



Work and Employment Community Action group



Designing effective GO-NGO partnership projects

Expected Outcome: Developing and disseminating a framework for effective GO-NGO partnership projects

Convenor:

Mr. R K Sama, WASMO, Gujarat

The premise of this note is that GO-NGO Collaborative arrangement in different development Projects needs to be strengthened. For the present the relationship between government and NGOs is strained and in many cases broken. The action group will study the partnership experiences and make suggestions for effective design for such collaborative partnerships.

Collaborative partnerships usually are institutions which agree to work together, sharing a common vision, establish common objective and plan of actions at a programme level. Mechanisms are institutionalized so as to facilitate delivery of services to their target communities.

There is a need to put development works in public domain and the citizen actions are important for empowering community/user of public services, so as to make government programmes more accountable and delivered in a transparent manner. Civil society in India has been emerging as a force since the late seventies as a result of the growing importance of participatory governance and democratisation. Working at the grassroots levels, NGOs have a better perspective of the requirements of the people and the approach to be adopted. Thus GO-NGO collaborations are important.

Background

With a resurgent economy, the government has enough funds to invest in large projects to address the "excluded" - largely rural populations. In the present context bilateral and multilateral agencies seek to fund the government for rural development as opposed to funding NGOs directly. In this arrangement the government funds the NGOs in a partnership mode for specific roles to be performed at a large scale (service delivery, awareness building, community organisation, partnering panchayats, training the stakeholders etc).

Experience of GO-NGO partnerships reveals that while the content of the work to be done & the results expected at the village level are discussed/analysed in detail; the nature of the partnership, which is critical to the effectiveness on the ground, remains largely unexplored. Some common problems that arise in GO-NGO partnerships are lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities, asymmetries in power, financial restrictions and an accountability gap.

GO NGO partnerships have to be nurtured so as to develop operational relationships, which recognise and capitalise on each others capacities and skills, resources and knowledge that each partner brings to the programme are valued. It is in this context that we need to understand what makes a partnership effective, what are the design elements which build

upon past learnings, and put in place processes and systems which help us create partnerships which truly serve the community.

Proposal

It is proposed that the Action Group will work on these critical questions and address their understanding to:

1. Develop a nuanced understanding on what makes an effective partnership
2. Developing a frame work for collaboration as per capability and selection procedure of suitable NGOs in a transparent and professional manner for different programmes
3. a) Incorporate this understanding towards designing a partnership approach which works optimally for GO-NGO partnerships; the roles, MoUs, monitoring mechanisms, fund-flow and cost-sharing arrangements, governance of the project etc.
b) To develop association agreements which provides for alignment of expectations of financial support and mechanism, time frame of each activities of the programme and quantum, scope of services and joint regular review of the programme: To incorporate the mechanism for conflict resolutions which is an important aspect of collaborative partnership and provide for feedback to each other.
4. Develop a framework for such partnerships and disseminate it extensively amongst the multi and bilateral agencies, state governments and NGOs

The Process

1. The Action Group would look into a few large successful collaborative partnerships and study the different aspects of partnerships which have contributed to effective arrangement. The programmes that can be studied are the (District Poverty Initiatives Programme) DPIPs of MP, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh; WASMO (Water and Sanitation Management Organisation, Gujarat); the DFID Livelihoods Programmes; the PIM (Participatory Irrigation Management) partnerships etc. The list of partnerships will be finalized with the Action Group members.
2. The group will meet programme managers and important staff of the larger collaborative programmes (both government staff and NGO staff) and a few beneficiaries to understand their experience.
3. Based on these experiences it will
 - a. Develop a base paper incorporating this understanding in the development of the "best design"
 - b. The base paper will be presented at a workshop for the members of the Community, representatives of Bilateral/Multilateral agencies, State Government staff and NGO leaders

Outputs and Activities

Output 1: Developing a base paper

- Update the Concept Note based on the Annual Forum proceedings
- Identify and finalise persons who will contribute to the Action Group
- Finalise list of partnerships for detailed study
- Carry out the research and documentation of case studies
- Formulate a partnership framework
- Circulate the material for an **e-Discussion** to:
 - Identify comparable experiences elsewhere
 - Identify key issues to be addressed for wider replication

Output 2: Workshop to disseminate the recommendations of the Action group

Core team: Mr. R.K Sama, WASMO, Gujarat; Apoorva Oza, AKRSP, Gujarat

Volunteers from the community: Sarbeshwar Sahoo, IIDS, Ahmedabad; Braja Mishra, Basix, Bhubaneswar; A.N Pandey, Gramika Foundation, Hazaribagh; Irena Sahana and Sudip, WDC Bihar; Mukesh, BRLP, Bihar; Sisir Sarangi, Shrishti, Bhubaneswar

We invite the other members of the community to Volunteer to participate by

- Responding to the above plan i.e. pointing out areas for fine tuning
- Sharing examples that they think will add value to this effort

You can contact

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