

Initial Social Welfare Programmes in Pakistan

Government of Pakistan requested and adopted technical assistance and guidance of the United Nations to start social welfare programmes during early 1950s. Urban community development projects and Village-Aid program for rural development were initiated with technical and financial assistance of the United Nations and International Cooperative Administration, USA. Presently, in Pakistan, a lot number of development/welfare projects are launched directly or indirectly by international organizations.

The majority of newly developed and underdeveloped nations adopted self-help projects which lead governments and international organizations towards further development plannings. Voluntary organizations also played a vital role to mobilize local communities and governments for development. Local governments were also considered as a suitable vehicle for grassroots development in some countries.

The role of all stakeholders i.e., voluntary welfare organizations, self-help groups, government, local government, local communities and international organizations and governments remained dominant or balanced or shared, or less than each other in different eras. Both top-down and bottom-up approaches to community development have been practiced and are also applied currently through different programs. Initially, following programmes were started in Pakistan:

Village-AID Program

After realization of the severity of the problems and recommendations of the UN experts, Pakistan Government took immediate steps for both rural and urban development. In 1952, the Village-AID (village agricultural industrial development) was launched for economic development in rural areas. This program was assisted from the Ford Foundation and the International Cooperative Administration based in USA. The economic development oriented

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program was designed for improvement of rural communities through better agricultural production. Furthermore, this aimed to tackle with ignorance, health problems and poverty by utilization of hidden capacities of rural communities on self-help basis and through local leadership. It was also considered as a program of the people, for the people and by the people (Government of Pakistan, 1955).

The Village-AID program was run by the Ministry of Economic Affairs to cover a population of 140,000. According to Khalid (2006), every Village-AID operational unit was equipped with one development officer, two supervisors and village level workers and they worked in coordination with civil authorities and technical staff of the other concerned departments. The beauty of the program was people-led approach to the solution of their problems rather than decisions imposed by the authorities. The program was expanded with various other development fields such as education, sanitation and cottage industries etc. Training institutes and academies were established for the training of village level workers and administrators. The program was proved its success in rural development but was abruptly closed down by the Military government in 1959. The social services part of the program was handed over to the newly introduced local government system known as the Basic Democracies.

Community Development Projects (CDPs)

Community development projects were actually government run offices with government appointed staff. These projects were started to initiate needed social and economic facilities and services for the welfare of poorer sections of the local community through the joint efforts of trained government staff and people in communities. The pilot CDPs educated, mobilized and trained the local communities directly and indirectly through citizen advisory councils and committees for self-help, local leadership and problem solution. The CDPs staff focused on and encouraged the self-help projects to fulfill needs of the local communities.

But many other services were added to the CDPs aims i.e., education, health, sanitation, sewerage, housing and playgrounds. Every CDP was staffed with two social welfare officers (one male and one female) and four or five subordinates. The provincial directorates of social welfare conduct post recruitment trainings for the staff specially officers (SWOs or DDOs). Later on, many changes were brought in the administrative structure and functioning of the CDPs. The CDPs got more responsibilities in the community development process after the success of pilot projects. The task of NGOs registration from the Department of Social Welfare was given to the CDPs after promulgation of the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies Registration and Control Ordinance, 1961. The people seeking NGOs registration from the Department of Social Welfare were to contact with the CDPs for registration process.

Local government Systems

The role of local government is significant in development and problem solving at the local level. Local government systems introduced in 1959 (Basic Democracies) by General Ayub Khan, in 1979 by Zia-ul-Haq and in 2001 by General Musharraf. Interestingly, all three local government systems were promulgated by military dictators during their regimes. In 1959, the first military government launched Basic Democracies System to involve grassroots people for the management of their affairs through new local government. That system was set up both in rural and urban areas. According to the report of the National Reconstruction Bureau (2006), local government systems of 1959 and 1979 were based on principle of office/king relationship and were controlled by bureaucrats and military powers. The Local Government System 2001 focused on local community development through involvement of grassroots people. The citizen community boards provision in this system allowed local communities to launch development projects in partnership with local government (Zari, 2003).

NGOs

A small number of organizations were engaged in welfare activities even before the creation of Pakistan. The number of voluntary social welfare agencies was 200 in 1955 which reached at 4000 in 1965 (Planning Commission Pakistan, 1965). The creation of the National Council of Social Welfare in 1956 was also a big reason for the rapid increase in the number of NGOs during late 1950s and afterwards. The National Council of Social Welfare launched grants-in-aid programme for financial support of voluntary welfare organisations. Grants-in-aid program initiation during the Second Five-Year Plan (1960-65) and its scope enhancement during the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1978-83) gave a boost for NGOs establishment. Promulgation of Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance 1961 was also proved as a motivation for NGOs registration during the 1960s. Though, government cut on grants-in-aid budgets after 1983 but foreign aid continued NGOs formation and registration in Pakistan . During 1990s, the re-birth of democracy, privatization and deregulation, globalization process, international interaction of civil society and weak lack of government funds for social services increased growth rate of NGOs. Baig (2001) estimated 10000 to 12000 registered and working voluntary organizations in Pakistan and 59% of them were in Punjab.

Figure 2. 1: Types of NGOs and Encouraging Factors to NGOs Growth During Different Periods

Period	Type of NGOs	Factors behind origin/growth of NGOs
1947-1958	A small number of voluntary organizations engaged in refugee settlement, poverty alleviation, healthcare, education, services for workers and peasants, women's issues and family planning etc.	Problems of refugees, unemployment, poverty, illiteracy
		Establishment of National Council of Social Welfare in 1956 for financial aid of organizations
1958-1971 (Martial Law Period)	Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies	Promulgation of Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961,
		Grants-in-aid program for NGOs through the provincial Councils of Social Welfare
	Non-profit religious organizations	The government took over Shrines and <i>Auqaf</i>
1971-1977	Trade unions	The government nationalized educational institutions and promoted trade unions
	Student Organizations	Educational reforms of 1972, encouraged student organizations in colleges/universities
	Women Organizations	The formation of The constitution of 1973 and UN declaration of Women year 1975
	Service delivery organizations	Continued to grow and work
1977-1999s	Religious organizations	Afghan war and the Islamization
	Human Rights and Advocacy Organizations	Afghan War, International funding for both war relief and human rights organizations
	Service Delivery organizations	State's failure in social welfare during mid 1980s, availability of public and international aid, liberalization in government policies after 1988, Government initiatives and support
1999-onwards	Religious organizations	Continue with same pattern with addition to war against NATO and Internal tension between religious and secular forces
	Human Rights and Advocacy Organizations	International funding , government liberal policies and emergence of liberal forces in country
	Service Delivery organizations	International funding and aid, liberalization in government policies after 1988 and Government initiatives and support

There are various and different estimates and figures about the total number of registered and unregistered NGOs in Pakistan. Figure 2. 2 seems very helpful to know about different estimates about registered and unregistered organizations in Pakistan. These estimates have been given with year of literature publications which provided the information.

Figure 2. 2: Estimated Number of NGOs during different times in Pakistan

Source	Estimated NGOs Number	Registration
Sheerin (2003)	55789	(Registered/unregistered)
Rafiq (2003)	14000	(Registered)
Rabbani (2004)	44000	(Registered/unregistered)
Ismail and Baig, 2004; Ismail, 2002; Khan and Khan; ADB; White, 2006)	45000	(Registered/unregistered)
Noor Akbar (2010)	45000	(Registered/unregistered)
Naviwala (2010)	60000 to 70000 in 2001 and 100000 in 2009	(Registered/unregistered)
Khalid (2006)	5003 (Dictionary of Social Welfare Agencies, 1987)	Registered with CDPs