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# **CITIES AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY**

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## PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

### EMERGENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

- 1) Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- 2) Community-based organizations (CBOs)
- 3) Civic and citizen's groups
- 4) New forms of active participation in policy formulation, budgeting, program implementation, and monitoring
- 5) Public-private partnerships

# WORLD BANK

## Size and Influence of the NGO Sector

Over the past several decades, NGOs have become major players in the field of international development. Since the mid-1970s, the NGO sector in both developed and developing countries has experienced exponential growth. From 1970 to 1985 total development aid disbursed by international NGOs increased ten-fold. In 1992 international NGOs channeled over \$7.6 billion of aid to developing countries. It is now estimated that over 15 percent of total overseas development aid is channeled through NGOs. While statistics about global numbers of NGOs are notoriously incomplete, it is currently estimated that there is somewhere between 6,000 and 30,000 national NGOs in developing countries. CBOs across the developing world number in the hundreds of thousands.

## Categories of NGOs

The term NGO is very broad and encompasses many different types of organizations. In the field of development, NGOs range from large, Northern-based charities such as CARE, Oxfam and World Vision to community-based self-help groups in the South. They also include research institutes, churches, professional associations and lobby groups. The World Bank tends to interact with two main categories of NGOs: **i) operational** NGOs - whose primary purpose is the design and implementation of development-related projects, and; **ii) advocacy** NGOs - whose primary purpose is to defend or promote a specific cause and who seek to influence the policies and practices of the Bank. It should be noted, however, that these two categories are not mutually exclusive. A growing number of NGOs engage in both operational and advocacy activities, and some advocacy groups, while not directly involved in designing and implementing projects, focus on specific project-related concerns.

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## Operational NGOs

The World Bank classifies operational NGOs into three main groups: **i) community-based** organizations (CBOs) - which serve a specific population in a narrow geographic area; **ii) national** organizations - which operate in individual developing countries, and; **iii) international** organizations - which are typically headquartered in developed countries and carry out operations in more than one developing country. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, most examples of World Bank-NGO collaboration involved international NGOs. In recent years, however, this trend has been reversed. Among projects involving NGO collaboration recorded in FY94, 40% involved CBOs, 70% involved national organizations and 10% involved international organizations.

CBOs (also referred to as grassroots organizations or peoples' organizations) are distinct in nature and purpose from other NGOs. While national and international organizations are "intermediary" NGOs which are formed to serve others; CBOs are normally "membership" organizations made up of a group of individuals who have joined together to further their own interests (e.g.: women's groups, credit circles, youth clubs, cooperatives and farmer associations). In the context of Bank-financed activities, national or international NGOs are normally contracted to deliver services, design projects or conduct research. CBOs are more likely to be the recipients of project goods and services. In projects which promote participatory development, grassroots organizations play the key function of providing an institutional framework for beneficiary participation. CBOs might, for example: be consulted during design to ensure that project goals reflect beneficiary interests; undertake the implementation of community-level project components; or receive funds to design and implement sub-projects. Many national and international NGOs work in partnership with CBOs - either channeling development resources to them or providing them with services or technical assistance. Such NGOs can play a particularly important role as "intermediaries" between CBOs and institutions such as the World Bank or government.



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## NGO Strengths and Weaknesses

Because the nature and quality of individual NGOs varies greatly, it is extremely difficult to make generalizations about the sector as a whole. Despite this diversity, some specific strengths generally associated with the NGO sector include the following:

- strong grassroots links;
- field-based development expertise;
- the ability to innovate and adapt;
- process-oriented approach to development;
- participatory methodologies and tools;
- long-term commitment and emphasis on sustainability;
- cost-effectiveness.

The most commonly identified weaknesses of the sector include:

- limited financial and management expertise;
- limited institutional capacity;
- low levels of self-sustainability;
- isolation/lack of inter-organizational communication and/or coordination;
- small scale interventions;
- lack of understanding of the broader social or economic context.

## **ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN IMPLEMENTING THE MDGs, HABITAT AGENDA, AND AGENDA 21**

- Secretary-General's Report on UN-Civil Society Relations Based on Panel of Eminent Persons Headed by Former Brazil President Fernando Henrique Cardoso
- Molly O'Meara Sheehan article
- Celine D'Cruz and David Satterthwaite article

Table 1: Details of the federations, their support NGOs, and their funds

Federation	Year founded	Number of members	Support NGO/federation-managed funds
INDIA: National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan	1974 and 1986	2 million plus	SPARC (1984) Community-Led Infrastructure Finance Facility (CLIFF)
SOUTH AFRICA: uMfelandla Wonye (South African Homeless People's Federation)	1991	c. 100,000*	Community Managed Resource Center The uTshani Fund (for housing), Ingolobane (The Granary) funds for employment/micro enterprise
ZIMBABWE: The Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation	1993	c. 45,000*	Dialogue on Shelter Gungano Fund
NAMIBIA: Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia	1992	13,000	Namibian Housing Action Group (1997) Twahangana Fund (for land, services and income generation) with state funds for housing (Build Together Program)
KENYA: Muungano wa Wanjiji	2000	c. 25,000	Pamoja Trust (2000) Akiba Mashinani Trust
MALAWI: Malawi federation	2003	20,000	COODE – Center for Community Organization and Development Mchenga Urban Poor Fund
SWAZILAND	2001		Peoples Dialogue, Swaziland
THAILAND: Various regional and city-based federations	1990	Thousands of savings groups	CODI – fund set up by the government of Thailand
PHILIPPINES: Philippines Homeless People's Federation	2003	50,000	Vincentian Missionaries Social Development Foundation Inc (VMSDFI) Urban Poor Development Fund
SRI LANKA: Women's Development Bank	1998	31,000	JANARULAKA Women's Development Bank Federation
CAMBODIA: Squatter and Urban Poor Federation	1994	Active in 200 slums	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights Urban Poor Development Fund
NEPAL: Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj and Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (women's federation of savings groups)	1998		LUMANTI Nepal Urban Poor Fund
A federation is also forming in Zambia, and savings groups that have the potential to form federations are being set up in many other nations, including Uganda, Ghana, Lesotho, Tanzania, and Madagascar. There is also interest in the urban poor federation model in several other nations, including several Latin American nations.			
* These are both maximum figures. Not surprisingly, activities in Zimbabwe have slowed considerably in the present climate. The South African Federation has been facing particular challenges in recent years, and membership has fallen.			

Source: Celine d'Cruz and David Satterthwaite, "The Role of Urban Grassroots Organizations and Their National Federations in Reducing Poverty and Achieving the Millennium Development Goals", *Global Urban Development Magazine*, 2, 1, March 2006.

## TRAINING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING ARE ESSENTIAL

1. UN Best Practices and Local Leadership Program
2. Grassroots Women's International Academies (Monika Jaeckel article)
3. Information and Communications Technology (Theo Schilderman and Otto Ruskulis article)
4. Ashoka Foundation — Financial and technical support for “social entrepreneurs” in six fields (700 fellows in 60 countries since 1981, 150 new fellows each year):
  - Learning/education
  - Environment
  - Health
  - Human rights
  - Civic participation
  - Economic development

NGOs can sometimes be wrong — Sebastian Mallaby, *The World's Banker* (2004)

# STRUCTURES OF DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Bogota case study (Ricardo Montezuma article)
- India — Women as local elected officials
- Philippines — Local Government Code — Barangays
- Brazil — Participatory budgeting
- Singapore — Heritage Conservation (Belinda Yuen article)
- The Economic Resurgence of Washington, DC (Weiss OECD article)