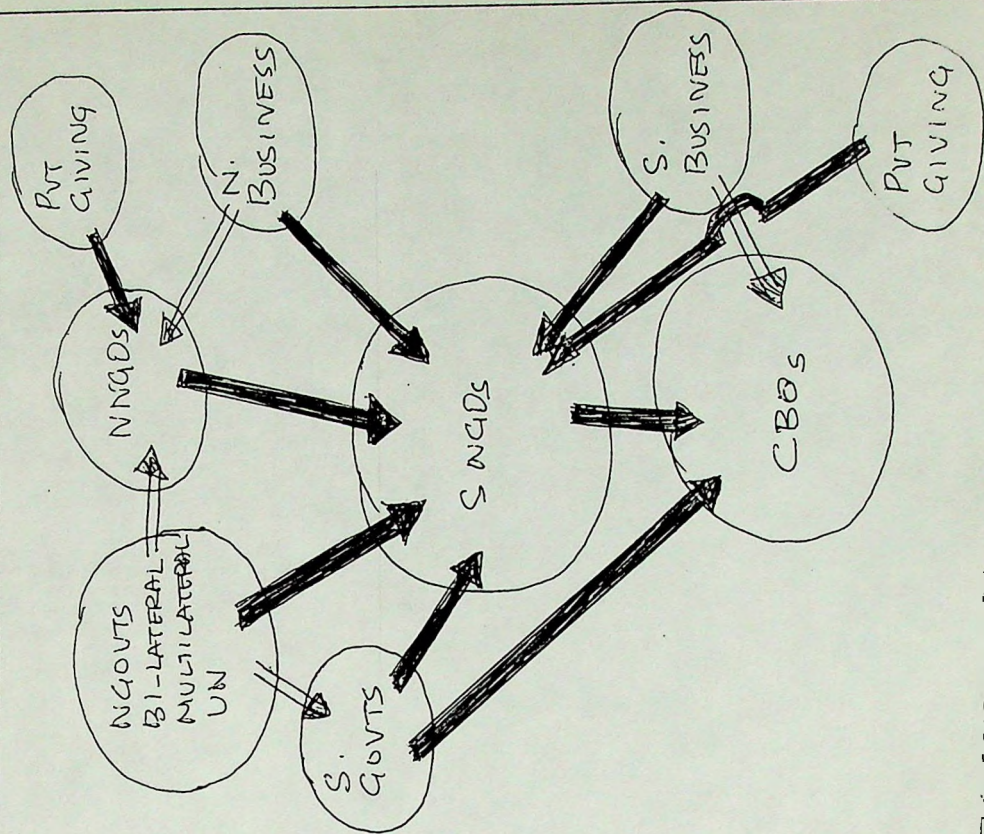
SOME IMPLICATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM SHIFTS FOR THE RESOURCE BASE OF NGOs

COMMUNISM - MARKET



MAJOR CHANNEL

MARKET - DEMOCRACY



SUPPLEMENTARY

Its praxis has been the critique of development policies and institutions from a "worm's view" with the poor at the "grass roots" - going beyond what is and envisaging/demonstrating what might be. It pressures the state/market to act differently. It mobilises "public action" for stake assertion, defend and expand their stakes in the political economy.

Collaboration, for most NGOs, was never an end in itself. It was only an instrumentality to subserve the interests of the poor and sustainable development. NGOs retained the right to critique, to dissent and to countervail. If now collaboration becomes a contractual obligation, NGOs may get domesticated and lose their real value - particularly when there are no clear signals that NGO overtures are motivated by a change of heart of the state and the market.

Besides, growing opportunities may attract unscrupulous operators and opportunists. On the other hand, those excited by the ideological alternatives articulated by the NGOs may become blind to or apologetic about their inadequacies to deliver goods, to go beyond aid-speak and the gap between rhetoric and practice.

6. New Opportunities:

Yet, if NGOs have the organisational and institutional strengths, a culture of transparency and accountability to its constituency, partners and peers (particularly horizontal accountability to the NGO Community), are clear sighted as well as level headed about their ideals and above all willing to outgrow their fiefdoms (however beautiful and different they be) and build alliances and strategic collaborations - certainly these trends do open up also exciting new vistas and larger possibilities for NGOs - and that too on a larger canvass and with more resources and accesses at their command.

Circumstances overpower the feeble and the rash. Nor will idealism and commitment substitute professionalism.

7. NGO Interrogation and Problematisation:

The NGO community (both in the north and in the south) must take stock of the new developments and re-vision, re-position, re-strategise, re-equip themselves, to take on the challenges and to maximally avail the opportunities while minimising the risks.

Interrogation is required on two fronts:

- a) Scanning the Horizon:
a shared reading of the current paradigm shifts in development and development cooperation, and in this context an analysis of the interests that power this this moving closer to the NGOs - going beyond stated

reasons to their real and latent motives. This is necessary for the NGOs to have a total comprehension of the consequences for themselves and for the poor

b) an internal critiquing:

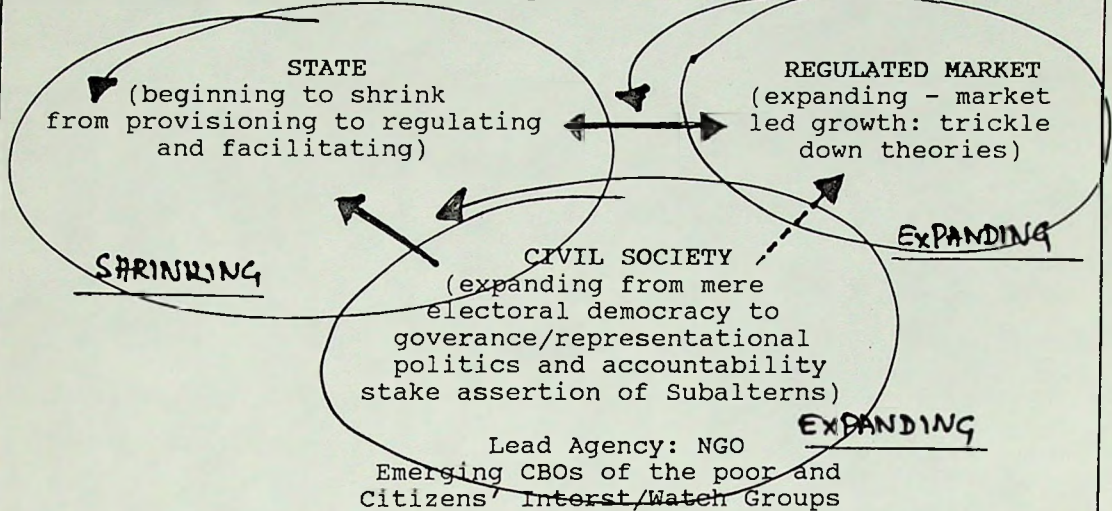
A SWOT of the capabilities and inadequacies of the NGO institutions (conceptual, strategic, value-linked, pragmatic) and a validation of their claims to performance/impact/relevance. NGOs, for sound strategic reasons at the very least, would do well to come down from their high moral grounds, give up some of their claims to be the holy cows of development, and not get overwhelmed by their own acclamations about commitment and contributions. Such pragmatic realism and willingness to take a hard look at themselves are required of NGOs if they are to shift their own paradigms to respond better to the larger paradigm shifts.

SCANNING THE HORIZON

DEVELOPMENT AGENDA - THE THIRD WAY
PARADIGM SHIFTS IN AGENCY ROLES
(STATE, MARKET AND CIVIL SOCIETY)

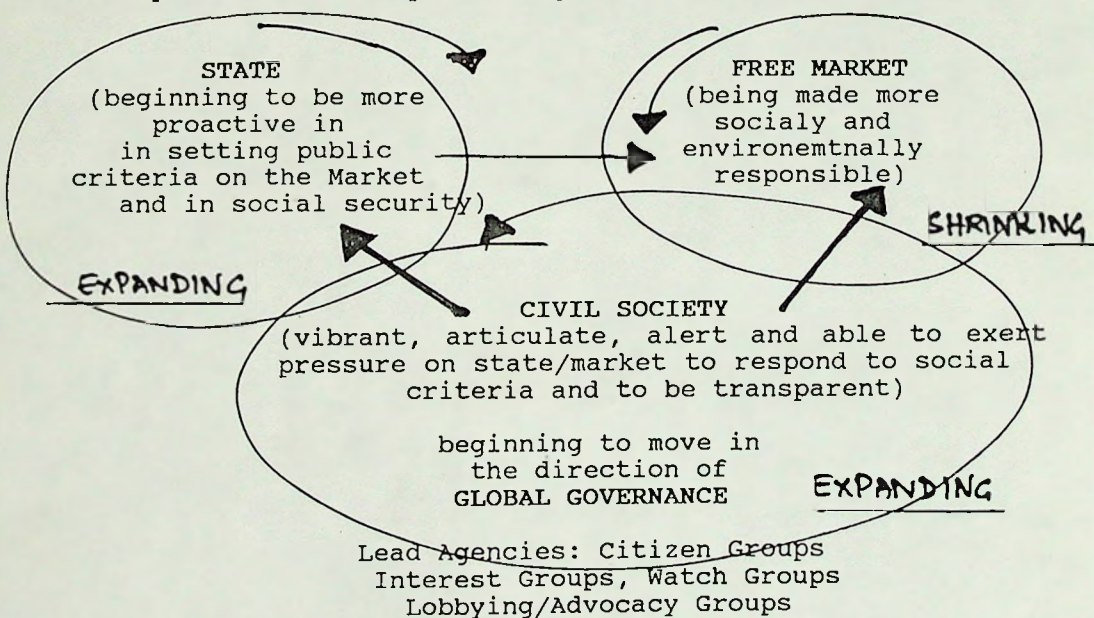
INDIA (SOUTHERN STATES)

development theme: social opportunities for the underclasses



NORTHERN STATES (DEVELOPED NATIONS)

development theme: responsible growth (sustainable/equitable)



the views of the old left have become obsolete
those of the new right are inadequate and contradictory
- Anthony Giddens (the Third Way)

D. OFFICIAL AID AND NGOS

9. The Trends:

Significant changes are taking place in the allocation and management of official bilateral and multilateral aid.

- * overall rate of growth of aid is slowing/stagnating, even as demands on it are increasing. A larger percentage is being spent on emergency/relief. Aid to Eastern Europe is often a reallocation from commitments to the South.
- * the public in the developed countries are aid fatigued. They do not feel as guilty and responsible as the older generations did for the poverty in their former colonies. They think that these countries have only themselves to blame - given the magnitude of corruption, mismanagement and inefficiency
- * a disinclination to get engaged in ideological debates on development and in understanding or addressing the structural underpinning of poverty to exploitative market exchange and political relations internationally
- * public support for structural and long-term assistance is on the decrease. Even the ability of NNGOs to raise money from the public for long-term development is being determined by their level of activity and profile in emergency and relief work - a sign that the social morality underpinning long term support is weakening.
- * a disenchantment that even after fifty decades of development support, the situations of the poor have not changed much. Many are no more convinced that poverty can be eradicated - certainly not through aid. Hence, much as one feels bad about it, the best one can do is to mitigate the negative impacts. Even NGOs cannot quite reach the poorest of the poor. Ideology and development rhetoric to which SNGOs are so much addicted are frowned upon
- * perception that most "political" NGOs do not seem have any clear idea on what next after awareness building and organisation. They have neither the internal competence nor are they able to hire them so that they take on serious livelihood interventions
- * the demand that development assistance to be more closely tied to short term measurable results in the areas of health, education and livelihood than in abstract concepts such as awareness generation, organisation, movement building, etc.

Add to these, the economic recession in Europe and the more porous national borders after the dismantling of the iron curtain and the collapse of the Berlin Wall. There is a growing demand for allocation of more resources for social security and welfare of the underclasses within northern countries and closer home in eastern Europe.

These shifts in northern public perceptions on the why and how of aid is very much reflected in the aid policies of most right of centre political formations/governments. Even social/democratic governments cannot ignore these perceptions. Most of official aid will therefore flow to targeted poverty alleviation programmes whose results can be planned for and the outcome measured, through control instruments such as the logical framework.

10. Positioning Towards NGOs:

In spite of - or rather because of these considerations - very basic shifts in attitude towards and relationship with NGOs (especially SNGOs) are taking place in the domain of official aid. Since the mid-eighties, a growing percentage of official aid is being channelled to NGOs. By the year 2000, this is likely to constitute more than 50% of total NGO disbursements (about US \$ 10 billion/ year), outstripping private giving by the public of developed countries. Through the instrumentality of direct funding (by passing both NNGOs and southern governments) this will significantly increase SNGO access to funds.

11. The Motives:

Increased official funding of NGOs have also other less altruistic and more political reasons. With both functional and strategic implications for NGOs.

Manifestly, increased allocation to the NGOs flows from the belief - reinforced by NGOs themselves - that they are different and that they can make a difference vis a vis the state. That they are more cost-effective than southern governments, that they have better reach to and credibility with the poor, that by financing them, the civil society and governance will be strengthened.

The more serious reasons for growing official interest in NGOs stems from the political ideology of northern states:

- * western style of democracy and social stability are a necessary environment for advancement of the market
- * state role is minimalist: regulatory and facilitative. The least government is the best governance.
- * Democracy must be more broad based and that necessarily means that the state should not be the sole agent of development

- * more of development and social welfare must be based on the principle of self-help. The state is not the provider. It is called upon to merely facilitate and regulate the development and welfare activities initiated and maintained by the civil society - in which the NGO community is a major actor.

It is not that northern governments and multi-lateral agencies have suddenly discovered the development incompetence and vested political interests of southern ruling elite. The core justification for official aid earlier was the halt the march of communism into economically underdeveloped and therefore socially volatile countries of the third world. The spheres of influence of western capitalism (and liberal democracy) had to be protected and expanded. The southern states and their ruling elite were both necessary and convenient.

But, in the present unipolar globalised market where the cooption of the elite into market is a fait accompli, what is important is to invest in social stability, to keep the underclasses quiet. Complementing commercial transfers and softening the negative externalities of the market, official aid functions as part of a global social welfare system for the poor - as a "global soup kitchen" - for those who do not have the minimum competencies/resources (are too poor) to access the market and have to await the trickle down to happen.

Without the East-West rivalry, Northern governments (hard pressed by economic recession and consequent demands on social security systems at home) can more easily justify allocating tax revenues for aid if it is seen as facilitating the market and protecting investments by serving as an instrumentality of global stability and for discouraging migration. A price to be paid for safeguarding the life styles of "contented" northern public. Since markets cannot be concerned with financing social stability, this function is assigned to the state and therefore the legitimate rationale for official aid. In other words, despite declarations about humanitarian values, democracy and universal rights, the agenda of capacity building, growth with equity, democratisation, environmental sustainability, etc. are most often only means to a deeper end.

Entrusting the soup kitchens to the southern states is seen as vitiating the very purpose of investing in social security. NGOs are the most cost-effective as well as efficient instruments for managing safety nets and containing social tensions and destabilisation. That this approach is in line with the northern civil society commitment to democratisation and accountable/good governance - is a convenient and added legitimisation for moving away from the state to NGOs at least as far as poverty questions are concerned.

12. Implications:

- * generally speaking promoting civic life and political reforms along northern liberal democracy lines - is unlikely to be a significant agenda in terms of allocations of funds from official aid
- * only an inconsequential and incidental portion of official aid will flow into this area
- * even as market transfers concentrate on infrastructure development, official aid will be directed at tangible improvements in social security and social welfare, managed professionally and on scale by the larger, more competent and professionally equipped NGOs.

Most of the existing and emerging opportunistic SNGOs will be are wary of opting for civic action as an overt objective in collaboration with official aid. It goes against the grain of real/dominant interests of the ruling elite and hence is fraught with risks. They also know that northern governments are disinclined to provide public finance for NGOs intent on mobilising public pressure against policies often dictated by the market through the agency of BWI/WTO and delivered via bi-lateral and multi-lateral development support packages. In the long term such efforts may discredit these policies and debunk the real intentions of official aid!

13. An Overview:

We sum up, quoting Alan Fowler:

"The new post cold war rationale for international aid is to maintain local, national and international stability in furtherance of a globalising market economy.

Aid does not cause development. Far larger forces are in play. (Therefore) Complementing commercial resource flows, aid enables markets to expand effectively by ameliorating negative socio-economic impacts, mollifying those with the most to lose".

However, along with Fowler we would like to qualify this generally valid summing up of the trend. There are contradictions and hence the seeds of change within the dominant market paradigm itself - pointing to the "third way" we discussed earlier:

- * there is a growing perception that markets are not necessarily beneficial
- * that it need to be regulated, controlled, made responsive and accountable to "social development" demands

- * that such demands and controls are best exerted on the market by the civil society and global governance than by nation states.

14. Spaces for "Activist NGOs":

The task as well as spaces within official aid for NGOs who do not subscribe to the paradigm of "There Is No Alternative" (TINA) and believe in human agency - lie in:

- * working with the poor to capacitate them for stake assertion
- * collaborating with those human agencies and institutions that believe in the need and feasibility of the third way.

These could include most of the UN Organisation, the governments formed by left of centre liberal social-democrats, neo-Marxists, economists and social scientists who do not subscribe to the view of markets best left alone since they have inbuilt self-correcting capacities, civil society movements, environmentalists, feminists, human rights groups. All of them countervail the market paradigm and force governments and hence official aid away from subserving markets to regulating it through sound, transparent and accountable governance.

However, one thing is quite obvious. There will hardly be any space in development cooperation with official aid for the radical revolutionaries. Those who consider an engagement with the market as reformist, will have to beat another path - mostly in solidarity with like-minded private givers and communities of the oppressed and the marginalised.

E. SNGOS AND SOUTHERN STATES

15. The Issue:

In India, the love-hate relationship between the state and the NGOs is at least half-century old. The actual character of the relationship is crucially depend on the social positioning, ideology and history of the NGOs.

Given the history of an inclusive (nationalist) freedom struggle and the socialist character of the constitution - at least in its preambles/directive principles - the development relation of NGOs with the state is particularly problematic.

The rhetoric and the pseudo-modernity of the nation conceals the real interests of the ruling elite, the feudal nature of the predominantly rural agrarian economy and the exclusion (nation without nationality!) of nearly one third of the nation - the adivasis, dalits, lower segments of backward communities, the minorities and women among them - from the structures of opportunity.

16. NGO Options:

- * some activist groups (NGOs?) a priori reject the possibility of collaboration with the state. Its class/caste nature and interests are seen not only as not supportive of the people's aspirations but essentially as anti-people. They espouse a radical - revolutionary paradigm.
- * a few NGOs (known derogatively as GONGOs - Government NGOs) are uncritical agents of the ruling elite, with an eye on the vote banks or to line their own pockets
- * under the present reduced flow of development funds from NNGOs, many of the mushrooming small NGOs are forced to contract "piece works" from the state for their own survival
- * with the increased delegation/ceding of development to the NGO sector, opportunists - retired bureaucrats, academics, professionals (without implying that opportunism is limited to them or that all of them are so!) - are also entering development and functioning uncritically in the area of development cooperation with the state. They have hardly any development understanding or concern and want to merely latch on to the opportunities for their own advantages, without necessarily intending to defraud the poor. They appropriate for themselves large pieces of the development cake
- * the vast majority of SNGOs adopt a middle of the road approach to the state. Their central concern is the

people. They operate basically within a critical collaboration framework and within the provisions of law. They extensively use human agency (concerned, socially conscious and politically committed administrators, police, political leadership, judiciary) to access state resources

17. Critical Collaboration:

Collaborative interface with the state, even with the right to dissent and to engage in adversarial action, can be categorised as welfarism or political economy focused.

NGOs with a welfare mindset are mainly concerned with poverty alleviation and mainstreaming - without problematising mainstreaming itself and the nature of the state. They adopt essentially a functionalist approach to understanding and addressing problems of poverty and deprivation. Efficiency and quality are their major concerns.

NGOs with political economy perspectives rely heavily on public action. They understand the nature and magnitude of poverty as indicative of structural inadequacies and systemic failures. System correction and changes require of the dispossessed that they articulate and assert themselves within representational politics. Of course, de facto also these NGOs extensively work with human agency for accessing welfare provisions and entitlements under the law. But these are not seen as ends in themselves. They are perceived as essential part of a right assertion. Such NGOs place great premium on processes: consciousness raising, leadership development, participation.

Issues of representational politics and affirmative action, especially from caste and gender perspectives, take on added dimensions and give "nationality" overtones to collaboration-conflict with the state for NGOs rooted in subaltern communities of dalits, adivasis, minorities and women.

18. The Dilemmas in Confronting the State:

Most of the NGO approaches to the state have one underlying assumption - that the state is the "provider". The task of the NGO is to enable and facilitate access and control - whether the path chosen is one of collaboration or of adversarial action or a mix of both. However, under the onslaught of structural adjustment programmes, the state is under pressure to withdraw from social sectors and divest itself of its social security tasks.

This creates further dilemmas for NGOs and complicates their interface with the state. Despite their even radical differences with the state, NGOs have to maintain their relation with the state at the level of non-antagonistic

confrontation. In the face of larger intrusions into the lives of the poor by powerful vested interests that operate globally, the state is still the best bulwark of the poor.

NGOs cannot afford to be naïve, insular and tunnel-visioned in their development perspectives and concerns. They need to also develop holistic and integrated perspectives especially today in the face of rapid opening of the state economy to the global market. NGOs should not get trapped into situations where willy nelly they are used by agencies like the WTO to weaken the state or to legitimise their own double standards. The market is free only notionally!

19. The Path Forward:

Despite the several problems political-economy oriented NGOs do have in collaborating with the state, larger compulsions and strategic sense should dictate the actual relationship. Also, it is not desirable from the stand point of the poor, nor is it likely that the state abdicates or is divested of its social functions.

In the long term we are all dead. In the meantime, the road ahead for SNGOs is still the one of collaboration, Certainly critical and adversarial, but certainly not one of total antagonism.

NGOs committed to the marginalised - and hence rightly perceive peripheralisation as legitimised and sanctioned by the state and its institutions - must therefore develop greater skills in political action within the framework of democracy, panchayat raj institutions, responsible and accountable governance, electoral politics and civil society processes. There is both scope and good sense in maintaining critical collaboration with the state.

20. State Responses:

Generally speaking, and despite the rhetoric, state partnership with NGOs will continue to be a mixed bag. In some areas state institutions will be eager to cooperate - especially when targets are to be met within time schedules or when donors/lending agencies prescribe NGO participation - provided NGOs concerned do not take their involvement too seriously. But when it comes to dilution of power and loss financial gains, the state agencies will be generally unwilling and reluctant to cooperate with the NGOs.

21. State and the Civil Society:

The crux of the matter when it comes to relation with the state is that of defending and strengthening democratic processes and institutions. The level and degree of critical cooperation between the state and the NGOs is indicative of the ability of the civil society to hold the state accountable.

We can anticipate that in the coming years, both bilateral and multilateral agencies will get much more openly and explicitly committed to civil society processes and democratisation. This will be realised through a two-pronged strategy of squeezing the state out of social welfare functions as part of the conditionalities for IMF/World Bank support and by channelling more and more of social welfare/security tasks to the NGOs. Apart from this pressure from above, rising articulation of the underclasses and of the subaltern groups will force the state to be more and more accountable and transparent.

F. SNGO-NNGO PARTNERSHIPS

22. The Partnership Tradition:

During the decades when SNGOs where on the margins of development cooperation, they were kept afloat by "partnership support" from northern NGOs.

These NGOs have provided funding support to southern NGOs - motivated primarily by moral and ethical values of concerned individuals, organisations and institutions. They could in turn motivate private giving (as an additionality to contributing to official aid through taxes). Some of these NNGOs were able to negotiate also official aid - in this process indirectly legitimising SNGO interventions.

Most of them (though not all) strengthened their initial motivations with theoretical understanding of the nature and causes of poverty. Such NNGOs were able to supplement funds with proactive interest in the development thinking, strategies and programmes of their southern partners, sharing their concerns, living their dilemmas and providing solidarity to their struggles through personal involvement and advocacy/lobbying with the northern public, governments and UN organisations.

23. The Constraints on Continued Partnerships:

Such strong partnership relations are likely to continue, perhaps under more adverse conditions.

On the one hand, NNGOs will find it harder to raise long term development funds from private sources. Their ability to supplement dwindling funds through leveraging official aid - over and above committed funds in the case of joint-financing agencies - is likely to get reduced. Since official aid agencies now can and would prefer to deal with SNGOs directly through their own specialised south based development cooperation agencies or embassies, rather than through north based NGOs.

NNGOs have to invest at least part of their time and energy in relief and emergency, if they are to be able to mobilise money for long term organisation development support to their valued southern partners. More time and greater professional skills will be required to mobilise funds and to be accountable for utilisation to both the public and to the state (wherever NNGOs are also accessing state funds).

Reduced ability to provide long term organisational support (rather than short term programme supports), the additional costs and time involved in raising funds and meeting accountability requirements, growing professionalisation in response to all these pressures, lower budgets for meeting overheads, etc. could have serious implications for NNGO

partnership relationship with SNGOs.

Particularly at a time when several partnership relations are decades old and need to be interrogated/problematised regarding impact on the poor, sustainability, scaling up and the consequent OD/OD demands such as role transformations, phased withdrawal, acquiring new competencies and professional skills. etc.

24. NNGO Response Strategies:

NNGOs need to both cope and creatively manage these transitional stress. Mere good will and commitment will not do. Nor will cold and detached professionalism work with often emotionally high strung and defensive SNGOs themselves caught up in a vortex of change.

In the final analysis only empathetic/concerned and yet informed/thoroughgoing professionalism will sustain and carry forward partnership relations. The need is for greater creativity, in-depth understanding of complex development issues/NGO positioning and to holistic responses rather than get trapped in simplistic solutions and knee-jerk reactions. Intermediaries such as project officers, evaluators, OD/ID experts, accompaniers, subject experts, financial auditors, will make or wreck partnerships. Hence, ideally the identification, mandating and follow up of such intermediaries themselves should be done with great sensitivity and through mutual consultations.

Whether southern and northern NGOs can marshall the type of high quality human resources to manage these processes is the crux of the question, current practices and experiences in re-examining and re-defining partnerships and in re-structuring them need to be examined carefully to serve as important learning points.

25. Options before NNGOs:

For the NNGOs the range of options for continued partnership and the required re-structuring will be more or less open depending on their identity and character, niche positions and profile with the northern public, their level of dependency on northern bilateral and multilateral agencies, current perceptions regarding their development management competencies, perceptions regarding their added value in areas such as expertise in specific areas of development, advocacy and lobbying functions, policy development and influencing capacities, support, etc.

NNGOs who are unable convincingly add value to development cooperation with SNGOs, may even find it difficult to access private funds and supplementary official funds. The challenge before them would be to make this qualitative difference - to do things differently and better than

embassies and specialised development cooperation bodies of bi-lateral and multi-lateral agencies - even while straddled with reduced administrative budgets and the high cost of professionals.

26. Options before SNGOs:

For the SNGOs, on the other hand, partnership relations with NNGOs will be particularly crucial if they wish to involve themselves particularly in the civil society questions where total dependence on official aid agencies is suicidal, and if they are unable to mobilise locally the resources needed for social mobilisation, campaigns, struggles, connected net working, research/documentation, advocacy and lobbying and policy influencing - an almost impossible task!

Civil society issues such as equity, participation, democracy, human rights, accountable governance and responsible use of the commons call for more than localised action. Geo-political arena is nothing less than globalised civil society and global governance. Hence the support of NNGOs, particularly their lobbying capacity with the northern civil society and with international bodies could make a difference.

To Conclude:

Paradigm shifts in development cooperation throw up more formidable challenges before NNGOs than they do before the SNGOs.

G. NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY:

27. The Expanding Domain of Civil Society:

In the context of the "third way" to development as a balance between unfettered markets and state managed socialism, the civil society has two important roles:

- * to make the state more transparent/accountable in its governance, and responsible for the security and well being of the vulnerable segments
- * to set the "public criteria" to which the market must be made sensitive (regulated market).

Development is not only about growth but also about equipping people with knowledge and power to decide why and how they want to develop, manage and enjoy resources and that too in their own democratic spaces.

The key function of the civil society is the deepening of democracy and the widening of inclusiveness. The interplay of concerns, interests and aspirations of all groups and peoples must determine the character of the state and of the market. The civil society creates an environment of profound respect for the rights of individuals, communities and nature.

28. NGOs and Civil Society:

Vibrant, informed, sensitive, responsible, ethical and vigilant citizen groups constitute the core of a civil society. Such citizen groups must emerge from the entire spectrum of interests and concerns of people. They must enjoy representative legitimacy. They must also have the skills and competencies for public action.

In developed countries, interest groups, citizen groups that specialist advocacy groups play key roles in the civil society - to make markets socially responsible and to ensure that the state represents the interests of the civil society. In the developing countries, since such civil society action is still in its nascent form, NGOs have been playing the lead role in civil society.

The contradiction is that civil society action is funded externally. Externally funded actions by NGOs are therefore transtitional in nature. Citizen groups must eventually mobilise resource internally for civil society action. Of course they could pool resources from external civil society agents when issues addressed and action invloved include international and global civil societies.

Most NGOs in India are concerned with articulating the problems of local communities of the poor. Than with generalised problems of equity, sustainable development,

gender equity. But we do see NGOs that are exclusively involved in providing specialist functions, without directly working with grass root communities. The nature of the linkage between these two types of NGOs is going to become critically important.

On the one hand grassroot organisations do not have the skills for significantly influencing the civil society - particularly in the context of globalisation, where many issues have to be addressed at the global level. On the other hand, networking and advocacy organisations that do not have grassroot links may increasingly find themselves challenged regarding their legitimacy and mandate. Rooting in the ground reality of people is absolutely essential if NGOs are to be seen as representing the concerns of the people, as civil society agencies.

29. NGOs and CBOs:

In India, the equivalent of citizen groups are the CBOs. However, most local communities of the poor and the marginalised are unable to develop themselves into effective CBOs without external facilitation. Several self-mandated groups (NGOs) therefore play the role of energising the emergence of CBOs from the people of concern.

The critical question before the NGO is its own continued role and relevance post CBO emergence. The options are: role transformation or withdrawal. The NGO ability and willingness to address these options creatively will decide its continued relevance.

Despite all the rhetoric of direct support to CBOs, most community based organisations - particularly of the poor and the marginalised - do not enjoy the visibility, competence and negotiating power to directly access state and external resources. Either NGO personnel must work within the CBOs as their paid employees (providing several services for less than their market value), or NGOs must stay outside and provide several vital support functions. In either case the community management question needs to be seen and addressed realistically without any romanticising. It is quite unrealistic to talk of CBOs totally in isolation from NGOs.

Exception would be the gram panchayats. But then, they operate largely within the framework of the state. It is quite well-known that the poor and the marginalised do not feel confident that their rights and entitlements will be protected by the gram panchayats as they really exist now. The feudal, patriarchal and casteist nature of our society creates deep polarisations. The civil society is still to emerge - at least from the perspective of the dalits, the tribals and women!!!

NGOs committed to those marginalised from rights and entitlements then have two options: to directly work on capacitating the poor to participate in the panchayat raj systems and/or to differentially equip them through their own organisations, so that they are progressively enabled to participate in self-governance institutions. Deep caste and gender cleavages seem to make out a case for continued NGO-led affirmative action with the marginalised.

As such, it may not be quite realistic to overly emphasise the role of panchayati raj institutions as "the" civil society forum. Yet since these are democratic institution provided under the law, NGO will need to consciously work for strengthening the capacity of the poor to participate, access and control these institutions. But certainly the choice is not to leave everything to the self-governance institutions - at least not in the short term.

This having been said, the nature of NGO relation to the CBOs they energise is critically important. Since CBOs are mandated by the people and managed by them, certainly they have representational legitimacy. In fact several NGOs may persist beyond the CBOs because withdrawal is not a feasible option for them. In such cases, the NGOs may end up doing what the CBOs can and should do, reducing them to mere programmes of the NGOs, creating perpetual dependencies and insulating them from mainstreaming into the larger political-economy/democratisation processes.

This danger of patronage on the one hand and on the other hand the real needs of emerging CBOs for complementary supports through specialist skills raise several questions regarding the nature and identity of NGOs who claim to resource support grass root community managed initiatives and build their capacities.

NGOs that provide such supports will have to begin to consciously address at some point of time the nature of their identity with the social class and ethnicity of the people and communities they seek to support. This may be done through the NGOs themselves emerging from these classes and ethnic groups or at least by building, federating and equipping the community groups to function on terms mutuality of inter-dependence with the NGOs that promoted them in the first place.

H. NGOs and the Market:

30. The Reality of the Market:

Though this may sound cynical, the general course of global development is really determined through commercial transfers. The gift economy is only a very small part of the global capital outflows.

Developing countries need an inflow of about US\$600 billion/year to wipe out worst forms of poverty and to increase per capita income by 2%. This resource requirement is about 10 times more than current official aid. It would be a self-delusion to think that aid can, will or has made the difference to the levels of well being in the world.

Powerful dialectical forces are at work as the world economy undergoes structural transformations. One promises hope and opportunity. The present win-lose market paradigm could be a transitional phase to cooperation (win-win strategies) which will expand opportunities for all. The GNP based trickle-down growth models could give way to decentralised trickle up sustainable development, which restores incentives to mutual aid and the development of agreements and models for managing global commons.

The second scenario threatens a future of despair: debt overhang, vitiating poverty and deepening ecology crisis - all interlinked. While globalisation brings global increases in income on the aggregate, it also threatens to leave much of humankind in conditions of absolute poverty and to widen the gap. These trends are likely to be accentuated with the advent of information/ knowledge economy, the increasing power of the multi-nationals and the growing severity of environmental constraints. Most developing countries fall further back unable to keep pace with technologies that are opening the way to new modes of production, distribution and economic/social life.

300 of the largest TNCs control about 1/4 of the of the world's \$20 trillion productive assets. Private international capital flows is nearly 150 billion dollars. The giants who make these investments are not merely economic agents seeking profit making opportunities. They wield enormous power. National governments act as if they are fully sovereign within their own borders on economic policy, while stateless corporations actually shape the national climates, by offering technology, capital and jobs and splitting the spoils with the national elite.

31. System Failures:

The unwelcome trends in the present global economy point to system failures and call for measures that go beyond restoration of debtor nations to creditworthiness. We need to use resources in a different way and for a different

purpose, we need changes that are more systemic in nature and scope: a more productive global economy in which there is much greater fairness and sensitivity to the maintenance and enhancement of social/cultural/ environmental quality/ equity. There are structural blocks to global growth with equity. There are no level playing grounds. The rules of the game are tilted against developing nations.

The market alone will not lead the way to prosperity, unless steadied by other factors: people, democracy, transparency, inclusiveness, participation, accountability, politics of decision making. The "hands off, leave it to the market" approach will not work.

At the same time the gravity and extent of poverty and unemployment the world over is so overwhelming and its causative factors so complex that traditional responses and delivery vehicles simply will not do. NGO collectives and governments are in no position to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the marginalised and of the poor. As noted earlier, present resources available is only one-tenth of that required to ensure satisfactory living conditions to the worlds poor. In short, scale and seriousness of contemporary social, economic and ecological problems can be solved only through a new paradigm of interaction and collaboration between NGOs, state and market forces (business and industry).

32. Market and Public Criteria:

The major task of the civil society and hence of NGOs the politics of alternatives - to demonstrate and campaign for "what might be", if the world is organised in a different way. NGOs must act locally even while aligning with the larger civil society and the institutions of global governance, to set standards of desirable behaviour at local, national, global levels.

As far as our own country is concerned, NGO must act in yet one more area. Globalisation per se is both inevitable and not necessarily bad. it may even usher in opportunities. The real problem is the inequalities in our own country. This will prevent the vast majority from benefitting the market, while a privileged few profit. This will accentuate divisions and lead to social tensions. The NGO has the task of public action for capacitating the poor through social opportunities - with education, health services, economic, political and social organisations, access to technology, credit, infrastructure. The recognition welfare economics (Amartya Sen) has gained will further legitimise this NGO task and will oblige the civil society to take on this task of equity more seriously.

I. NGOS AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

33. New Global Issues:

As the recent crisis in the south Asian countries demonstrated, growing spheres of influence of global financial markets is reducing the authority of nation states over many areas of policy and resource allocation/deployment. Another area of emerging concern will be the management of the global commons. "The fundamental political conflict in the opening decades of the new century we believe will not be between nations or even between trading blocs, but between the forms of globalisation and the territorially based forces of local survival seeking to preserve/redefine the community (Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order).

The project of responsible interaction between the three systems - state, market and civil society - will have to be pivoted and piloted by intergovernmental world bodies, more specifically by the UN organisations.

34. NGO Potential:

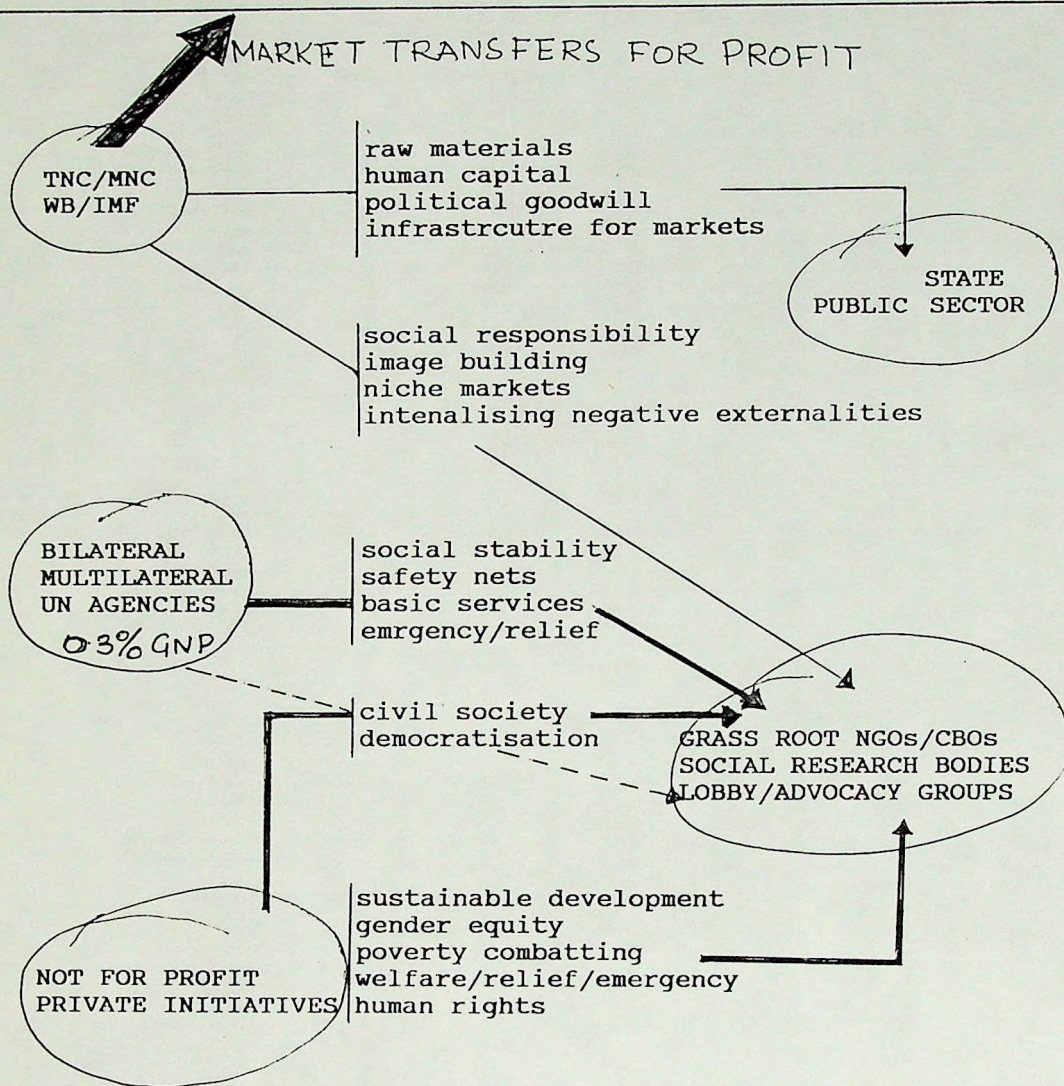
NGOs can play a more creative role, given the recognition now accorded to it, to develop and work with networks that link local action with global dialogue and to strengthen the UN and its organisations. To link issues and their causes - to globalise from below the struggles and aspirations of the marginalised. Both problems and solutions are global.

Together with these UN bodies, concerned citizen groups and responsible states, NGOs are called upon to work on strengthening GLOBAL GOVERNANCE in a world fast turning into a global village in terms of both opportunities and threats, problems and possibilities.

The privileged positioning of NGOs within the domain of civil society thus places before NGOs several options - to act locally with communities of the poor and at the same time to address the global challenges.

These demands place before NGOs several options. Each option brings with it several dilemmas.

THE GIFT ECONOMY: ACTORS AND (REAL) INTERESTS



aid is such a small proportion of global capital flows that it is a self-delusion to think that overseas development assistance can, will or has made the difference to the levels and distribution of well being and poverty in the world. Much larger forces are in play that keep poor people poor and lead to unrest

- Alan Fowler (Capacity Building and NGOs: A Case of Strengthening Ladles for the Global Soup Kitchen?)

NGO RESPONSES

J. NGO OPTIONS AND DILEMMAS

35. The Scenario:

We could sum up our discussions thus far by mapping the two broad areas of demands on/expectations from NGOs, whatever be the motivations and the consequences:

a) Delivery/Management of Social Stability/Poverty Alleviation:

Efficient, effective, accountable and low cost extensionists/social contractors to distribute and manage welfare, social security, technology, livelihood interventions - in lieu of or complementing state delivery. But radical interrogation of underpinning rationale/concepts/basic packages will not be encouraged. Critique is welcome if confined to the mechanisms of packaging, delivery, accounting. This demand will generally come from two sources: official aid agencies who fund SNGOs directly and from southern governments financed by IMF/WB under SAP.

b) Empowering the Poor for Alternatives:

The concern will be with capacitating the civil society in general and the marginalised in particular to assert, negotiate and expand their individual, collective and indivisible rights within a political economy context. Political questions will be raised regarding models and delivery systems and their scope and anticipated results, going beyond what is stated as motives and intentions. Programmes and strategies will revolve around democratisation, responsible governance, strengthening the civil society, capacitation of the marginalised (indigenous people/women/peasant communities), the role of human agency.

Concepts, strategies and delivery systems will be treated as equally important as programmes. "Economistic" definition of development will be challenged and combined with rights/entitlements (political, economic, social, cultural).

Most northern official aid agencies will be prepared to support these programmes as tokens/symbols, provided the NGOs do not obstruct the agenda of marketisation. NGOs who are committed to these ideals, must be very strategic, innovative and selective if they wish to access official aid from northern and southern governments.

The best bet for them would be NNGOs with track record of intense involvement in questions of equity, sustainable development and poverty combatting. Specific agencies of the UN, human rights bodies,

feminist groups, etc. could be strong allies. Support from them will have to be complemented with local resource mobilisation and a lobbying capacity of a high order.

The green lobbyists pose before NGOs some very profound issues and challenges. These centre not only around sustainable development, but also around questions related to global commons and negative externalities of development on the ecology of nature and humans. NGOs committed to equity/sustainability have great opportunities via the environmental agenda. By establishing links between environment, people and social development (agenda 21 and Social Summit provide the broad directions for interventions), NGOs can push forward a holistic agenda for development. Collaboration is full of promises in this area - between NGOs, official aid, for-profit organisations, civil society, people whose livelihood depend on natural resources, those concerned with the control and use of earth/life sustaining commons and the way its costs are being externalised to unsuspecting people and to the future.

To some extent, also women empowerment and gender balance could provide avenues NGOs committed to strengthening the civil society.

36. The NGO Dilemma:

The issue before SNGOs is not merely a question of choice of the development path. Given their dependency on external or state funds, choices could be forced on them. The overall direction in development funding is to entrust delivery of social services for the poor to NGOs in preference to the state (for example, 50% of US non-profit organisations receive more than 50% of their incomes from taxes levied by different levels of government). This trend could compel NGOs into the role of uncritical "ladles" in the "global soup kitchen".

Though the rhetoric of official aid will be that NGOs could promote democracy and political reforms along western lines, it is unlikely that they will put their money where their mouth is. Despite the high profile accorded to the promotion of civil society, most aid will be directed at tangible improvements in peoples living conditions and livelihoods.

The confusion these trends create are confounded by the uncertainty within the NGO community itself regarding its roles in the post cold war geo-political economy of the market. Ultimately, clarity of purpose and informed options must come from the NGOs themselves - what roles they choose to play, for what reasons, with what consequences (for themselves and for the people they work with), how they

propose to manage these tasks and to live with the risks.

But one thing is quite clear. NGOs cannot hope to access and use funds from official state aid and for-profit sources on NGO terms alone.

37. NGOs and NGOs - the Identity Question:

The major difficulty in comprehending NGO response strategies comes from the fact that the NGO label is so inclusive that it has lost its definition. Particularly in the present context when many more new entrants. There is no one representative/ideal type/modal NGO whose responses/options could be taken as generally representative of the position/view of "NGOs".

One is therefore forced to categorise NGOs into several modes and then try and understand how generally within each mode/category, NGOs understand shifting development paradigms and strategise their responses.

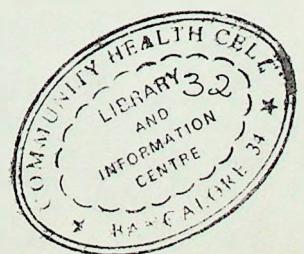
Within each mode, the response options and their strategies will be critically dependent on the development ideology, nature of relationship with its constituencies, the nature of leadership, the nature of relationship with the donor, levels of professional competencies, the networks and solidarities to which they have access for resources/contacts, their lobbying and advocacy capacity for themselves and for the communities, their legitimacy with their constituency and with the NGO community, risk taking capacity, range of strategic options, management style, work ethics, ability to scale up and broad base or alternatively specialise, etc.

38. Choices:

Choices about development role and related institutional positions are far more complex than "either/or". NGOs are often hybrids. Development is itself a mix of short and long terms, of the micro and the macro, of the local and of the global. And aid is many things at once. Most of development is neither white nor black. It is invariably grey. Pragmatic and strategic choices - real politick - within a matrix of concerns, reality, perceived strengths and willingness to take risks.

Removing from discussion the opportunists (extreme right) and the revolutionary radicals (extreme left), most NGOs can be ranged in the centre (critical social contractors), right of centre (uncritical ladles) and left of centre (collaboration in social security is a strategic measure, a means and never the end). These positions will be the consequence of the NGO perception regarding several issues:

- * the nature and character of the state
- * the nature and character of the market

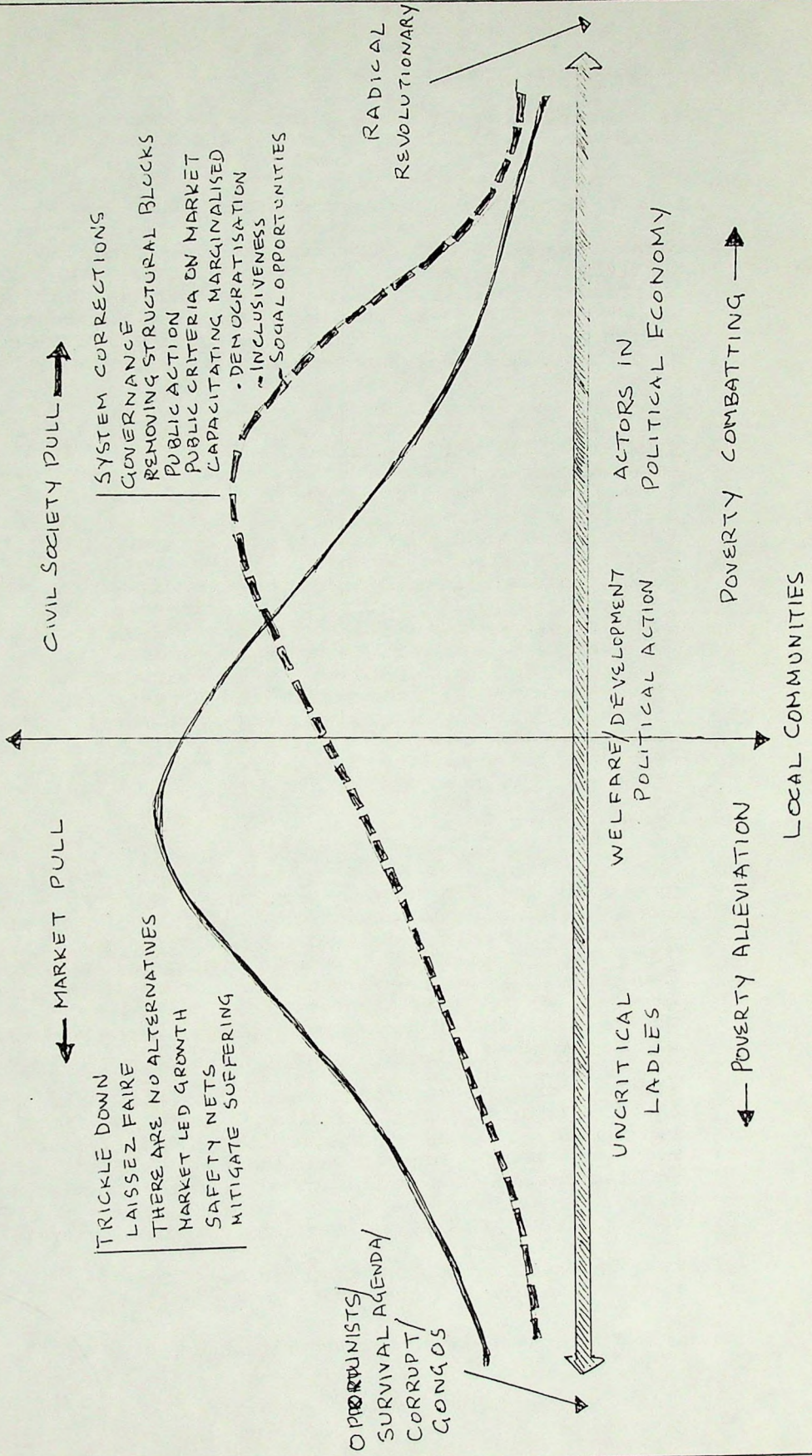


NGO POSITIONING IN DEVELOPMENT

- TO MAKE MARKETS ACCOUNTABLE/RESPONSIBLE
- TO CAPACITATE THE MARGINALISED WITH SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

EMPOWERING IS WELFARE-DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL POWER. THE STRATEGY SPREADS ACROSS COLLABORATION TO CONFRONTATION

GLOBAL SYSTEMS



- * the function of civil society and of NGOs within it
- * the political economy
- * the understanding of the nature and causes of poverty and the response to them
- * the role of the poor in addressing these questions
- * the level of dependency on funds
- * its own competencies to address and manage the external environment.

Many NGOs may be willing to be uncritical ladles in the welfare kitchen if their development understanding does not point to other viable alternatives. It may, then, make sense to them to build safety nets and to mitigate negative externalities. Their concerns will then centre on the poor benefiting from whatever redistribution of global surplus is taking place. They may be unwilling and unable to address questions related to a more equitable operation of the economy and greater inclusiveness in society and politics.

The dividing line between NGOs working with welfare and NGOs working with political economy questions is indeed very thin - provided their motives are not suspect. In reality the dichotomy between both is unreal. Those working with local communities of the poor and the marginalised cannot afford to compartmentalise welfare, development and political action. These are part of a continuum. Depending on the nature of the problem, the intervention strategy will have to range across a spectrum of collaboration-critical collaboration-adversarial action-confrontation and conflict. Yet NGOs can be positioned on the development ideology-praxis matrix based on their theoretical understanding, track record and levels of organisational and institutional strength.

39. The NGO Relevance:

A vast majority of the good/concerned NGOs have been trying to straddle welfare, development and political empowerment. On the one hand collaborating in running the soup kitchens and on the other hand addressing the larger structural questions of poverty, be they global or local (economic interests, power questions, market realities, caste, patriarchy, life styles....).

An "enlightened" NGO (as also networks) will recognise the tiny scale of its operations vis a vis the complexity and magnitude of the problems it confronts. It will bring to its work "learnings" that can be shared and reflected upon. Everything said and done, the NGO "product" cannot be more than improved well-being and power for the poor they are committed to. However, the larger relevance of the NGO - and hence its power - is the mix of knowledge and proven practice which it can bring to development to inform and confront the wider economic and political systems that maintain poverty as a global phenomenon (Fowler).

K. OD/ID LEARNINGS

40. The Need for Shared Reflections:

The new rationale for international aid will also create new systems for achieving results intended. It is in the interest of the NGOs to give top priority to capacity building and institutional strengthening in relation to their basic response option.

Ideas and strategies regarding the best "transition" into a new pattern of aid are only in their infancy. Most NGOs have not yet seriously reflected on this matter. In fact, the study reveals that NGOs are hardly aware, in a conscious manner, of the paradigm shifts that are taking place and on their impingement on NGOs.

As a matter of urgency, practitioners and thinkers on these issues need to get together so that current experiences can be explicated, compared and critiqued in the context of macro-perspectives. This is one way of ensuring that resources invested in institutional and organisational development of NGOs are effectively used. Learnings must go beyond individual NGOs to the NGO community as a whole - at least of NGOs who share the same ideals and concerns. This is not the time to harp on "differences" (real and imagined) because of which NGOs reinforces their separate spaces (turfs!).

41. Options and Implications:

The choices and their implications will be different for each (loose) category of NGOs:

- * for those who prefer to be ladles in the global soup kitchen
- * for those who chose to operate in the political economy
- * for those who try and straddle both - as the majority of NGOs do.

42. Choosing for the Soup Kitchen:

From an ID perspective, those NGOs wishing to position themselves in social welfare opportunities, will have to:

- * develop effective linkages with northern official aid agencies in order to both satisfy and seek to influence the policies and practices which actually determine what NGOs do
- * access and part-finance their work from southern government resources

- * mobilise resources from non-conventional sources: particularly tax/penalty reduction linked funds from private persons, business and industry, both national and international.

The principal demand for organisational development will, because of the logically-framed project approach used in official aid, tend towards a concern for outputs rather than processes. Stringent accounting and physical output measures will constitute the primary instruments of accountability. OD will be primarily directed at strengthening an NGO's ability to meet targets and administer resource flows, within formal and hierarchical frameworks. Social processes such as local resource mobilisation and capacity building will take second place unless the OD employed ensures otherwise. The focus will have to be on how NGOs can do differently what the government has been thus far doing. For this, OD processes will need to concentrate on the systems NGOs use to reach out to and relate with people, on influencing the content of the delivery process - issues such as reach to the really poor, disadvantaged and marginalised, together with their authentic participation in decision-making.

43. *Choosing For Working with the Political Economy:*

The likely emphasis of institutional development for those NGOs not wishing to function purely within the framework of official aid systems could be:

- * to alter the way society operates economically and politically in relation to the structurally poor, the worlds functional underclass
- * institutional impact to be directed at the basic principles by which a country and society operates and regulates
- * equip itself to address the nature of governance, (civic) right and political inclusiveness
- * concentrate on establishing a network of relationships between NGOs with similar intent and interpretations of their functions, locally, nationally and internationally
- * the integrated nature of the world economy will call for a corresponding integration of NGO action through civic alliances.

ID should concentrate on establishing a network of relationships (local, national and international) with NGOs and civil society actors (media, citizen groups, concerned professionals, religious groups). The integrated nature of the world economy will require a corresponding globalisation from below of the concerns, issues and

struggles of the marginalised. Strengthening of the UN organisations will be an important agenda.

From an OD perspective this means that an NGO must be fully rooted in society and economy:

- * progressively mix and eventually replace official aid with other funds, especially those locally generated
- * improve capacity to generate and handle information, share knowledge and maintain multiple interdependent relationships
- * be fully rooted in its socio-cultural and political economy milieu and in the struggles of the people and their alliances
- * legitimacy will be determined also by the NGO's own systems of governance and accountability. These must receive direct attention under OD, since these are basic to development and not mere strategies.

OD efforts must pivot around capacity to generate and handle information, share knowledge and maintain multiple interdependent relationships. They will require a complex skill mix to effectively link ability to organise with capacity to theorize, interpret and share, to lobby and advocate for policy changes, to influence large number of individuals and institutions in the civil society, to link horizontally and vertically between different types of development actors and levels of action, local n global. They must be comfortable with collective action, working without frontiers. They must be able to work with complex measures for assessing performance.

44. NGOs Straddling Social Security and Political Economy:

An "enlightened" NGO, even while concerning themselves with improved well-being and power for the poor they work with, will try and mix their proven micro-practice with macro linkages. Their legitimacy is derived from their strong grass root presence. From within these platforms, they try and participate in larger collaborative processes that inform/influence/confront the economic and political systems that maintain poverty as a global phenomenon.

Such NGOs have to also face up to the consequences: deep structural tensions requiring complex organisational designs and very competent management. Most NGOs do not have the resources and the competencies to manage these tensions and finally fall between two stools. Unfortunately this may be the fate awaiting several small and medium well-intentioned NGOs, lacking in both theoretical understanding of the sweeping changes around them and the change management skills to cope and respond creatively.

L. NGO RE-POSITIONING

45. The Task Ahead:

NGOs are being called upon to play all or some of the following roles:

- a) local practitioners in the implementation process
- b) a watchdog who can be counted on to sound the alarm when national and international authorities fail to meet their commitments
- c) advocates who push policies and programmes at all levels.

Re-visioning and re-positioning to play all these three roles - under differing development task/role perceptions and in interaction with development actors who have their own views and interests, and all these on global scale and magnitude - call for radical changes in NGO organisations and institutions. The broad areas and directions for changes and for re-equipping have been already discussed.

46. From Being Different to Making a Difference:

NGO relevance and legitimacy cannot be based any more on their being special and different. NGOs must make difference - by learning to work without frontiers. This calls for new ways of collaborating also on day to day basis. NGOs and their leadership must rise above the rationalisations they offer for their differences, exclusiveness, the cut-throat competition for funds, privileges and positions. All these call for radical interrogation of the why and how of NGOs structurations and institutionalisation.

47. Representational Questions:

NGOs operate at national and international levels and at grass root level with communities of people. Both are interdependent on each other. They must therefore be transparent and accountable to each other in partnerships and solidarities. NGOs must seriously address questions of mandate, legitimacy and representation. They become more and more relevant as organisations of civil society gain greater roles in governance.

Yes, it is necessary that competent organisations move beyond to advocacy and even to help in setting public policy agendas, identifying critical areas and providing official policy makers with advice and assistance. But they must have profound respect for the NGOs at the ground. It is these organisations and their struggles that give legitimacy and added value to advocacy/policy influencing NGOs at regional, national and global levels. Without such

rooting, these NGOs run the risk of cooption. Rooting requires that the NGO community also address real questions of risks, adequate livelihood and security, competency building, spaces for vertical and horizontal mobility, sharing of "rewards and privileges", etc. These questions cannot be wished away. Partnership and solidarity cannot be reduced to rhetoric. A pretence of equality among inequals only accentuates inequalities (Aristotle).

48. Building Collaborative Skills:

NGOs committed to empowerment must also develop the competencies, skills and organisational versatility to go beyond their traditional role of confrontation and recognise the new spaces opened up for the civil society and the public domain. The ground situations and the nature of struggles of the people must decide the course of action between collaboration and confrontation. Even while engaged in adversarial action, through other facets of their organisation/alliances, NGOs must still hold to the principle of non-antagonistic relationships and contribute to governance through advice and even participation in decision making and impact monitoring at micro, macro and global levels.

Rather than limit themselves to the margins, they must reach and influence decision makers and decision making fora: the UN, G-7, WTO, IMF, World Bank... They must develop the competencies to take advantage of the new openings. Even while working as critiques, they must also serve also as co-creators, who bring analysis, expertise and solutions to policy dialogues.

49. Implications/Demands on NNGOs:

This task is very much also that of NNGOs.

Especially fraught with danger is the position of those NGOs who wish to or de facto limit their role to that of donors vis a vis SNGOs, down valuing "partnership" and all that it demanded: empathy, passion, involvement, the right to critique - and hard - but from inside. And all that it implied for their own OD/ID: the type of professionalism they build, their ability and willingness to lobby and influence policies of their own governments/business; their visibility in international fora, their ability and willingness to understand development issues both from micro and macro-perspectives; their capability to support inter-NGO alliances and solidarity by setting an example at their own levels.

M. PERCEPTIONS FROM THE GROUND

50. Motivators of Change:

Change becomes necessary only when events create turbulence within the entire or some part of the organisation and/or its institutional linkages. This turbulence calls for change. This change may cause uncertainties which can be threats or opportunities. Noel Tichy presents five modes of decision making in response to a "triggering event":

- * *unconflicted adherence*: in this situation the persons within the organisation do not feel the risk of the triggered event
- * *unconflicted change* ("incrementalism"): the change is only a slight change from previous situation and this does not call for serious strategic diagnosis
- * *defensive avoidance*: the organisation has no hope of change as the new changes and the existing situation show equal risks
- * *hyper vigilance*: same as situation in defensive avoidance, sees possibilities of change, but no time to act on it
- * *vigilance*: the organisation perceives serious risks from the current course as well as the new, but find time to evaluate the situation and keep stress under control. A deliberate attempt is made to find solution.

When an organisation reaches the stage of 'vigilance', stress will be a motivating force and not discourage the participants from facing risks. Time pressure, political process and lack of managerial experience are limitations to vigilant change diagnosis.

51. Triggering Event Perceptions of ADATS, AVAS and ODP:

At least two of the three organisations which participated in the study did not perceive any noticeable change in the external development environment. While the third did perceive changes, but was able to take it in its stride.

All the three organisations could be categorised as NGOs committed to empowerment processes. They worked with community based organisations that had their own identity and legal status. Good relationship was being maintained. They also had long standing partner relationship with NNGOs and were able to mobilise adequate resources from them.

The organisational strategies for straddling both welfare and mobilisation work were good. Accessing state funds and taking on adversarial action were essentially the task of

the CBOs. The NGO itself was essentially a functional resource organisation to the CBO. It complemented the CBO by performing specific tasks: horizon scanning, orienting the CBO to understand and respond to the changes, providing training services, facilitating planning and monitoring, taking responsibility for reporting and documentation, etc. In short the NGOs were the ideologues, interlocutors and resource bases for the CBOs.

The three organisations had strong leadership - command figures. The organisations were essentially extensions of the NGO entrepreneur, who had control over the internal coalition and could effectively deal/neutralise threatening external coalitions. In addition the leadership was essentially charismatic and focused on a mission. All three leaders had professional competencies, had good institutional linkages and were effective leaders.

It is therefore not surprising that these three organisations did not see the external environment as rapidly changing, as threatening and as creating stress for the organisation.

52. Practices and Experiences of ADATS, AVAS and ODP in Accessing Official Aid:

In ADATS, accessing state aid is part of the agenda of the CBO. In AVAS, it is part of the work of the NGO. In ODP, possible and feasible state aid is accessed and channelled to the CBO. The three organisations in general have been able to mobilise the money needed for their work predominately from Northern NGOs. There is no apparent constraint or evidence related to the paradigm shifts which is the main context of the study.

However, ODP has received intimation from the Northern NGOs that in future the item of staff salaries can not be supported by them, as a beginning fifty percent of the staff salaries has been cut in this years budget.

The state aid accessed by the CBOs is used for the planned activities of the CBO such as watersheds, as well as for the power of negotiation and participation. The economic base of the CBO- the savings and credit in particular- is used as leverage for this. The responsibility of mobilising the CBO resource is essentially that of the NGO. The resources mobilised for the CBO is utilised as technical and productive inputs, for asset creation, and as development funds.

53. Correlation between Development Variables:

All the three organisations work with the mission of empowering people.

The constituency ranges over the concept of cooly (deprived

section of the society based class, caste and gender), programme and interest based organisation (women sanghas and watershed committees) and rights based humanising processes for the urban poor (rights, securities and livelihood of people in slums).

The development ideology is in three forms. Starting from acknowledging the condition of deprivation and the mission of building in means and motivation to over come it in ODP, it passes through issues and need based organisations of the urban poor in AVAS, and is seen in acknowledging the strengths of the people and building on it through constructiveness and growth in a wider context of micro and macro in ADATS.

The work style of ADATS is based on the objective of enabling the CBO for self-reliance and political participation. Towards this the NGO adopts a combination approach of power looking strategies and technology of implementation based on it. The NGO-CBO identity is integrated through relationships at personal as well as organisational level. ODP works on programme based working relation with CBO. The NGO-CBO identity is distinct, but interlinked. The focus is on self reliance through a change in the role of NGO and CBO with time and growth. AVAS work on mission of reorganising the communities in urban areas towards their rights and basic securities. The approach is issue and agenda based partnerships with the CBO. AVAS adopts a key focus area approach and has working alliances with multiple CBO identities, and affiliations to people's movements which are larger than the work and area of the NGO.

The ethos the three NGO is based on the concept of people's participation and empowerment. The organisation adopts a balance of process and results. All the three NGOs have definite competencies, skills and special expertise to continue with their development missions. These competencies and skills are upgraded with time and growth. A significant factor contributing is the efficiency and capabilities of the leaders.

54. Access to Official Aid:

None of the three organisations handle official aid directly - as on date. But ground work had been undertaken to access funds from sources such as European Union (ODP) for the main reason that existing NNGO partners may not be able to accommodate the increased requirements over the next 5 to 6 years. ADATS has taken the initiative to accessing funds from northern corporates under carbon sequestration programme. All the three NGO have been successful in enabling strong CBOs who are on their planned path for growth. The organisation linkages of the three NGOs and their CBOS confer that as on date the work of the NGOs and CBOS are not likely to be disturbed by change in

the sources of funds.

55. Understanding of the three NGOS regarding Official Aid:

The increasing trends towards official aid is perceived as part of the process of change at the macro level. The governments - both in the north as well as in the south - are crucial players in the field of development. This needs to be acknowledged. Official aid is one of the multipliers of the larger paradigm shifts taking place at the global level. Consequently official aid has to be seen in its interrelatedness to other forms of aid. It needs to be acknowledged and addressed with realism.

56. Desirability of Official aid for NGOs critical of the nature of the state and of the market:

Official aid is one of the manifestation of change and hence a reality to live with. It has some advantages (quantum, continuity etc). There are also spaces for negotiations to accommodate the mission of the NGO-CBO, which is people's empowerment and political participation.

The source of funds, per se, is not a constraint for people and their development. The deciding factor is the strategies adopted for the utilisation of the funds. The northern NGOS have to be compete with other players such as government and corporates who are intensifying their role in development. All three NGOS felt that southern NGO have addressed the issue of official aid quite appropriately.

57. Accessing possibilities for Southern NGOS:

The three NGOS see a high degree of possibilities for accessing official aid for the following reasons:

- a) The northern government have not questioned the relevance and effectiveness of the southern NGOS and CBOs.
- b) In few instances, preconditions set by the southern NGOS have been accommodated by the official sources.
- c) appropriate systems for professionalism are being developed by NGOS and in case NGOS will do well to develop its capacity to deliver goods and on schedule.

58. Areas Where Official Aid Could be Made People Friendly:

- * simplification of procedures and demystification of processes
- * elimination of exploitative and opportunist intermediaries

- * define and strengthen the concept and practice of participation and partnership
- * move towards totality and comprehensiveness in terms of OD and ID of NGOs/CBOs from narrow and limited programme orientation
- * strengthen gender, caste, indigenous people and other subaltern perspectives
- * address more seriously also questions of representative character of NGO/CBO partners, resource organisations and intermediaries

59. Factors that Could Make Official Aid Interesting for SNGOs:

SNGOs could seriously look at opportunities of Official aid for the following reasons:

- * increasing availability and there is no significant difference from accessing funds from NNGOs
- * adequacy of funds to meet growing fund need for sustainability and scaling up
- * to offset the lack of consistency and predictability of support from NNGOs
- * official aid is more professionally managed, more forward looking and more adequately reflecting the changes in the larger environment

60. Implications for the Political Understanding of NNGOs:

Development organisations, both in the north and in the south need to re-define their understanding of development issues and political orientation. This redefinition itself must be contextualised in people orientedness and dovetailed with several other areas of concern of the people. It is also necessary to consider the size of the organisation to speak of political significance and impact. For strategies such as linkages with larger political processes and visibility at that level, size is important. Small NGOs are not effective there, unless they are able to scale up. However, small NGOs lack the competence to scale up. As of now several networks are problematic. Given these reasons, official aid may move in the direction of large/ mega/professional NGOs unless smaller local community based NGOs can re-imagine themselves on larger canvass, cutting across their boundaries. Of course this is more easily said than done. However it is important to initiate such experiments and document success stories.

61. SNGO-NNGO Partnerships:

NNGOs need to reflect more seriously on the changes that

are currently taking place in their organisations and their implications for partnership relations - which involved not only funding but also shared concerns, passionate commitment and personal identification.

Partnership norms and ethics need to be redefined once again. Gaps that are developing need to be understood and the reasons identified. NNGOs and SNGOs must develop a mission approach to partnership strengthening and re-orientation in the context of rapid changes that are taking place in SNGOs, NNGOs and in the external environment.

In the context and on the platform of such partnerships alone can NNGOs play effective role in influencing official id policies in favour of NGO ideals and best practices. NNGOs must be able to demonstrate that they can make a difference to development cooperation.

62. Learning Points:

The study could identify the following best practices in these three NGOs, which could be important learning points:

a) NGO-CBO Relationship:

stable, effective and complementing working relationship and organisational linkages with the CBOs that the NGOs had promoted in the first place

CBO structures and leadership are appropriate for self-reliance and partnership relation with the NGO and with other CBOs

Clear role definitions existed and the NGOs had equipped themselves for these new roles (training, wider linkages, planning, monitoring and documentation support...)

the CBOs had spaces and programmes that were appropriate for their growth and potential sustainability.

b) Action-Reflection Processes:

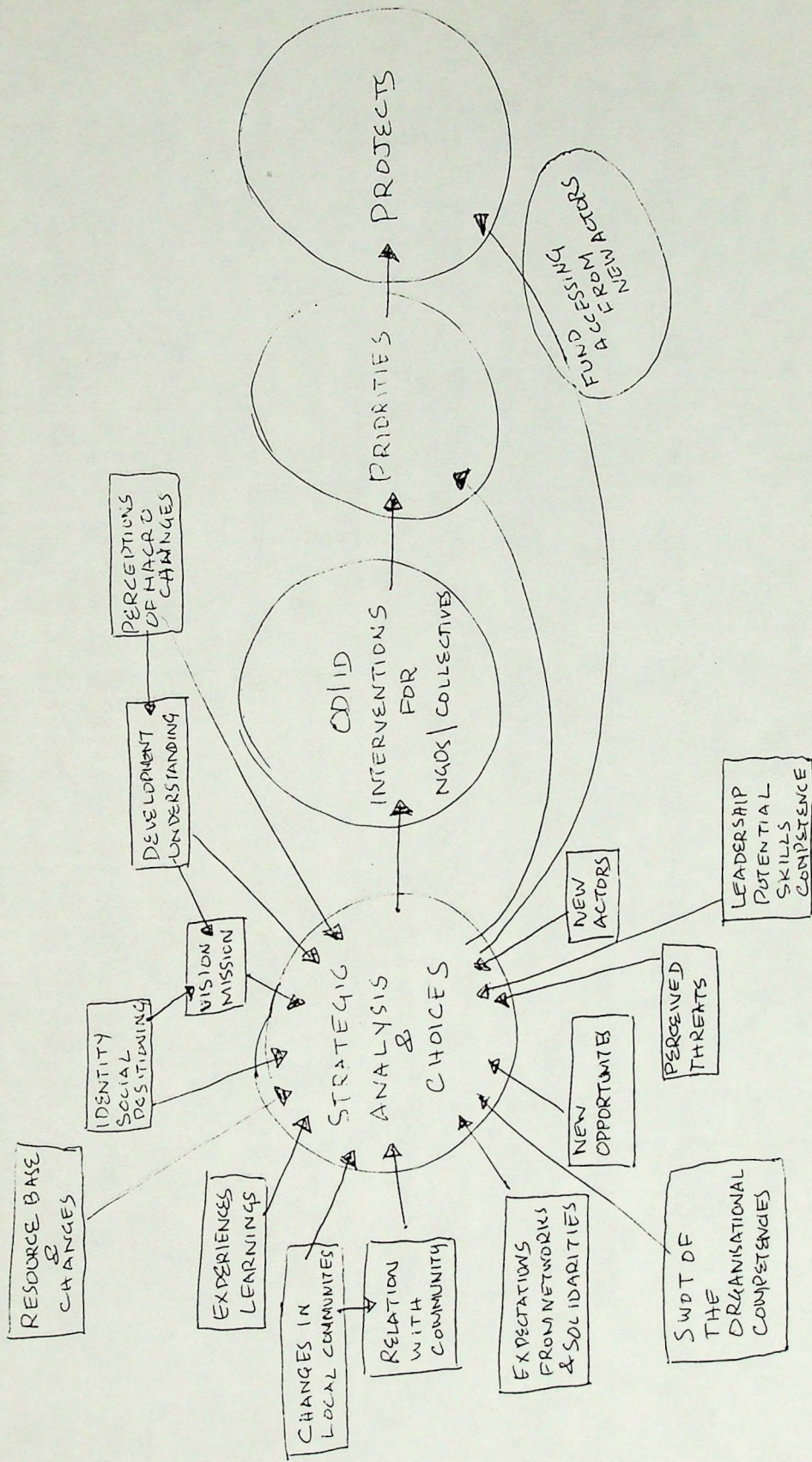
The NGOs had adopted an action-reflection process to understand and respond to external and internal changes. The three organisational leaders were essentially open and had discerning and learning minds. Review and planning processes were quite serious exercises in the organisations

c) Growth Rate and Size:

The size of the organisation and its pace of growth were optimal for taking advantage of the economies of

PARADIGM SHIFTS & NGO CHOICES

NGO CAPACITY TO HOLD ON TO ITS CHERISHED IDEALS & BEST PRACTICES WILL CRUCIALLY DEPEND ON ITS
ODID STRATEGIES/SKILLS TO REPOSITION ITSELF



scale and yet retain the characteristics of small non-bureaucratic organisations

d) Professional Competencies:

The organisational leaders had professional competencies, institutional linkages and status to comprehend and manage the external environment and to provide internal leadership

Data collection, updating, retrieval and reporting systems were good and the staff trained to handle information technology with reasonable level of comfort

Finance management was externalised from the NGO leader and efficient.

e) Leadership:

The leadership was essentially visionary and mission oriented rather than bureaucratic. They led from the front with their vision and dreams and not with their positional advantages. The leadership was creative enough to see new opportunities and perceptive enough to perceive the risks and address them

f) Organisation Culture and Ethos:

The three NGOs had good culture of decentralisation, delegation and clear allocation of responsibilities.

Their people orientedness within and beyond the organisations is their clear strength.

g) Strategic/Niche Positions:

All these NGOs occupied strategic/niche positions in their own sectors: rural subsistence agriculture, urban poverty and land questions, church managed development interventions.

In their own areas, they were clear leaders and trend setters. They had clear perceptions on what needed to be done, why and how. They could demonstrate alternatives that worked.

These niche positions have been reinforced by the ability to market both their positions and the differences they are able to make to the communities they serve.

To sum up, ADATS, AVAS and ODP clearly demonstrate that with pragmatic/strategic skills, professional competencies, proper positioning, networks and solidarities, NGOs can

find and expand spaces for their cherished ideals even within the new paradigms of development and push it in the direction of equity, social opportunities for the marginalised, gender balance and sustainable development.

N. THE STATE CONSULTATION

63. The Context:

Concerns and interests which inform development - and shape development cooperation - are being pulled in several directions by the interplay of market and civil society. Of particular significance are:

- * the changes in the motives, character and instruments of development financing
- * their implications for (existing and new) stakeholders in development cooperation
- * and, most important, their consequences for the understanding of and response to marginalisation and poverty questions.

The logic and compulsions of this market-civil society dialectic pull-push NGOs, thus far on the margins of development cooperation, onto the centre stage and right into the vortex of a process which is defining the contours of a new global order sans communism and state managed socialism.

All those who believe in the criticality of NGO contributions in shaping this new world order, must also theorise and strategise why and how NGOs must re-vision, re-equip, re-position and re-launch themselves. So that they are enabled to continue to affirm their cherished ideals and best practices, even while coping with the sweeping changes.

64. The Consultation Agenda:

Praxis will be the overriding concern of the two day consultation. The consultation could focus on NGO positioning within the market-civil society diad. Such OD and ID strategies should help the NGOs:

- * to best avail the opportunities and minimise the risks (for themselves)
- * to optimally contribute (along with the poor) to strengthen forces that address issues of responsible development and counter those that externalise negatives particularly on to the poor.

The consultation will develop such a conceptual and operational response matrix for the three major NGO stakeholders: the Northern NGOs (NNGOs), the Southern NGOs (SNGOs) and intermediaries (consultants/resource agencies).

These are stakeholders have a long tradition of engagement with and partnership in capacitating the marginalised

communities with knowledge, organisations, leadership, skills, resources, programmes and linkages so that they affirm, assert and expand their political, economic, social, cultural identity and sustainable development rights within the political economy.

65. Southern NGOs:

The consultation could envisage likely consequences and opportunities for NGOs who work with local communities on both rights and livelihood questions.

On the one hand, to effectively address the nature, magnitude, implications and inter-connectedness of most development questions of subalterns and local communities and, on the other hand, to access larger funds from official bilateral and multi-lateral agencies and from business, most strong NGOs will try and scale themselves up in size, competence, expertise and coverage. They would rightly perceive the geo-political spaces as nothing less than global.

Medium and large sized NGOs may have the internal competencies and the external supports required for such build up. But the vast majority of the NGOs working effectively with local communities are small. They lack the resources and the geographical spaces for scaling up. Not only, the expansion agenda of larger NGOs have negative externalities for them.

What are the areas in which both medium and small NGOs need to and can syndicate their strengths? What are the institutional arrangements for realising such synergy? What current NGO practices are the constraints and obstacles? Can these be addressed? How?

What are the response strategies for small NGOs? How can they scale up? Can the more competent medium sized NGOs and the smaller/emerging NGOs (mostly staffed and managed by subaltern leadership of dalits, tribals and women) complement each other in mutually beneficial arrangements for themselves and for the communities they work with? How can we contain and resolve the real and potential sources of conflict inter-NGOs? What models exist? What are their strengths and limitations?

66. Northern NGOs:

It is generally perceived that existing partnership relationship between SNGOs and NNGOS need to be further strengthened and expanded if both are to effectively respond to the emerging realities.

What are the existing and new areas where partnership and complementarity will be critically important? What are the possibilities and the specific demands on NNGOS? What are

the compulsions that may force NNGOs away from partnership relationships? How can the new demands on NNGOs for professionalism and results be balanced with the empathy, passion and commitment that are necessary to search together for alternatives?

67. NGOs and the Market:

The gift economy transfers (aid) are too small and too inadequate to meet even minimal development requirements. NGOs would be naïve if they thought that they can take on the development task in isolation from for-profit enterprises. There is therefore a pragmatic imperative for availing and expanding the spaces for critical collaboration with the market and its agencies to influence and countervail them to take responsibility for a win-win relation with people and environment.

What are the human agencies, instruments and institutions for this critical collaboration with the globalised market? How can NGOs and their solidarities strengthen global governance through UN institutions? Even as the market is getting globalised, how can issues and concerns of people be also globalised? What new strategies and institutional vehicles are required? What are the possibilities and the dangers? Can the market have some beneficial impact on NGOs - for example improve their competency and vibrancy and weed out the incompetent and the corrupt?

68. Intermediary Organisations and Consultants:

Development consultants and professional/resource organisations who interface NNGOs and SNGOs make or mar partnership relations. Because of their proximity to funds and decision making they influence the directions of NGO response to development issues. Based on their individual idiosyncrasies and personal vested interests, they can pull development in different directions. They can foster or block transparency and horizontal accountability.

Within the NGO world, these persons and organisations are a class in itself, if not for itself. Yet, they are ideally placed and best equipped to make the concept of "NGO Manageriate" work. They can best contribute to strategising interventions and funding support from larger and more holistic sectoral/thematic macro perspectives. They can creatively problematise the current approaches to identification, funding, monitoring and evaluating projects. However, this problematisation must begin with themselves then go on to envisage how their roles and functions can be re-envisaged as consistent with the present concerns with transparency, legitimacy and collaborative processes.

The consultation could take up a SWOT analysis of current intermediary institutions and practices. From this analysis

it could go on to revision intermediary services in support of the larger re-visioning and re-positioning task of NNGOs, SNGOs and small NGOs. Particularly so when, in the absence of visionary NGOs, intermediaries often set the directions and decide the content of development interventions.

69. Methodology of the Consultation:

a) Plenary Session:

- * presentation and validation of the study report (executive summary will be circulated earlier)
- * identifying learning points for the NGO stakeholders.

b) Working Groups:

The participants could form three working groups (SNGOs/NNGOs/Intermediary Organisations and Consultants) to move forward from problems to opportunities and responses:

- * using the learning for problematising current practices of SNGOs, NNGOs and Intermediary Organisations/Consultants
- * going beyond problems to the possibilities and hence to the response strategies, using the SWOT and/or log frames.

The output from these working groups can be further validated in plenary sessions.

70. End Use:

The actionable agenda for each of the three stake holders as emanating from these sessions will be incorporated into the study report.

Hopefully both NNGOs, SNGOs and Intermediary Organisations will further contextualise these recommendations and convert them into action platforms for:

- * Organisation/Institution Development (inter and intra)
- * Advocacy/Lobbying to influence development cooperation thoughts, policies and institutions

Perhaps, the consultation itself could make a beginning in these two areas.

O. TO CONCLUDE

Not to respond creatively to the emerging issues of development is in itself a response; one where the NGO role will be determined for them, not by them. As Petrin Sorokin wrote: volentem fata ducunt, nolentem trahunt (those willing to recognise the truth will be led by it; those who resist stubbornly will be compelled by it).

It is before us development practitioners, to get together so that our concerns can be reinforced and experiences compared, distilled and shared. We must address global questions with equally global responses.

Hopefully, this study will be a small step in this direction.

Paradigm Shifts in Development Cooperation and NGOs

NGO-100

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ANNEX 1:
STUDY PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

- a) *Organisation for the Development of People (ODP)*
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- c) *Association for Voluntary Action and Service (AVAS)*
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