

representatives sitting on government advisory committees.

To coordinate the activities of the NGOs with those of the government, there have been efforts—sometimes not very effective—to form NGO coordinating committees at the ministry, state government, state department and district levels. In some states, the NGOs have formed committees at the district, and state levels. Indian NGOs are, for the most part, individualistic and don't work together easily.

The local communities, with whom the NGOs work, view the NGOs as an alternative to the government. NGOs earn the most respect from local communities in places where government programs are weak and where NGOs have good links with senior government officials. This helps them gain access to government development funds.

The main sources of NGO funding are the Indian government and overseas organizations. Other sources include foreign missions and Indian and overseas public and multilateral agencies. Increasingly, some large, well-established NGOs have become involved in bilateral and multilateral programs, undertaking training, design, and project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Some of

these function as “nodal” NGOs which coordinate NGO networks and influence funding programs, often state-wide.

Funding is the greatest barrier faced by NGOs, especially the smaller ones. They often receive support through linkages with nodal NGOs which many funding agencies find more convenient to support.

A number of international NGOs or private voluntary organizations (PVOs) implement projects indirectly through their Indian partner organizations. The large PVOs have their own offices or agents in India to monitor their projects. Many contract independent consultants to carry out activities. A large number of Indian NGOs receive funds from international PVOs. Although each PVO may have a sectoral focus, they usually provide funding for varied development initiatives, ranging from relief to social and economic development.

Your NGO partner

Most NGOs operate around one key individual, often the founder who has nurtured the NGO from its infancy. His or her ideology greatly influences the organization and its activities. The NGO leader is often a volunteer chairman or president or a paid secretary or director. In smaller NGOs, power is highly centralized in the