



OVERVIEW OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

INDIA

Country Context

India is located in South Asia, bordering Bangladesh, Bhutan, the People's Republic of China, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. The Indian peninsula lies east of the Arabian Sea, north of the Indian Ocean, and west of the Bay of Bengal. The capital of India is New Delhi. The country declared independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947.

India is a federal republic. The bicameral *sansad* (parliament) is made up of the *rajya sabha* (council of states) and the *lok sabha* (people's assembly). The president of India is the head of state, chosen by an electoral college for a term of 5 years. The prime minister is appointed by the president and is typically supported by the party or coalition of parties controlling the largest number of seats in the *lok sabha*.

India has more than 1.1 billion inhabitants, making it the world's second most populous country and the largest democracy. Hindi, the country's official language, is the native tongue of about 3 in 10 Indians. English, a subsidiary official language, is widely used for national, political, and commercial communication. The Constitution of India recognizes 22 languages.¹

India is a highly populated and predominantly rural country. It is classified as a country of medium human development, ranked 128th in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index 2007. Life expectancy is 63.7 years at birth, and four fifths of the population lives on less than \$2/day. The adult literacy rate is 61%.²

History of NGO Activity in India

India has a long history of civil society based on the concepts of *daana* (giving) and *seva* (service). Voluntary organizations³—organizations that are voluntary in spirit and without profit-making objectives—were active in cultural promotion, education, health, and natural disaster relief as early as the medieval era. They proliferated during British rule, working to improve social welfare and literacy and pursuing relief projects.⁴

During the second half of the 19th century, nationalist consciousness spread across India and self-help emerged as the primary focus of sociopolitical movements. Numerous organizations were established during this period, including the **Friend-in-Need Society** (1858), **Prathana Samaj** (1864), **Satya Shodhan Samaj** (1873), **Arya Samaj** (1875), the **National Council for Women in India** (1875), and the **Indian National Conference** (1887).

The Societies Registration Act (SRA) was approved in 1860 to confirm the legal status of the growing body of nongovernment organizations (NGOs). The SRA continues to be relevant legislation for NGOs in India, although most state governments have enacted amendments to the original version.

Christian missionaries active in India at this time directed their efforts toward reducing poverty and constructing hospitals, schools, roads, and other infrastructure. Meanwhile, NGOs focused their efforts on education, health, relief, and social welfare. A firm foundation for secular voluntary action in India was not laid until the

Servants of India, a secular NGO, was established in 1905.

Mahatma Gandhi's return to India in 1916 shifted the focus of development activities to economic self-sufficiency. His Swadeshi movement, which advocated economic self-sufficiency through small-scale local production, swept through the country. Gandhi identified the root of India's problem as the poverty of the rural masses and held that the only way to bring the nation to prosperity was to develop the villages' self-reliance based on locally available resources. He also believed that voluntary action, decentralized to *gram panchayats* (village councils), was the ideal way to stimulate India's development. Gandhi reinvigorated civil society in India by stressing that political freedom must be accompanied by social responsibility.

After independence, the Government of India increased its presence in social welfare and development but recognized the potential for civil society to supplement and complement its efforts. The first Five-Year Plan stated, "Any plan for social and economic regeneration should take into account the services rendered by these agencies and the state should give them maximum cooperation in strengthening their efforts."

The **Central Social Welfare Board** was established in 1953 to promote social welfare activities and support people's participation programs through NGOs. This additional funding and recognition led to a growing body of professional NGOs. The Government of India decentralized development activities throughout the 1950s. The establishment of the **National Community Development Program** and the **National Extension Service** were early steps in this direction. Further decentralization was achieved with the introduction of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system in 1958. Many farmers unions and agricultural cooperatives were founded around this time, and networking became more commonplace in civil society. In 1958, the **Association for Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD)** was founded as a consortium of major voluntary agencies.

International NGOs entered India in significant numbers to provide drought relief during two consecutive agricultural seasons, 1965–1966 and 1966–1967. Many of them established permanent local operations thereafter. Moreover, foreign funds began flowing to domestic NGOs in India, changing the character of civil society once more.

During the 1970s the government pursued a "minimum needs" program, focusing on the basic impediments to improving the quality of life for the rural poor, such as education, electrical power, and health. Several

governmental development agencies were established around this time, such as the **People's Action for Development of India**. Foreign-trained Indians entered civil society in greater numbers, leading to a professionalization of the sector.

India witnessed a rapid increase in and diversification of the NGO sector as a response to the national political scenario and increasing concern about poverty and marginalization. Both welfare and empowerment-oriented organizations emerged during this period, and development, civil liberties, education, environment, health, and livelihood all became the focus of attention. With community participation as a defined component in a number of social sector projects during the 1970s and 1980s, NGOs began to be formally recognized as development partners of the state. Their work was increasingly characterized by grassroots interventions, advocacy at various levels, and mobilization of the marginalized to protect their rights.

The process of structural adjustment begun in the early 1990s—and the more recent approach of bilateral and international donors channeling funds directly through the government, NGO networks, and large corporate NGOs—have somewhat pushed peoples' organizations into the background. Small, spontaneous initiatives at the community level, as a response to social and economic exploitations at the community level, are no longer the hallmark of the NGO sector.

NGOs Today

Today, about 1.5 million NGOs work in India (i.e., nonprofit, voluntary citizens' groups organized on a local, national, or international level). This includes temples, churches, mosques, *gurudwaras* (Sikh place of worship), sports associations, hospitals, educational institutions, and *ganeshotsav mandals* (temporary structures set up to house Ganesh festival celebrations). Most NGOs in India are small and dependent on volunteers. According to a survey conducted by Society for Participatory Research in Asia (**PRIA**), 73.4% of NGOs have one or no paid staff, although across the country, more than 19 million persons work as volunteers or paid staff at an NGO.⁵

The PRIA survey also reveals that 26.5% of NGOs are engaged in religious activities, while 21.3% work in the area of community and/or social service. About one in five NGOs works in education, while 17.9% are active in the fields of sports and culture. Only 6.6% work in the health sector.⁶

The **Indian Centre for Philanthropy**, the **Center for Advancement of Philanthropy**, **Charities Aid**

Foundation (India), National Foundation for India, and the **Society for Service to Voluntary Organizations** are among the nonprofit organizations that provide information resources, services, and networking opportunities to NGOs.

The **Credibility Alliance** is an initiative by a group of NGOs committed to enhancing accountability and transparency in the voluntary sector through good governance. Credibility Alliance was registered in May 2004 as an independent, not-for-profit organization after 2 years of extensive consultation with thousands of NGOs in India. Credibility Alliance operates as a standards-setting body, and aims to build trust among all the stakeholders. Its members include nearly 600 organizations.

Legislation on NGO activity

NGOs are not required to register with the government. However, registration allows an NGO to deduct expenses from income for tax purposes, receive foreign contributions, and be considered for government grant-in-aid schemes. Registration also facilitates domestic fundraising, as the income tax act permits donors to deduct contributions made to register NGOs.

Registration

Laws in India classify organizations working in development into three categories: charitable trusts, societies, and Section 25 companies. Whether registered as a trust, society, or company, NGOs are subject to the Societies Registration Act of 1860⁷ and the Income Tax Act of 1961. Trusts are subject to the Public Trust Act (1976) and are, in addition to federal regulations, governed by the State Office of the Charity Commissioner. Organizations receiving foreign funds must abide by the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act of 1976, and are regulated by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The government offers three principal forms of tax relief for voluntary organizations under the Income Tax Act.

1. Section 80G allows voluntary organizations working in specified areas deemed to be charitable to register with the income tax authority. This enables donors (individuals and companies) to claim tax relief on 50% of the amount donated, up to 10% of the donor's income. The beneficiary organizations are required to issue a receipt or certificate in a prescribed format to the donor to enable the donor to claim tax deduction. This is the most widely used tax benefit for charitable giving.

2. Section 35AC allows contributions to be 100% deductible. However its application is specific to projects, generally research projects, rather than to organizations. To benefit under this section, the recipient organization must typically be implementing the project itself. Approval must be sought from the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare based in New Delhi. Donations to government development agencies, such as the Integrated Rural Development Program are 100% deductible under this section.
3. Section 35 (I to III) provides for a similar 100% exemption for donations to approved scientific research associations such as universities, colleges, or other institutions for scientific research, research in social science, or statistical research.

Section 25 businesses are exempt from paying income tax on profits "incidental to the attainment of the objects of the non profit organization," as long as separate books of account are maintained. Bilateral development assistance to NGOs continues to be governed by the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976. Only organizations registered under the act—nearly 30,000 at present—are permitted to receive bilateral assistance.

Government–NGO Relations

NGOs have responded to the government's socioeconomic development agenda over the years. Thus, when the government changed emphasis from capital-oriented growth to anti-poverty programs, NGOs made a distinct shift from welfare and service delivery interventions to a direct attack on poverty. Subsequently, in the 1990s, when the state moved on to macroeconomic and structural reforms, NGOs began to focus on scaling up their activities. This led to their working with the state to develop innovative methods and ensure commensurate changes in policy. They also stepped up advocacy and lobbying, increased networking, expanded their range of operations, and targeted marginalized groups.⁸

The 1990s also saw the establishment of several forums to promote dialogue between the government and NGOs. The Planning Commission initiated an NGO–government interface through a series of conferences and, in 2000, was appointed the nodal agency for NGO–state interactions. In the second half of the 1990s, the **Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART)** was decentralized so that envisaged benefits from NGO activities could also spread to the less explored and extremely poor areas of

the country. (CAPART was created in 1986 to promote and assist voluntary efforts in implementing rural development programs).

Goals of the state and NGOs have converged, particularly in the areas of empowering communities, encouraging participation, strengthening democratic institutions, and improving access to basic services like health and education. They differ in the uniform, bureaucratic processes adopted by the state, contrasted with the NGOs' more flexible response to local needs.⁹

The government has set up several institutions to promote funding of NGOs (e.g., Khadi and Village Industries Cooperatives, Central Social Welfare Board, National Wasteland Development Board, CAPART). This has led to the beneficiaries' dependence on the state. NGO reliance on such funding has also introduced the risk that they will lose their autonomy and become mere implementers of public sector projects.¹⁰

NGO approaches to government now range from strongly oppositional to closely collaborative, with the majority of NGOs keeping an uneasy, sometimes reluctant, but pragmatic and often sophisticated partnership with the state in its various forms.¹¹

National Policy on the Voluntary Sector

In May 2007, the cabinet of ministers of the Government of India approved the National Policy on the Voluntary Sector¹² as the first step in a process to evolve a new working relationship between the government and volunteer organizations. Through the policy, the government commits to encouraging, enabling, and empowering an independent, creative, and effective voluntary sector with diverse form and function, so that it can contribute to the social, cultural, and economic advancement of the people of India. It recognizes that the voluntary sector has contributed significantly to finding innovative solutions to poverty, deprivation, discrimination, and exclusion, through awareness raising, social mobilization, service delivery, training, research, and advocacy.

The policy identifies four objectives:

1. Create an enabling environment for volunteer organizations that stimulates their enterprise and effectiveness, and safeguards their autonomy.
2. Enable volunteer organizations to legitimately mobilize necessary local and foreign financial resources.
3. Identify systems by which the government may work together with volunteer organizations, based on the principles of mutual trust and respect, and with shared responsibility.

4. Encourage volunteer organizations to adopt transparent, accountable systems of governance and management.

Among the specific central government actions cited in the policy are encouraging state governments to simplify, liberalize, and rationalize laws and rules on registration of volunteer organizations; examining the feasibility of enacting a simple, liberal central law to serve as an alternative all-India statute for volunteer organization registration; and encouraging the evolution of an independent, national self-regulatory agency for the voluntary sector.

Other steps include considering tax rebates for transfers of shares and stock options to volunteer organizations; simplifying provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act; introducing training modules for government employees on constructive relations with the voluntary sector; creating joint consultative groups comprising government and volunteer organization representatives; identifying national collaborative programs to be implemented in partnership with volunteer organizations; supporting philanthropic institutions and foundations that provide financial assistance to deserving volunteer organizations; and recognizing excellence in governance among volunteer organizations by publicizing best practices.

NGO Coordinating and Support Bodies

Following are three of the leading apex organizations in India:

■ Association for Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development

AVARD is an association of more than 650 NGOs engaged in rural development in India. Since 1958, it has promoted voluntary action, planned rural reconstruction with local participation and *panchayati raj* (a decentralized form of government where each village is responsible for its own affairs, as the foundation of India's political system), thereby addressing issues of poverty reduction, food security, rural technology, and environmental sustainability. Excellent microplanning and strong networking are its strengths.

AVARD has worked as a consultant for projects financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Food and Agriculture Organization. It has established links with most national organizations connected with voluntary action and rural development in India. It is a member of the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

AVARD
5 (FF), Institutional Area
Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg
New Delhi - 110 002
Tel +91 11 2323 4690
avard@del3.vsnl.net.in

■ Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology

CAPART was formed by mandate of the 7th Five-Year Plan in 1986 as a nodal agency for catalyzing and coordinating the emerging partnership between voluntary organizations and the government for sustainable development of rural areas.

CAPART was formed by the amalgamation of two agencies, the Council for Advancement of Rural Technology and People's Action for Development India. CAPART is an autonomous body registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, and functions under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development. Today, this agency is a major promoter of rural development in India, assisting more than 12,000 volunteer organizations across the country in implementing a wide range of development initiatives.

CAPART
India Habitat Centre
Zone-V-A, 2nd Floor
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003
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capart@caparthq.delhi.nic.in
www.capart.nic.in

■ Voluntary Action Network India

Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) is a national apex body of NGOs in India. It is a network that comprises

- 237 organizations
- 2,500 NGOs (in 25 states)
- 19 network federations
- 42 individuals

VANI is a platform for national advocacy on issues and policies confronting the development sector, and for coordination and action to promote and support volunteer involvement. VANI has been working as a catalyst between central and state governments, on the one hand, and NGOs in India, on the other. It represents NGO concerns through advocacy, networking, and sensitization of the government and other stakeholders.

VANI
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info@vaniindia.org
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NGO Directories

Credibility Alliance

Close to 600 organizations have become members of the Credibility Alliance, which promotes accountability in the voluntary sector. Member organizations can be searched by state and region at www.credall.org.in.

ProPoor

This is a large database of South Asian NGOs that can be searched by country, state, organization, keyword, and type of organization, at www.propoor.org/search/search.php.

NGOs India

A web directory of NGOs that can be searched by organization name or state, at www.ngosindia.com.

ADB-NGO Cooperation in India

ADB recognizes NGOs as significant players in the development process and cooperates with them to improve the impact, sustainability, and quality of its services. NGOs provide value in promoting sustainable development through

- *innovation*—identifying new approaches and models for specific development activities and drawing upon their close knowledge of local communities;
- *accountability*—helping ensure that project components are implemented as envisaged and planned;
- *responsiveness*—encouraging the implementation of projects to respond to local needs;
- *participation*—serving as bridges between project authorities and affected communities, and providing structures for citizen participation; and
- *sustainability*—nurturing continuity in project work, especially when the implementing agencies lack capacity or when staffing changes.

The ADB resident mission in New Delhi acts as a focal point for relations with NGOs in India.

NGO Involvement in ADB-Financed Activities

NGOs have taken part in several ADB-financed activities in India. The following tables provide examples of such

ADB–NGO cooperation in the context of loans, technical assistance, and projects funded by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR).

Nongovernment Organization Involvement in ADB-Financed Loan Projects

Project Title	Project Objective and Nongovernment Organization/Civil Society Organization Involvement
2000	
Housing Finance II (\$100 million) Approved: 21 Sep 2000	<p>The project improved the living standard and quality of life of low-income households that lacked access to affordable credit for housing and home-based, income-generating activities. As a result of workshops and other project preparatory activities with nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and community-based financial institutions (CFIs), a major component of the project was providing housing finance to low-income households through NGOs and CFIs in partnership with the Housing and Urban Development Corporation.</p> <p>NGOs involved included Self-Employed Women’s Association, Society for Integral Development Action, Sri Padmavathy Mahila Abyudaya, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Center, and Friends of Women’s World Banking.</p>
Calcutta Environmental Improvement (\$250 million) Approved: 19 Dec 2000	<p>The project aimed to improve environmental conditions in the outer areas of Calcutta, now known as Kolkata, reduce poverty in low-income areas through affordable access to basic human services, empower communities through participatory processes, and protect the environment from adverse development impacts. NGOs were consulted during project preparation, and segregated and transported biodegradable waste. A range of community-based organizations working in slums and low-income communities in the city were engaged to support the stakeholder consultation process, the slum improvement component, and the implementation of the resettlement plan for the canal bank dwellers.</p>
2001	
Gujarat Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (\$500 million) Approved: 26 Mar 2001	<p>The project helped rehabilitate and reconstruct damaged infrastructure and housing, and supported livelihood rehabilitation in the earthquake-affected area of the state of Gujarat. It also enabled people to rebuild and resume their normal lives by restoring availability of basic services such as drinking water and electricity, providing housing to mitigate homelessness, and fostering economic opportunities.</p> <p>NGOs helped identify high priority areas, participated in project planning and carried out benefit monitoring. Several well-known local and national NGOs and the Self-Employed Women’s Association are active in the area and implemented livelihood restoration activities under the project. Their activities included enhancing skills of artisans and empowering them to market their work.</p> <p>A local NGO, Kachchh Navnirman Abhiyan, was nominated as the coordinator of NGO activities and set up 22 local subcenters to coordinate information and assistance. Cooperation between international and national NGOs was extensive.</p>
Western Transport Corridor (\$240 million) Approved: 20 Sep 2001	<p>The project financed upgrading a two-lane single carriageway to a four-lane divided highway on the Tumkur–Haveri section of National Highway 4 in the state of Karnataka.</p> <p>NGOs helped with the resettlement program, and were responsible for HIV/AIDS-awareness training for construction workers. They also participated in project reviews with the government and stakeholders.</p>
2002	
Modernizing Government and Fiscal Reform in Kerala (\$200 million) Approved: 16 Dec 2002	<p>The project supported the Government of Kerala in attaining the financial means and capability to deploy resources in a transparent, accountable, predictable, and equitable manner, and to create an enabling environment for pro-poor growth. NGOs helped ensure that the relevant components of the program were implemented in consultation with stakeholders.</p>

Project Title	Project Objective and Nongovernment Organization/Civil Society Organization Involvement
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2003

<p>Urban Water Supply and Environmental Improvement in Madhya Pradesh (\$200 million) Approved: 12 Dec 2003</p>	<p>The project is addressing citywide deficiencies in basic urban services for six of the largest urban centers in Madhya Pradesh. Direct social benefits are expected to be sustained improvements in water supply, sanitation, garbage collection, and disposal within the project cities. The project is helping cities undertake participatory planning exercises that met the needs of the urban poor. Based on successful experience in other states in India, financing is being provided for community water supply, sanitation, drains, and social services for poor settlements.</p> <p>Domestic NGOs are being engaged to assist in the municipal action planning process for poverty reduction in each project city. They are also gaining experience by working with government agencies and communities in participatory planning and implementing environmental and slum improvement projects.</p>
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2004

<p>National Highway Sector II (\$400 million) Approved: 21 Dec 2004</p>	<p>The project is intended to strengthen the capacity of India's National Highways Authority for national highway development and operation and maintenance; upgrade and increase the capacity of 566 km of key national arterial corridors, particularly the north-south corridor; improve road safety; and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and human trafficking along the project highways.</p> <p>NGOs are assisting in the HIV/AIDS and anti-trafficking components of the project, including monitoring the socioeconomic indicators along the project roads.</p>
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2005

<p>Tsunami Emergency Assistance (Sector) Project (\$100 million) Approved: 14 Apr 2005</p>	<p>The Tsunami Emergency Assistance (Sector) Project is intended to enable people to resume their normal lives by supporting restoration of livelihoods and essential services; and rehabilitate and reconstruct damaged public and community-based transportation and rural and municipal infrastructure. NGOs have identified high priority areas, and are participating in the selection, design, implementation, and monitoring of rehabilitation and reconstruction of rural infrastructure and other activities. Field monitoring is taking place through district coordination committees, which encompass consultative processes with Panchayati Raj institutions and NGOs. Input from NGOs is integral given the project's thrust to establish livelihoods and community-based infrastructure.</p>
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2006

<p>North Karnataka Urban Sector Investment Program (\$270 million) Approved: 6 Dec 2006</p>	<p>The program will help the Karnataka government rehabilitate existing urban infrastructure facilities and construct new ones in North Karnataka. Community development programs in poor communities will be implemented with the help of civil society organizations (CSOs), which will focus on health and sanitation awareness, low-cost sanitation infrastructure, and self-help groups for women. The program includes establishing a district-level valuation committee, including representatives of CSOs and affected persons, to determine replacement costs of losses of land, structures, trees, and crops. CSOs will also be part of the grievance redress committee to resolve grievances of program-affected persons.</p>
<p>Rural Cooperative Credit Restructuring and Development Program (\$1 billion) Approved: 8 Dec 2006</p>	<p>The program will develop a sustainable cooperative credit structure that will improve rural households' access to affordable financial services. This will enhance the income and employment growth for the rural poor. The program acknowledges the pivotal role of NGOs in implementing rural finance through self-help groups. The program is the outcome of intensive policy dialogue carried out over 3 years involving key stakeholders including NGOs.</p>

Nongovernment Organization Involvement in ADB-Financed Technical Assistance

Project Title	Project Objective and Nongovernment Organization/Civil Society Organization Involvement
RETA 5889: Women's NGO Projects	
<p>Strengthening Government–Citizen Connection for Effective Governance of Urban Local Bodies (\$20,000) NGO: Center for Social Research Approved: 2000</p>	<p>The project improved the performance and accountability of urban local government officials by strengthening the interface between urban local bodies, citizens, business groups, and NGOs. The Center for Social Research studied the changes that had taken place since the enactment of the 74th constitutional amendment. The center interviewed representatives of various stakeholders about their socioeconomic and electoral backgrounds. Training modules were developed for male and female elected representatives, followed by a 2-day workshop to report the outcome of the research and training. The study showed that increased participation of women in urban local bodies has been successful. The research also indicated that women performed well in the election, and that providing reserved seats for women was viewed positively.</p>
<p>Women's Empowerment and Socioeconomic Development (\$19,000) NGO: Humana People to People India Approved: 2000</p>	<p>The project trained women in 10 Jaipur villages in technology, leadership, and rights-awareness to enable them to better meet their socioeconomic needs and become more active members of the community. Women were organized into self-help groups and attended educational training, health counseling, and gender-issue workshops.</p> <p>The project established 20 self-help groups in 11 villages in Jaipur with a total membership of 331 women. These groups provided access to credit, training, and other resources for sustainable, farm-based income-generating projects such as goat rearing and worm culture (vermiculture). The self-help groups operated as forums to raise awareness on women's health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, violence, work hazards, and gender equity.</p>
<p>Attacking Poverty Using Microcredit to Promote Women's Access to Improved Transportation (\$18,000) NGO: Self-Employed Women's Association Approved: 2000</p>	<p>Project activities included pilot testing and evaluating financial and organizational mechanisms to increase poor women's access to transportation through a revolving loan fund, monitoring the affordability and demand-responsiveness of the program, evaluating the economic and social impacts of improved transportation on women and their families, and developing guidelines for replicating the pilot program on a larger scale. The project assessed the transportation needs of its clients. The study found that transportation was a central concern for self-employed women.</p>
Technical Assistance	
2002	
<p>Integrating Poverty Reduction in Programs and Projects (\$640,000) Approved: 14 Jun 2002</p>	<p>The project strengthened implementation, integration, and mainstreaming of poverty reduction approaches at the program and project levels. It also provided small-scale assistance to selected poverty and gender organizations for 3 years.</p> <p>Fifteen NGOs carried out poverty- and gender-based interventions that generated interest, encouraged grassroots impact, and produced useful lessons for ADB engagement with NGOs in India. The interventions included supporting income generation for women's self-help groups in Rajasthan, HIV/AIDS awareness among youth of urban slums of New Delhi, expansion of health services to women in remote areas in Rajasthan and Assam, water related advocacy activities in Gujarat, home-based rehabilitation of deaf and blind children in Gujarat and New Delhi, and medical and educational assistance to slum-dwelling children and young girls in Calcutta.</p>
2005	
<p>Water Users Association Empowerment for Improved Irrigation Management in Chhattisgarh (\$1.9 million) Approved: 29 Mar 2005</p>	<p>This technical assistance project developed an enabling framework and capacity for water user associations to assume responsibility for irrigation system management throughout Chhattisgarh. The project contracted an NGO to conduct an awareness campaign about revised participatory irrigation management policies and to help organize the water user associations.</p>
2006	
<p>Knowledge Management and Capacity Building (\$2 million) Approved: 17 Apr 2006</p>	<p>The project will create an enabling environment for sustainable growth and poverty reduction by supporting knowledge creation, dissemination, and capacity enhancement with an operational focus. It supports NGO projects with links to ADB-financed projects and complementary to the ADB country partnership strategy. The project also supported the India Development Marketplace by providing \$200,000 for innovative NGO-run projects.</p>

Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction Projects Involving NGOs

The Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) is an untied grant facility established by the Government of Japan and ADB in May 2000. From an initial contribution of \$90 million, the fund now stands at well over \$360 million, of which \$224 million has been committed. JFPR helps ADB clients provide direct relief to the poorest and most vulnerable segments of society while building up their capacities for self-help and income generation.¹³

JFPR is a tool for local communities and NGOs to actively participate in the development process. In particular, it

- initiates and supports innovative programs with high potential for improving the affected countries' situations;
- provides relatively rapid, demonstrable benefits through initiatives that have positive prospects for developing into sustainable activities; and
- assists programs designed and implemented by local populations and civil society.

Examples of Projects Financed by the Japanese Fund for Poverty Reduction Involving Nongovernment Organizations in India

Project Title	Project Objective and Nongovernment Organization/Civil Society Organization Involvement
<p>Rainwater Harvesting and Slum Development in Rajasthan (\$1.9 million) Approved: 24 Sep 2002</p>	<p>This project reduced water-related human poverty in slum and low-income urban areas in Rajasthan through rainwater harvesting, sanitation, microdrainage, garbage collection, and capacity building.</p> <p>Nongovernment organizations (NGOs) operating in each city were selected for the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate beneficiary participation in planning, prioritizing the physical works, and developing schemes to raise counterpart funds. • Train local workers to complete the works under the project. • Supervise the works to maintain reasonable quality. • Train local organizations and individuals to operate and maintain the physical facilities. • Build capacity in these organizations to install revenue recovery schemes to finance operations and maintenance. • Conduct information campaigns and local workshops to train local people, particularly women, in personal and public hygiene and health. • Help empower the community-based organizations to seek further benefits from the counterpart loan project and other funding sources. <p>HUMANA, an international NGO, supported the design phase of the project. National NGOs involved in the project included Marudhara Academy, Human Settlement Technology Centre, Dantor Vikas Sarvajanic Punyarth Trust, Social Welfare Charitable Trust, Prashantt Sansthan, Pulkit Academy, Institute of Town Planners, India, and Self Employed Women's Association. The national NGOs undertook small physical infrastructure works related to rainwater harvesting, sanitation, microdrainage, and garbage collection; complementary community awareness; capacity-building activities; and additional activities related to income generation, microfinance, microinsurance, housing finance, and youth clubs.</p>
<p>Sustaining Income and Basic Human Needs of the Poor in the Disaster-Prone Areas of Gujarat (\$3.4 million) Approved: 6 Nov 2002</p>	<p>This project provided alternate drinking water sources, promoted sustainable income generation through leasing arrangements, and addressed specific needs of rural poor, tribal families, and women in disaster-prone areas of Gujarat. At least 15 NGOs were selected to participate based on competitiveness, delivery capacity, and previous work experience with communities in the designated areas. The NGOs implemented a range of subprojects through local community-based and beneficiary groups under the main project components: setting up a community-owned tool center, supporting the poor's transport needs, and promoting new technologies for village-based use.</p> <p>NGOs included International Water Management Institute, Aga Khan Rural Support Programme India, Bochasanvasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha, Western India Automobile Association, Shroff Foundaiton, Lok Vikas, Sadguru Foundation, Centre for Environment Education.</p>

Project Title	Project Objective and Nongovernment Organization/Civil Society Organization Involvement
<p>Restoration and Diversification of Livelihoods for Tsunami-Affected Poor and Marginalized People in the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala (\$5 million) Approved: 21 Jun 2006</p>	<p>The purpose of the project is to set up a model fishing village complex to help tsunami-affected members of the fishing community and others whose livelihoods are closely linked to fishing community activities, add value to the seafood and related industries and establish market links for sustainable income generation for tsunami-affected poor in the vicinity, pilot new approaches and develop opportunities for alternative livelihoods by infusing technology into sustainable income-generating activities, and introduce livelihood activities that reduce vulnerability to natural disasters. International and national NGOs and community-based organizations are among the groups helping to implement the model village fish-processing complex and fish-breeding activities.</p>

Endnotes

- ¹ National Portal of India. www.india.gov.in/knowindia/ethnicity_of_india.php
- ² United Nations Development Programme. 2007. *Human Development Report 2007/2008: Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*. hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/
- ³ The terms “VO” (voluntary organization) and “NGO” (nongovernment organization) are often used interchangeably in India. However, some draw a distinction between the two, arguing that voluntary organizations are a subset of NGOs and distinguished by the spirit of volunteerism and independence from government and business.
- ⁴ Mohanty, M., and A.K. Singh. 2001. *Voluntarism and Government – Policy, Programme and Assistance*. New Delhi: VANI.
Nair, P. 2007. *Whose Public Action? Analysing Inter-sectoral Collaboration for Service Delivery: Historical Analysis of Relationships between the State and the Non-Governmental Sector in India*. International Development Department, University of Birmingham.
- ⁵ IndianNGOs.com. www.indiangos.com/
- ⁶ PRIA. 2002. *Invisible, Yet Widespread: The Non-Profit Sector in India*.
- ⁷ Most states have enacted amendments to the Societies Registration Act. Some states have passed more recent laws governing NGOs.
- ⁸ Nair, P. 2007. *Whose Public Action? Analysing Inter-sectoral Collaboration for Service Delivery: Historical Analysis of Relationships between the State and the Non-Governmental Sector in India*. International Development Department, University of Birmingham.
- ⁹ Najam, A. 2000. *“The Four Cs of Government—Third Sector Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Cooptation,” Non profit Leadership and Management*. Islamabad, Pakistan: Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) Working Paper Series.
- ¹⁰ Tandon, R. 2002. *Voluntary Action, Civil Society and the State*. Delhi: Mosaic Books.
- ¹¹ Kudva, N. 2005. *Uneasy Relations: NGOs and the State in Karnataka, India*. ISEC/Cornell University/World Bank. Paper presented at the Karnataka Conference, Bangalore, India, 10–12 June.
- ¹² Government of India. 2007. *National Policy on the Voluntary Sector 2007*. New Delhi.
- ¹³ Asian Development Bank. www.adb.org/jfpr/

This profile provides an overview of nongovernment organizations and civil society in India. It was prepared by the ADB Nongovernment Organization and Civil Society Center. New information or comments on this profile can be sent to ngocoordinator@adb.org. The views expressed in this profile are not necessarily the views of ADB or its members.