



## Voluntary organization's function in rural development (with special reference to management)

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### Abstract

The overall development of rural regions becomes crucial in a nation like ours, where three-fourths of the population lives in villages. "Integrated development of the area and the people through optimum development and utilization (and conservation where necessary) of local resources-physical, biological, and human-and by bringing about necessary institutional structural and attitudinal changes by delivering a package of services to encompass not only the economic field i.e., agriculture allied activities rural industries but also establishment of required social infrastructure and services in the area of health and nutrition sanitation housing, drinking water, and literacy, with the ultimate objective of improving quality of life of rural poor and the rural weak." Therefore, rural development is the process of enhancing living circumstances, meeting basic requirements, boosting employment and production, and unlocking the potential of rural resources by integrating geographical, functional, and temporal factors. Government industries, nonprofit organizations, institutions, banks, Christian missionaries, commercial establishments, trade unions, and others are becoming more and more active in different rural development initiatives due to the enormous amount of work needed in this process. Within this framework, the function of nonprofit organizations is vital, and recently, their relevance has grown.

**Keywords:** Nonprofit, voluntary agencies, welfare, poverty, community, empowerment, social justice, rural development, funding, professionalism

### Introduction

A nonprofit organization can be defined as "an organizational entity set up by a group of persons on their own initiative or partly by an outside motivation to help the people of a locality to undertake activities in a self-reliant manner (partly or wholly) to satisfy needs and also bring them and the public sector extension services closer to one another for more equitable and effective development of the various sections of the rural poor" Voluntary agencies are therefore non-profit entities that were founded primarily to reflect the interests and goals of the people they are meant to assist.

### Emergence of voluntary agencies

In India, voluntary work has a long history and is highly valued, particularly in the welfare sector. Administrators and policymakers alike acknowledge the important role that voluntary agencies play in society. They are involved in a number of endeavors that are directly tied to rural development. While others are experts in different fields, social workers gather for conferences, seminars, and workshops to share experiences and gain knowledge from one another.

Since independence, the number of volunteer organizations across the nation has significantly increased. There are currently thought to be over 10,000 voluntary organizations involved in various welfare and development projects, having increased fivefold from 1,739 in 1953 to 8,052 in 1980. The following categories can be used to broadly classify the activities of volunteer organizations in our nation:

1. **Charity:** Providing alms in cash and kind, as well as food, clothes, medication, land, structures, etc.
2. **Relief:** Performing obligations in the event of man-made disasters, such as the devastation of war, the

surge of refugees, or natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, droughts, etc.

3. **Rehabilitation:** Continuing and monitoring work in disaster-affected regions and initiating long-term projects.
4. **Services:** Developing infrastructure in underdeveloped, depressed areas, such as tractor rental services, loan supply for seeds, fertilizer, technical know-how, etc.

Women, children with disabilities, the elderly, young people, members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and other underprivileged groups, including small farmers, craftsmen, and landless people, are all covered by these programs.

### Initiatives in rural development by volunteers

Improving the living circumstances of the rural poor, who make up the bulk of the impoverished, is the main goal of the different rural development programs being implemented in our nation. The early forces behind the new push for rural change were voluntary agencies, and they played a crucial role. The role of volunteer organizations is growing along with the implementation of various programs aimed at reducing poverty in rural regions. A number of developmental efforts have been undertaken by volunteer agencies as a result of the significant increase in stress on rural development in recent years. The volunteer organizations are increasingly expanding their perspective on local development and shifting away from the welfare and charity model that was historically prevalent. Subsequent Five-Year Plans' documents have emphasized the importance of volunteer organizations' involvement as a key component of people's participation in a range of

developmental activities. Generally speaking, voluntary organizations have supported government initiatives in:

1. Making the government aware of the challenges people have in receiving the benefits to which they are entitled from government programs.
2. Reporting anomalies in programmers' implementation.

Special attributes that are known to be lacking among government functionaries, such as creativity, commitment, flexibility in approach to suit local conditions, close contacts with locals, high levels of motivation, and minimal procedural practices, are important for the role of voluntary agencies in rural development. Generally speaking, volunteer organizations' primary objectives in rural development are:

- a. To assist others in assisting themselves in their pursuit of advancement.
- b. To encourage and support the development of each person's innate potential.
- c. To start a participatory development process.
- d. To raise awareness of the rights and responsibilities of marginalized groups in our society and to establish social justice for them.
- e. To encourage the development of rural communities' social, political, and economic facets of existence.

### Merits and limitations

As helping the underprivileged is the primary goal of nonprofit organizations. They are naturally able to mobilize weaker groups and the impoverished in rural areas to protect their rights. They are better suited to unite the people of the countryside in order to reap the benefits as a group. They can also be beneficial as community-based watchdogs for matters of public concern. In the following three areas, they are seen to have the ability to outperform government agencies:

1. Because they are not constrained by strict bureaucratic rules and procedures, they can quickly and continuously adapt their activities while learning from their experience;
2. They can have a better rapport with the rural poor than Government employees; and
3. Their workers can be more sincerely committed than Government staff to the task of reducing the suffering of the poor.

Additionally, their inherent skills—such as raising money close to the community, experimenting with flexibility in approach, having a deeper understanding of people's needs and issues, etc.—put them in a good position to carry out rural development programs.

### Limitations

The United Nations organized the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 1979, despite the fact that voluntary organizations are better equipped to carry out programs related to rural development. The importance of public engagement and the beneficial function of nonprofit organizations in rural development were also acknowledged during the meeting. Additionally, Reddy has noticed the following prevalent anomalies across the nonprofit organizations:

1. It appears like these agencies are run by a single person since they are all led by strong, dominant personalities

who do not give the lower parts any autonomy or influence.

2. Caste, religion, and other personal factors are typically taken into account when hiring new employees rather than evaluating their talent and level of dedication.
3. Exploiting educated young people without jobs by offering them pitiful wages and occasionally employing them for antisocial purposes.
4. The programs that are put into place are often "agency-oriented" or "donor-oriented" as opposed to people-oriented.
5. An excessive reliance on the government and funding organizations as opposed to raising money and resources locally.
6. A widespread propensity to assign responsibility for shortcomings to other organizations and authorities without making an effort to acknowledge their own strategy and operational procedures.

Furthermore, because of national actions and decisions that no voluntary agency is prepared to undertake or deal with, as well as the size of the funds required, voluntary agencies are unable to perform the tasks in some areas, such as power mining, coal, and the minerals industry savings and investments magnitudes and equations balance of payment flows capacity utilization pricing and money and credit supplies.

Therefore, voluntary agency activity is inappropriate in any area of national life and development that necessitates extensive action through a nationwide network and/or substantial financial and human resources. Additionally, non-profit organizations suffer from a lack of professionalism. The majority of skilled professionals would rather work in cities than in rural regions. As a result, these agencies lack the knowledge and abilities necessary to finish a variety of tasks, such as creating project proposals, statement of accounts, planning, and scheme execution, among other things. Additionally, they rely more on sacrifice and commitment than on skill and reliability. Above all, the primary obstacle is the insufficient funding needed to carry out the programs.

### Conclusion

Despite a number of obstacles, the government's intrinsic inability to reach the impoverished in rural areas has made the participation of nonprofit organizations in the rural development process crucial. Rural development may be greatly aided by voluntary organizations if adequate funding and direction are given.

In conclusion, it can be said that one of the best strategies for the effective execution of different programs aimed at reducing poverty is the participation of nonprofit organizations in the rural development process. Even though the government may be successful in improving the economic circumstances of individuals, nonprofit organizations can assist in improving the lot of those who are less fortunate through group initiatives such as community irrigation, community bio-gas, social forestry, etc., where they can inspire and offer managerial assistance for the collective benefit of the community. In order to encourage them to participate in various developmental programs, which will undoubtedly prove to be a significant step in the process of rural transformation, the government

should acknowledge their contribution, provide financial assistance, and loosen laws and regulations.

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