

# NGO Initiatives: Non-Governmental Organisations Initiatives

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## 1 Introduction

Globalisation, that is, the opening up of economy (Chenoy 2013) and the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies in the 1990s created new waves in all the sectors in India. Especially, it generated workforce demand in manufacturing and service sectors like retail, media, automobile, hospitality, healthcare, IT and ITES, medical transcription, aviation and marketing. The market required skilled human power to function effectively. The 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan envisioned to provide skill training to potential employers by strengthening the existing infrastructure and creating proper institutional mechanism to address the needs of the market. Many have played an active role in transforming the unskilled/semi-skilled people into skilled ones. The union ministries, state governments, private sectors and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), all are involved in the skill development programme. NGOs work (Chenoy 2013) especially among socio-economically weaker sections of the society and try to make them a part of skilled human power, thereby providing opportunities for them to overcome poverty.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment in India formulated a National Skill Development Policy in the 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan (2007-2012) period and it is being given priority in the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan (2012-2017) period. The 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan provided three tier institutional structures for skill development. The government also wanted to identify the gaps in imparting skill training in the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan and it initiated coordinated efforts to address the issue. Hence, developing a curriculum according to the demands of the industry becomes important. So, the government analysed each sector and its required skilled human power to train prospective employees. This paper focuses only on the role of NGOs in providing skill training. Before analysing that, the theoretical perspectives on the development of NGOs over a period and the role played by NGOs in the development sector has to be discussed.

## 2 Non-Governmental Organisations

In the modern development discourse, NGOs play a significant role in addressing the concerns of the socially and economically weaker sections of the population and they work closely with the disadvantaged to address their concerns. Various mechanisms are used by the NGOs to strengthen them (Kilby 2004). These mechanisms include creating space for the poor to raise their voice, enabling them to access public resources and making them aware of government schemes and programmes. These process adopted by the NGOs make the disadvantaged empowered (Narayan 1999; AusAid 2001). For example, one of the largest NGO in India, Action for Welfare and Awakening (AWARE) in Andhra Pradesh had formed 200 village organisations, bringing 23,000 hectares of land under cultivation and mobilised a volunteer force of 25,000 people by the late 1980s. This action challenged the powerful land - owning community in Andhra Pradesh (Clarke 1998; Cooperation with NGOs, ADB 1989). According to Patrick Kilby

*“Non-Governmental Organisations are self-governing independent bodies, voluntary in nature, and tend to engage both their supporters and constituency on the basis of values or some shared interest or concern, and have a public benefit purpose.” (Fisher 1997; Lissner 1977; Salamon and Anheier 1999; Salamon et al. 2000; Vakil 1997)*

NGOs working in the development sector consider themselves as part of the society and so they play empowering and representative roles (Abramson 1999; Gaventa 1999; Nelson 1995). NGOs are not membership-based organisations (Fowler 2000), but they are governed by self-appointed board members and have small regular staff based on religious or ethical values (Thomas 2004). Since they generate funds from different sources and work for the weaker sections of the population, they generally lack downward accountability to the constituents (Mulgan 2003; Najam 1996; Salamon, Hems and Chinnock 2000). The driving forces behind NGOs' activities are the values they pursue and the work they undertake to improve the livelihoods of the weaker sections of the society (Edwards and Sen 2000; Fowler 1996; Gerard 1983; Lissner 1997). As it has been said, “(...) [NGOs are] the heartland of the social economy since they are marked by distinctive value systems (...)” (Paton 1993). “NGOs are value-base participants representing the concrete interests of marginalised groups” (Nelson 1995). Lissner defines NGOs values as:

*“(...) the basis on which agency [NGO] policy makers interpret trends and events. It emanates from religious beliefs, historical traditions, prevailing social norms, personal experiences, and similar basic sources of human attitudes (...). [they] cannot be directly translated into concrete action because of their degree of abstraction (...).yet they are still sufficiently*

*clear for the policy makers to take their bearings from them when deciding on the fundamental direction of their agency." (1997).*

The above-mentioned quote tells us how NGOs look at the world from a certain philosophy. With regard to their evolution, Korten (1990) classifies NGOs into four generations. First generation NGOs were committed to relief and welfare activities and they addressed the immediate needs of the community. The second generation NGOs encouraged small scale self-reliant local development projects. They could prove their ability to the donors. Stronger sustainability emerged in the third generation NGOs and they influenced public policy also. In the fourth generation, NGOs are largely involved in community organisation, mobilisation and coalition building and they aim for long-term structural change at the national and international level. Based on Korten's classification, one may understand that there were generational changes in the NGOs activities. One may also need to know the activities of the NGOs based on their relationship with the state, donors and community.

In the developing world like India, philanthropic foundations, church development agencies, academic think-tanks and other organisations focusing on issues like human rights, gender, health, agricultural development, social welfare, environment, and indigenous peoples are also part of NGOs. Apart from these, private hospitals, schools and religious groups do philanthropic works. But, they are not identified as NGOs. People's organisations (POs) and membership-based cooperatives are also not identified as NGOs (Clarke 1998; Carroll 1992).

The following factors have been identified for the emergence of large number of NGOs, especially in the developing countries. The first and foremost reason behind the increasing many NGOs in the southern states are the increasing percentage of aid by the Northern NGOs. The second reason is the emergence of neo-liberal economic policy. In the neo-liberal economic climate, the role of state has been reduced to address the socio-economic condition of the population. At the same time, the pressure from the member states to address the concerns of the weaker sections of the population made the developing countries involve various actors especially NGOs. Thirdly, multi-lateral and bilateral agencies provide considerable aid to the NGOs to work at the grassroots. The data gathered by Carothers in the 1990s, showed that the United States (US) is spending more than US\$ 700 million in a year to implement democracy programmes in the countries located in Eastern Europe - former Soviet Union, Asia, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Economic recession in 1980 and the NGO working in close proximity with the communities at that time is also a reason why governments of developing countries started recognising NGOs. They also collaborate with the government to implement the some programmes (Carothers 1999).

In India, NGOs are formally registered bodies. They are not government-based. NGOs are non-profit/public charitable organisations and can be registered as trusts, societies, or private limited non-profit companies, under section-25 Companies Act. Non-profit organisations in India (a) are independent of the state; (b) are self-governed by a board of trustees or ‘managing committee’/governing council, comprising individuals, who generally serve in a fiduciary capacity; (c) benefit others, generally outside the membership of the organisation; and (d) are ‘non-profit-making’, in as much as they are prohibited from distributing a monetary residual to their own members (Lewis and Kanji 2009). NGOs in India can be classified based on their purpose, philosophy, expertise, programmes, approach and scope. NGOs may also called operational/advocacy NGOs. Some may operate at international level, some at national level and some at local level.

In India, after the independence, the state concentrated more on welfare programmes and introduced a number of measures to address the needs of the citizens. Citizens could avail the social benefits free of cost. The state legitimized its intervention due to the mass poverty and backwardness (Scott 1998). Based on the Gandhian principle of Constructive Programme, Gandhian ideology-based organisations like *Gandhi Peace Foundation* (GPF), *Khadi and Village Industries Corporation* (KVIC) and the *Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural development* (AVARD) were promoted by the state, after independence, to closely work with people for many issues - basic education, health, agricultural programme, rural development. These organisations were heavily supported by the five year plans. The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru fully supported and promoted community-based organisations (CSOs). Nehru’s death and the emergence of Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister brought many changes in the country, like centralisation of power, price rise, emergence of regional parties, congress losing power in many states and Jayaprakesh Narayan (JP) social movement. Being a Gandhian, JP opposed the Indira Gandhi government for its authoritarian attitude and urged all Gandhians to come forward to oppose the government. This non-violent protest was called *Sampurna Kranti* or total revolution. JP was supported by another Gandhian Moraji Desai. Gandhian NGOs - GPF and AVARD - also protested against the Indira Gandhi regime. Indira Gandhi imposed emergency on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1975. It lasted for 21 months. During this period, voluntary organisations faced many restrictions and the government promoted only apolitical organisations. The Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (1976) was enacted to monitor political associations and the funds they receive from foreign sources (Biswas 2006). After the emergency period was over, Moraji Desai came to power and he encouraged voluntary organisations (Sahoo 2013). His government allocated Rs. 500 million to NGOs and added section 35 CCA to Income Tax Act,

which allowed corporations to deduct donations to NGOs from their taxable income (Kudva 2005).

Large scale social movements in the late 1960s and 1970s like JP movement in India fragmented and became small NGOs (Human Development Report 1993; OECD 1998; Lehmann 1990).

In India, Sethi argues,

*“A withering of formal representative institutions has fuelled the explosion in NGO numbers. Since the mid-1970s, political parties have increasingly dismissed significant sections of the dalits (scheduled castes), tribal groups, other backward castes (OBCs), and the poor and landless, as unorganisable, while trade unions have failed to penetrate informal sectors of the economy.” (1993)*

Hence, NGOs filled the vacuum created by political parties and trade unions. Like pressure groups, NGOs also exerted pressure to influence the public policies (Clarke 1998).

Rajiv Gandhi too encouraged NGOs and increased the funding. His government provided Rs. 2.5 billion to NGOs in the social sector (Sahoo 2013). One million registered NGOs are in India. Among them around 100,000 identify themselves as development organisation directly involved in empowering economically weaker sections (Elliot 1987; Rajasekhar 2000; Vakil 1997).

Through the 1970s and early 1980s NGOs emerged as institutions for development in India. However, modern development discourse expects NGOs to play a critical role in making the socio-economically weaker sections of the society, socially economically and politically empowered ones (Jorgensen 1996; Krut 1997; Nelson 1995; White 1999; World Bank 1996). Feminists involved rural women in the conservation of nature and natural resource management and this led to the formation of environment – related NGOs in the 1980s. These NGOs were also involved in women empowerment. During this period, there were lots of changes in the economic sphere and in the perspective of developmentalism. The period also witnessed the introduction of neo-liberal economic policies and the slow withdrawal of nation-state in the process of development.

International development aid was also increased. Favourable government policies in India helped NGOs increase their presence in development. In the context of globalisation and neo-liberal economic policies, international agencies like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) insisted structural reforms and encouraged government to involve NGOs in development work. They felt that the existing government structures were incompetent in implementing programmes at the grassroots level due to its over-bureaucratic nature and lack of experience in social mobilisation (Biswas 2006; Ghosh 2009).

India adopted structural adjustment policies in 1991 and the government brought many reforms. The most significant reforms were transparency, accountability, equity in accessing all government programmes. The state slowly withdrew many social welfare programmes and introduced many rights-based programmes. The state also collaborated with civil societies, market and transnational organisations to address the concerns of the society. As per the conditions imposed by the World Bank and IMF for receiving aid, India promoted (apolitical) the NGO sector as part of the good governance agenda (Jenkins 2005). NGOs promoted neo-liberal economic agendas like self-help, entrepreneurship and social mobilisation (Jakimow 2009). The private sector – multi-national and transnational corporations – participated in social development through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme.

The Government of India introduced Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) scheme in 1999. It provided opportunities for NGOs to mobilise women and marginalised groups and make them participate in the economy (self-help groups). The main objective of the SGSY programmes is to ensure assisted poor families, who are above the poverty line (swarozgaris), an applicable sustained level of income over a period of time. This can be achieved by inducting rural poor into self-help groups (SHGs) through social mobilisation, training and capacity building and creating provision for income generation assets (GoI 2004) (see chapter 12). The scheme concentrates on establishing micro-enterprises at grassroots level by encouraging activity clusters, providing infrastructure support, technology credit and market linkages (Shylendra and Bhirdikar 2005). The working of the 10<sup>th</sup> five year plan mentioned that social mobilisation is a key factor in SGSY programme. And they recognised that NGOs were better equipped in doing this than the government agencies (GoI 2001).

Identifying skill gap and providing skill training to unskilled and semi-skilled workers is different when compared to self-help programmes due to various reasons like target population, employable skill training, creating opportunities for employment, identifying training centres, creating partnership with industries and creating requisite mind-set on skill development. Many NGOs in almost all parts of the country are involved in skill development initiatives through Vocational Education and Training (VET). (According to National Skill Development Corporation, 2014 there are 150 training partners, both for-profit and not-for-profit ones). Since NGOs work closely with the society, Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) could be made accessible to socio-economically weaker sections and youths in rural areas. In order to analyse the role of NGOs in skill development, this paper has taken two NGOs for study and has analysed their activities – *Peace Trust* from Dindigul, Tamil Nadu, a southern state in India and *ETASHA*, which works from New Delhi. Based on that, this paper will look in to

the role of NGOs in skill development and the challenges they may encounter in imparting the same. The activities of NGOs in skill development were analysed using good governance principles – accessibility, availability and equity.

### **3 Skill Development, Governance and Non-Governmental Organisations – Methodology**

The government of India recognised the significance of good governance as deprivation and inequality continued due to poor governance (GoI 2002a). According to the government, good governance means the

*“(...) management of all such process that, in any society, define the environment which permits and enables the individuals to raise their capability levels, on the one hand, and provide opportunities to realize their potential and enlarge these of available choices, on the other.” (ibid.)*

Therefore, it is imperative to follow governance (good governance) principles, if any institution-government, corporations or NGO-working for a community wants to improve their lives and livelihoods. Since the NGOs are working for improving a community by imparting skills to low/semi-skilled people and transforming them into an employable population in the market, this paper has used good governance principles as a framework to analyse the skill development activities of NGOs. Based on the analysis of these two NGOs, this paper attempts to provide a few policy prescriptions for the NGOs to make their skill development activities more result-oriented and sustainable. The NGOs, *Peace Trust* and *ETASHA*, were chosen based on purposive sampling method.

The two NGOs were chosen because they have worked specifically with the youth to make them skilled and employable. *Peace Trust* was established in 1984 at Dindigul. It has been engaged in social work for several years, helping the child labourers get released from hazardous industries like tanneries and cotton mills. It works particularly in rural areas, rehabilitates child labourers and provides skill training for them (Peace Trust 2014). *ETASHA* was started in 2006 and it believes that by helping young people acquire new skills by giving them access to relevant vocational training and later connecting them to employers, they enable them to take control of their careers and lives and help their families break out of the cycle of poverty (ETASHA 2015). The skill development activities of both of these NGOs were documented by interacting with the heads of these institutions through a semi-structured questionnaire. The activity reports of these NGOs were thus analysed.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has completed the skill gap assessment study for the States of Tamil Nadu and Delhi. The skill gap identified by the in Tamil Nadu and Delhi are also considered for discussion (see chapter 7 and 13).

#### 4 NGOs' Initiatives on Skill Development

Several NGOs all over the country are involved in skill development. The NSDC has prepared a report based on the need for skill development in each state in the country, except Bihar and Chhattisgarh. This paper first discussed the activities of *Peace trust* having experience in the development sector for nearly two decades for the release and rehabilitation of child labourers and in providing skill training for rural youth. Peace Industrial School (PIS) was launched by *Peace Trust* in 2000 with financial assistance from *Indiska Magasinet*, and it provides technical education for former child labourers and underprivileged youth thereby enabling them to get suitable industrial employment and encourages self-employment.

*Peace Trust* has been providing quality skill training for positions like:

- Electrician, Fitter, Industrial Tailor, Embroiderer, Fashion Designer
- Computer Operator, Data Processor, Desktop Publisher
- Fire & Safety Managers, Industrial Safety Mangers/Home Appliances Maintainer
- Psychologist, Counsellors, Trainers, Residential Warden & Secondary, Higher Secondary Teachers
- Watershed Mangers, NGO Project Managers
- And provides coaching for government, bank, public sector jobs

PIS has so far provided technical education to 1,076 youth in various technical courses between 2000 and 2013. As many as 734 youths have got gainful employment in the nearby garment factories, textile industries, computer and browsing centres, petrol stations, rental shops and schools (including government ones) etc., and 214 youths have started their own micro and small enterprises. These technically qualified youth are currently earning an average annual income of Rs. 96,000 which is recurring, stable and sustainable. They have thereby improved their standard of living. These youths, if not trained, would have become unskilled labourers and toiled for meagre income, which is also not permanent (Peace Trust 2014). Similarly, *Indiska's* support for the Peace Garments and Handicrafts Centre is also significant because it continuously provides livelihood for 60 women and has capacitated 250 women from the drought-prone rural villages of Dindigul.

*ETASHA* receives funds from corporate organisations, international funding agencies and private banks (gets covered under ‘Corporate Organisation’). Its branches in Delhi provide various types of vocational training. They have listed out the areas where they have decided to do this. They operate skill training in five models to reach target groups.

They run dynamic training hubs named Career Development Centres (CDCs) in the slum areas of south Delhi, from which their community mobilisation team engages with local youth and their families, community and religious leaders and other NGOs. They work with the students of other vocational training providers to improve their employability skills through their programmes and also manage students' placement. They also collaborate with other NGOs to train the youth in their communities. They have opened temporary satellite centres in local areas contiguous with but not close enough to their CDCs, to run programmes accessible to local youth. They run programmes from rented premises or an NGO-run school. They closely work with industries to identify their specialised skill requirements and based on that they design and deliver joint programmes for youth from low socio-economic communities. For example Project *Indradhanush*, a collaborative project with Nippon Paints to train youth as colour matchers for the Automotive Paints Industry, was initiated in November 2011. In all their programmes, they incorporated compulsory spoken English course, computer skill and self-confidence course. At the end of the programme, during the last week of each session, the learners undergo rigorous practice and preparation to equip themselves for placement into an organised sector. *ETASHA*'s placement team will connect the prospective employees to potential employers by arranging interviews and supporting them through the process until placement is made.

## 5 Analysis of the NGO activities

### *Need*

With regard to the need, Peace Trust provides skill training according to the study conducted by NSDC. The courses offered by them are also in line with the NSDC's latest report on skill gap assessment from 2012-17 to 2017-22 (NSDC 2012). Tamil Nadu will require 1.9 million skilled human resources and 1.5 million semi-skilled human resources by the end of 2017. But the current availability is 1 million and 0.2 million in each category respectively. The Peace Trust did situational need assessment study in Dindigul to find out the problems regarding acquiring education and employment. They also studied the needed intervention to make the youth employable. Before starting their skill development programme, it conducted a scientific field study. According to the study, large numbers of children

are forced to work in the agricultural field or take up small low-paid unskilled jobs after spending ten hours in school. Most of the children achieve basic literacy, numeracy and smattering of English while in school. The findings of the study were incorporated in the project proposal for skill training. They found that lack of mentorship, lethargy and fear of competition lead many youth to discontinue their studies. Based on the needs and requirements for local level and skill requirement for macro level (state), courses are identified and developed. They ensure that the courses fulfil the skill requirement of various sectors such as automobile, construction, food processing, textiles and retail industry even in the developed districts of Tamil Nadu. The strategy of Peace Trust clearly indicates the accessibility and availability of courses based on need (Peace Trust 2014).

According to the NSDC study, there is sufficient supply of skilled workforce through 2012-2017 and 2012-2022 in Delhi (NSDC 2012). But, there is shortage of semi-skilled workforce. The availability of skilled workforce also depends on the availability of training institutes and the number of people willing to enrol in these training institutes. The skill gap report of Delhi mentioned the areas that needed to be covered. The syllabus for the manufacturing sectors needs to be revised. The government should establish training institutes for retail and healthcare industry because there are none now. There is workforce shortage in retail, hospitality, automobile and auto parts manufacturing and metallic products manufacturing. The demand for workforce for construction and domestic help in Delhi is noteworthy. The existing study has noted labour exploitation in these sectors. The government needs to bring appropriate institutional mechanisms to avoid exploitation. Acting according to the skill gap report, ETASHA provides skill training in retail sector with a special emphasis in their curriculum for language and computer proficiency (ETASHA 2015).

### *Equity*

With regard to equity, Peace Trust targets economically and socially underprivileged groups. Trained youth are placed in different sectors. According to the data 734 youths employed and 214 trained youths started their own employment.

According to ETASHA, skill training facilitates an entry point for the disadvantaged into the organised sector and to bring them into mainstream society. Their target trainees are mainly from slum and slum resettlement colonies in Delhi, who have migrated from rural areas and some of their parents are from agricultural background. They also target small vendors and service providers in the unorganised sector. If we have a look at the profiles of their trainees, they are either school drop outs, or are working to support their families while continuing their education. They ensure that all the trainees looking for work must be 18 at the time of

completing a programme and must have cleared 10<sup>th</sup> standard. Both Peace Trust and ETASHA targets school drop outs from economically weaker sections of the society.

### *Accessibility and Availability*

Having a look at the skill training programmes of both the NGOs (Peace Trust and ETASHA), their activities are accessible by all the socio-economically weaker sections of the society. ETASHA is running four centres. Three are located in Delhi and one in Gurgaon. They also collaborate with other NGOs in North Delhi. They collaborate with government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) to train the learners and make them employable (see chapter 4). ETASHA's syllabus stresses the significance of combined development. Along with skill development, they focus on confidence building and inter and intra personal skills. They believe this will assist underprivileged young people to move into an organised structure, where they will face situations they might not have come across before, thereby enabling them to interact successfully with people from all sections of society. The course fee of Peace Trust is fixed low by considering socio-economic condition of the learners. Also the trust arranges loans for economically, socially backward students. After placing the learners, it follows up if they are progressing in their careers. During the admission period, they motivate learners. The institute environment is inclusive in nature. In ETASHA, a learner's average family income is Rs. 5,000 per month or less than that. They learners have attended low-end government schools and generally reside in slum or slum resettlement colonies around the capital, where crime is common. Typically, such colonies have major power and electricity shortages throughout the summer and sanitation is poor. ETASHA branches in Madanpur Khadar and Tigri, both in South Delhi, are located near slum colonies and are community training hubs. It was able to place 71% of their learners in formal employment in 2012 in sectors like, designing and architecture, financial services, manufacturing and travel. Trainees' starting salaries ranges from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 15,000 per month, and some organisations offer free travel, subsidised food, life and health insurance.

### *Partnership with other agencies*

With regard to partnership with government and other agencies, Peace Trust carried out a survey involving the government and community to identify the needs of the society. This programme was funded by *Indiska Magasinet*, Swedish business firm. Apart from financial assistance by an international agency to run the programme, it collaborated with British Council, Chennai, BBC Radio Station,

London and Deutsche Welle Radio for communicative English. It also has MOUs with deemed universities, autonomous organisations and institutions under central government ministry.

ETASHA is also supported by corporate like HDFC Bank's Employee giving Programme, TATA Communications Ltd. funding for vocational training in Delhi, Bain and Company (Project Sarthank), Accenture's Employee giving programme through Charities Aid Foundation. Other supporters are Amdocs', FICCI Ladies Organisation and GAIL India, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Nippon paints, Barclays Shared Services, Aga Khan Development Network, Maruti Suzuki, Tech Mahindra Foundation and JCB India.

### *Curriculum and Course fee*

The shortest of ETASHA's skill development programme has 220 hours of inputs. It is designed to develop a positive attitude, hard and soft skills and finally place young people into entry level careers. Peace Trust has incorporated more practical components in their curriculum rather than theoretical input. After consulting all the stakeholders, both the NGOs have designed the syllabus according to the needs of the industry. Both the NGOs have collaborated with industries and the government to utilise the space of ITCs and ITIs and to mobilise requisite fund to support the programmes. They design the curriculum by themselves. They target school drop outs and youth working in the unorganised sectors. Along with sector-specific syllabus, they give more emphasis on individual development and communication skills. As far as the fee structure is concerned Peace Trust minimum fees of Rs. 2,000 and maximum Rs. 4,000, depending on the nature of the Course and the socio-economic background of the family. A learner from economically lower stratum gets fee exemption. ETASHA's course fee is also much more affordable for socio-economically weaker sections at Rs. 250 per month.

## 6 Sustainability of NGO activities

Having a look at the Skill development activities of two NGOs, they depend on external sources like private banks, corporations and International NGOs for funding. Funding from external sources is time-bound. While NGOs have the responsibility to keep the course fee low to encourage weaker sections of the society to enrol themselves in the courses, they should also provide quality skill training. Along with generating funds from student fee, they are in a position to augment resources from various sources to make their activities sustainable. Industry collaboration may provide sustainability. Social Impact Assessment is one such activity in which NGOs may assess their activities to make them sustainable.

Frank Vanclay defined:

*“Social impact assessment includes the process of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. Its primary purpose is to bring more sustainable and equitable bio-physical and human environment.” (2003)*

Skill development programmes are carried out by NGOs as per government policies and market requirements. It is done to bring intended and unintended changes among individuals and society. By developing appropriate indicators, NGOs activities can be assessed so that they can enrich their syllabus according to the changing needs of the market and society and can be followed by other NGOs.

## 7 Challenges

Skill Development is considered as an employment-oriented course/programme and not education. There is a need for concerted action in several key areas to ensure that skill training takes place in a demand driven manner. The curriculum for skill development has to be updated continuously to meet the demands of the employers/industry and it has to be aligned the available self-employment opportunities. Accreditation and certification system has to be improved. The existing national-level institutions may be equipped with providing needed information on skill inventory and skill maps on a real time basis. A sectoral approach is required for this purpose with special emphasis on those sectors that have high employment potential. NSDC (2012) has done a study and found the skill gaps at the national and state level in India. Peace Trust in Tamil Nadu as well as ETASHA in New Delhi has developed programmes for skill development based on this study conducted by NSDC. Other NGOs involved in skill training can adopt the same kind of programmes. This will help to achieve the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan target. The main

challenges to the NGOs are to provide certification and quality training based on National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF). Since the NGOs are closely working with the community, they can identify if a potential candidate is a dropout or a semi-literate or has completed school. India is likely to achieve 100% youth literacy by 2015. NGOs can conduct skill development programmes for them to make them a part of mainstream economic activities.

As per the CSR programme, companies have to spend 2% of their average net profit on CSR activities (CII 2013). Companies invite proposal from NGOs for this. ETASHA generates funds by aligning with the corporate. Since it regularly interacts with the companies, the NGO is able to place their learners after the training. Other NGOs can follow this too. The lack of required technical infrastructure and trained teachers in ITIs, ITCs and Polytechnics are challenge that the NGOs have to face to provide quality education to the learners (see chapter 9). For this they have to generate funds from external sources to improve the infrastructure. NGOs also actively participate in forming SHGs. For an example *Myrada*, a NGO (Fernandez 2008) is involved in mobilising unskilled women in SHGs. SHGs are trained in small entrepreneurial activities like running food canteen, production of packaged food items, handicrafts. By observing the activities of both the NGOs, we can see that the socio-economic condition of the learners becomes a priority for them. Governance principles like need, accessibility and availability are also given priority. Another area NGOs need to provide attention is bringing gender perspectives into their work. Human development indicators have identified gender differences in accessing resources in the areas of health, education (see National Human Development Report, 2001, for detailed educational status of girls, boys, men and women). Considering this, NGOs need to collect sex disaggregated data to encourage everyone to access skill development programme. The existing data shows that girls have a higher percentage in being school drop outs. Lesser number of women has the opportunity to do college education and higher studies. Skill development can act as an alternative to higher education and women will be able to do production-related work. Also, gender-sensitive awareness courses can be incorporated in the skill development curriculum. As much as 60% of Indian economic output is from informal sector (World Bank 2008; ILO 2002). Workers from informal sector are unskilled or semi-skilled, without certification (Pilz et al. 2014). By targeting unskilled workers in the informal economy and giving them training, NGOs can bring them into formal economy (see chapter 12). The important thing is to not only expand access, but also to provide quality TVET for all. NGOs depend on external funding sources for running skill development programmes. Many NGOs are located in rural and semi-urban areas unlike ETASHA. They lack requisite infrastructure to provide skill development. NSDC's proposal in 2012 (NSDC 2012) for NGOs involvement in skill development in formal and

informal sector states that they provide funds only for skill development and not for infrastructure development. If NGOs do not have proper infrastructure, they need to depend on external sources for practical classes. They need to bear the cost for it. Because of this, many NGOs hesitate to run skill development programmes. In situations like this NGOs can tie up with ITIs and ITCs for providing TVET training. NSDC prioritised 20 sectors (ten industry and ten services) and sought proposals from NGOs to impart training. The proposal clearly stated that the NGOs should prioritise unorganised sector. After implementing neo-liberal economic policies, higher educational institutions like engineering colleges, nursing training institutes, teacher training institutes, Arts and Science colleges have increased manifold. Currently, there are 621 Universities, 32,974 Colleges and 11,144 standalone institutions all over the country (Ministry of Human Resources 2013). NGOs can tie up with these institutions for providing training to people working in the unorganised sector. TVET training can be organised after college hours or during weekends. Though there are lots of potential in the primary sector, government skill gap reports are prioritising secondary and tertiary sectors. Organic farming and other farm-related activities and off-farm activities of agriculture and allied sectors are waiting for takers. Reduction in human power in agriculture and large scale migration to urban areas from rural areas has impacted agriculture. Due to migration by male population, agriculture has become feminised. Contribution of agriculture to economic growth (GDP) has also slowed down. The rate of growth of major sectors during 2008-2009 at factor cost (2004-2005 prices) for agriculture is 1.6% (Government of India 2010). The increasing rate of skilled human power and mechanization of agriculture may increase agriculture productivity. So, since many of the NGOs located in semi-urban and rural areas, there is more chance for them to concentrate on skill development in agriculture sector.

## 8 Concluding Observation

The paper has analysed the role of NGOs in skill development by observing the activities of two NGOs from governance perspectives. Considering this, we have understood that they target unskilled educated youth from socio-economically weaker sections, to give skill training. NGOs establish the required infrastructure by mobilising financial resources from various sources. Neo-liberal economic climate has contributed to the development of NGOs. Apart from free market economy, neo-liberal economy too has given importance to governance thereby promoting economically weaker sections as economic actors (entrepreneurs) by providing skills. Socio-economically weaker sections are concentrated in the unorganised sectors and primary sectors. NGOs, private sectors and government can

collaborate among them to make the weaker sections skilled so that they have the chance to work in the organised sectors. The previous government of India programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and SGSY also targeted the economically weaker sections to improve their livelihoods through various kinds of economic activities. All the previous poverty eradication programmes of government of India brought certain population above poverty level, but some gaps were found in implementing those programmes (Fernandez 2008). NGOs need to conduct a study among the target population and other stakeholders to assess the existing economic potential of the target population, their skill level, education level, available local resources like technical institutions, skilled human requirement of the district and potential collaborators. NGOs also need to conduct impact assessment study in regular interval among skilled youth to know if the training has created significant improvement in their lives.

#### Notes

1. International-level NGOs: It often headquartered in developed countries;
2. National-level NGOs, whose orientations are towards issues and interests in the countries in which they are based; and
3. Local-level or Community-based NGOs that generally exist to address concerns in relatively localised geographical areas. NGOs operating at the community level often reflect memberships comprising individuals who have come together to address immediate community-based interests.
4. The Constructive programme may otherwise and more fittingly be called construction of Poorna Swaraj or complete independence by truthful and non-violent means.” - Constructive Programme its meaning and place – M. K. Gandhi, 1941
5. There are different sections in Income Tax Act of India. These sections are given continuous number and alphabets. The sections in the act starts from A. Section 35 CCA deals with expenditure by way of payment to associations and institutions for carrying out rural development programmes.

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