NGOs, SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN BANGLADESH

M. Rezaul Islam

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For (late) Rejia Begum,
my mother

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CONTENTS

Introduction: NGOs, Social Capital and Community Empowerment

Abstract This introductory chapter provides a brief outline about the capacity of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) towards social capital and community empowerment. This chapter briefly explains the three concepts used in this book e.g., NGO, social capital and community empowerment, and then explains NGOs' position in social capital and community empowerment. Finally, this chapter provides the chapter outline of this book.

Keywords NGO · Social capital · Community employment

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) become an important sector for development in the developing countries like Bangladesh. Due to its socio-economic disadvantages and the lack of governmental supports, NGOs' development initiatives are considered as one of the best alternatives for all aspects of community well-being (economic, social, environmental and cultural) in the country. This becomes a very popular initiative, whereby the community members come together to take a collective action and generate solutions to their common problems. It is considered as a 'grass-roots' process by which a community becomes more responsible; organise and plan together; develop healthy options; empower themselves; reduce ignorance, poverty and suffering; create employment and economic opportunities; and achieve social, economic,

cultural and environmental goals. In the wake of 'flexible accumulation' and intense market competitions under the conditions of neo-liberal globalisation, the international NGOs are playing a significant role in funding and formulating development frameworks in the development activities in many developing countries like Bangladesh. It is said that almost 90 % of the NGOs' funding is coming from foreign donations. As a result, NGOs and donors increasingly face the twin challenges of demonstrating effectiveness in their work and accountability in their relationships with various stakeholders. Donors, on the one hand, are particularly concerned about accountability of NGOs in the efficient and effective delivery of services. NGOs, on the other hand, are often concerned that accountability to donors can overshadow and overwhelm their accountability to communities and to their own missions.

This book has focused on NGOs' development interventions in two development approaches such as social capital and community empowerment. The term 'social capital' has been the subject of great interest and debate in the development literature. It has been elaborated so widely that it is very difficult to explain its theoretical context briefly. NGOs' contribution for social capital is relatively a new area in development studies. Yet both governments and NGOs' social capital formation in Bangladesh is little known (Mondal 2000; Islam and Morgan 2012a; Islam 2015a, 2015b). The theoretical framework of social capital in this book is based on four core elements provided by Robert Putnam (Putnam 1993, 1995). These elements are collective action, social trust, coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits, and sharing norms and values. On the other hand, the concept of 'community empowerment' is one of growing interest in development discourse. The theoretical framework of community empowerment of this book is based on the nine domains provided by Glenn Laverack (Laverack 2006). Community empowerment is advocated by prominent agents in economic and social development, and especially by NGOs. Empowerment enables people to organise and influence change based on their access to knowledge, to political processes and to financial, social and natural resources.

To consider the terminological explanations, we can see that both concepts are very crucial in NGOs' development initiatives. Much ink has been spilt on the question of NGOs, social capital and community empowerment towards development—albeit separately. However, we still lack a complete and coherent account of the complex nexus between of NGOs, social capital and community empowerment. What is the

practicality of NGOs' necessity in developing countries like Bangladesh for development? How are the NGOs' development interventions positioned in the dynamisms of global pressures and local needs? What are the merits of social capital and community empowerment in NGOs' activities? What are the capacities of NGOs in social capital and community empowerment? What is the important role that can be defined of the NGOs' social capital and community empowerment towards development? What challenges and limitations are the NGOs heading? This book provides a comprehensive understanding of NGOs' real capacities with focus on Bangladesh to illustrate a global problem. I believe that while the book focuses on Bangladesh, the implications are international in scope.

As we turn the millennium, a concern is growing again among a new generation of students, but they confront a literature on the NGOs, social capital and community empowerment, which is largely descriptive, dated and does not contain the complex nexus embedded in the flexible accumulation of and powerlessness of the developing countries under neo-liberal globalisation. While teaching courses related to NGOs and social development, we have found that existing books have a few compilations with uneven and disjointed chapters. We have used several books in courses and assembled clippings in course-packs, but the students find themselves wishing to know more about the complex nexus between NGOs, social capital and community empowerment, a more coherent structure with which to understand them. This book will meet the growing needs of this new generation of students, as well as academics, conscious citizens and policymakers.

Chapter 2 provides the background information, for example, country context of Bangladesh, the socio-economic and political realities of the origin of NGOs, their activities and why Bangladesh bothers NGOs. This chapter opens a discussion about NGOs' significant position and the role in development discourse. The massive expansion of the NGO sector in both the north and the south is widely recognised. In the 1980s, the decade of neo-liberalism, the market was seen as the panacea of development and the NGOs were to play an increasingly significant role in development discourse and practice. Since the 1990s, there has been recognition that liberalisation alone is an inadequate response to the social and economic development of developing countries. However, NGOs' corporate responsibilities have been widened largely. In many developing and underdeveloped countries, NGOs were considered as an effective

alternative development agent in international development arena. The aim of this chapter is to address the key issues that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s on the theme of development and NGOs; examine theoretical and policy debates on NGOs, states, civil society and democracy; and critically assess the roles and relationships of development NGOs and international organisations.

Chapter 3 provides the role of NGOs for development with globalisation and indigenous knowledge. First, the chapter provides a discussion on the emergence of NGOs for development. It highlights the main parameters of NGOs. The chapter attempts to integrate various relevant debates of NGOs' activities in the socio-economic, political and cultural development paradigms. It is found that the NGOs have abrasive relationships with state and donors, on the one hand, and global versus local development debates, on the other. The chapter shows how the development challenges might be solved through consulting both local and global knowledge approaches, so that the NGOs can achieve participatory-oriented development interventions according to the choices of the rural mass people in Bangladesh.

Chapter 4 presents a comparative discussion of indigenous and global knowledge approaches within the globalisation process. The chapter highlights and explains each of these concepts, and attempts to establish a significant link with a new role of NGOs for development. The main purpose is to find out the gaps, for example, what are the general explanations of these concepts, and which are effective for Bangladesh?

Chapter 5 elucidates the complex intersection between social capital and community empowerment towards NGOs' development initiatives. The chapter provides a solid theoretical discussion about different aspects of development and then examines how social capital and community empowerment are widening where NGOs' role is significant.

Chapter 6 discusses NGOs' capacity for social capital development with the evidence of two NGOs, for example, Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) and Proshika in Bangladesh with two indigenous communities, for example, blacksmith and goldsmith. This chapter explores NGOs' capacities on the five main elements of social capital such as social network, social trust, sharing norms and values, collective actions and mutual benefits. The main argument is whether the NGOs' capacities were elusive.

Chapter 7 is based on the evidence of the two NGOs, which is linked with Chap. 6. The chapter considers the role of NGOs in terms of their

capacity as agents of community empowerment in Bangladesh. The chapter then investigates the application of community empowerment domains.

Chapter 8, the final chapter of the book, looks at the major limitations and challenges of NGOs' capacities for social capital and community empowerment approaches. This chapter highlights the evidence of two NGOs that are discussed in Chaps. 6 and 7. A growing number of critical assessments suggest that the operational impact of NGOs in socio-economic development is less than claimed. NGOs may pursue a 'service delivery' paradigm, where the provision of services is strictly separated from engagement in the broader polity. In reference to this connection, NGOs become providers of goods to poor 'consumers', rather than 'facilitators' of collective action and empowerment. This growing predominance of service delivery programmes among NGOs is problematic for the goals of empowerment and poverty alleviation. Based on the evidence and literature survey, this chapter shows that the NGOs could not achieve their development targets because of the local dynamics and global pressures. This chapter analyses a number of local dynamisms such as local context, political issues, NGOs' conventional role, NGOs' monolithic development approach, lack of accountability and the global pressures such as lack of local funding and donor dependency, global development frameworks, decentralised management system.

NGOs in the Development Discourse

Abstract This chapter opens a discussion on the significant position of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their role in development discourse. The massive expansion of the NGO sector in both the north and the south is widely recognised in the present time. In the 1980s, the decade of neo-liberalism, the market was seen as the panacea of development and the NGOs were to play an increasingly significant role in development discourse and practice. Since the 1990s, there has been recognition that liberalisation alone is an inadequate response to the social and economic development of developing countries. However, NGOs' corporate responsibilities have been widened largely. In many developing and underdeveloped countries, NGOs are considered as an effective alternative development agent in international development arena. The aim of this chapter is to address the key issues that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s on the theme of development and NGOs, examine theoretical and policy debates on NGOs and critically assess the ongoing debate about the benefits of participation in development.

Keywords NGOs · Non-profit organisations · Development discourse · Socio-economic development · Developing countries · Lack of accountability · NGO management

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2.1   NGOs: Concepts and Background

The literature gives a certain level of confusion about the definitions of the term non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Willetts (2002) argues that there is no generally accepted definition of an NGO and the term carries different connotations in different circumstances as many diverse types of bodies are now described as being NGOs. Lewis (n.d.) mentions that NGOs' definition remains contested. Ulleberg (2009) argues that it is a nearly impossible task to enumerate the various NGO characteristics when it comes to their aims, strategies, resources, target groups, tools, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Lewis (n.d.) further mentions that the world of NGOs contains a bewildering variety of labels. While the term is widely used, there are also many other overlapping terms used such as 'non-profit', 'voluntary' and 'civil society' organisations. However, it must be independent from the direct control of any government. According to Turner and Hulme (1997, 200), 'NGOs are generally registered organizations, community groups, professional associations, trade unions, cooperate charity organizations whose aim is to improve the wellbeing of their members and of those areas in which they exist'. It covers a range of organisations within civil society, from political action groups to sports clubs. To consider this, it can be argued that all NGOs can be regarded as civil society organisations though not all civil society organisations are NGOs. NGOs take different forms and play different roles in different continents, with the NGO sector being most developed in Latin America and parts of Asia. Lewis and Kanji (2009) argue that the roots of NGOs are different according to the geographical and historical context. Cleary (1997) argues that although there is contestation of the definition of an NGO, it is widely accepted that these are organisations which pursue activities to relieve the suffering, promote interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services and undertake community development.

The World Bank defines NGOs as 'private organisations' that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services or undertake community development (Risal 2014). The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD 2004, 6) defines development-oriented NGOs as organisations that 'attempt to improve social, economic and productive conditions and are found both as small community-based organisations (CBOs) at village and district levels, and as large professional development

agencies at state or national level'. NGO is a non-profit, voluntary citizens' group, which is organised on a local, national or international level. An NGO will not be constituted as a political party; it will be non-profit-making, and it will not be a criminal group, in particular, it will be non-violent (Willetts 2002). The United States Agency for International Development understands NGOs as a wide range of local organisations, particularly in the developing countries, operating various development activities largely with the financial, technical and material assistance of wealthy countries (Schuller 2007).

The nature and structure of NGOs vary considerably. Many NGOs are now recognised as grass-roots organisations (locally based groups) or community-based organisations. Both are active at the national or even the global level (Mostashari 2005). Lewis (n.d.) distinguishes between 'northern NGO' (NNGO) and 'southern NGO' (SNGO). The NNGO refers to organisations whose origins lie in the industrialised countries, while the SNGO refers to organisations from the less developed areas of the world. Lewis further mentions that another key distinction is between membership forms of NGO, such as community-based organisations or people's organisations, and intermediary forms of NGO that work from outside with communities, sometimes termed grass-roots support organisations. There are also numerous examples of bogus NGOs, such as those established as fronts by government (government-organised NGOs) or 'briefcase' NGOs set-up by individuals for personal gain (Lewis, n.d.).

Lewis and Kanji (2009, 10) mentioned NGO as a 'third-sector organisation'. According to them, a third-sector organisation has the following five key characteristics: (1) it is formal, that is, the organisation is institutionalised in that it has regular meetings, office bearers and some organisational permanence; (2) it is private in that it is institutionally separate from government, though it may receive some support from government; (3) it is non-profit distributing, and if a financial surplus is generated it does not accrue to owners or directors (often termed the 'non-distribution constraint'); (4) it is self-governing and therefore able to control and manage its own affairs; and (5) finally, it is voluntary, and even if it does not use volunteer staff as such, there is at least some degree of voluntary participation in the conduct or management of the organisation, such as in the form of a voluntary board of governors. A more common-sense definition focuses instead on the idea that NGOs are organisations concerned with the promotion of social,

political or economic change—an agenda that is usually associated with the concept of 'development'.

The term NGO came into currency in 1945 because of the need for the United Nations (UN) to differentiate in its Charter between participation rights for intergovernmental specialised agencies and those for international private organisations. According to the UN, all types of private bodies can be recognised as NGOs, but should be independent from government control, not seeking to challenge governments either as a political party or by a narrow focus on human rights, non-profit-making and non-criminal (Willetts 2002). We can see that due to the weakening of ideological political parties and the retreat of the state from providing social entitlements and services, in response to structural adjustment policies imposed on most Third World countries by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and under the pressure of neo-liberal reforms (Edwards and Hulme 1995). Some see NGOs as the product of neo-liberal policies, as financially dependent on neo-liberal sources and as directly involved in competing with sociopolitical movements for the allegiance of local leaders and activist communities (Petras 1997). Others see them as mechanisms organised for the 'creation of civil society by external intervention' (Sampson 1996, 121–122). In this case, the conflict between NGO and civil society becomes an important issue in development history. A number of studies emphasise the negative impact of NGOs on social movements (Petras 1997) and explore the impact of what has been termed 'NGOisation' on mobilisation and social action (Jad 2007).

Ebrahim (2001) sees NGOs development from the shifts in development thought, policy and practice over time. He mentions that beginning with the establishment of the Bretton Woods institutions after World War II, the objective of NGOs' activities changed dramatically. The development programmes of governments in the south and of international organisations and aid agencies in the north shifted from an emphasis on large-scale infrastructure, industry and agriculture in the 1950s and 1960s, to a 'basic needs' focus on individuals and families in the 1970s. The NGOs' functions concentrated on the participation, sustainable development and gender equity in the 1980s, more recently, on issues of economic liberalisation and civil society (Fisher 1997). Willetts (2002) and Nelson (2002) explain the origin of NGOs with the role of UN, World Bank and the USA (Boxes 2.1 and 2.2).

Box 2.1 The origin of NGOs with the role of the UN and the USA
The term NGO was not in general currency before the UN was formed. When 132 international NGOs decided to cooperate with each other in 1910, they did so under the label the Union of International Associations. The League of Nations officially referred to its 'liaison with private organisations', while many of these bodies at that time called themselves international institutes, international unions or simply international organisations. The first draft of the UN Charter did not make any mention of maintaining cooperation with private bodies. A variety of groups, mainly but not solely from the USA, lobbied to rectify this at the San Francisco conference, which established the UN in 1945. Not only did they succeed in introducing a provision for strengthening and formalising the relations with private organisations previously maintained by the League, they greatly enhanced the UN's role in economic and social issues and upgraded the status of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to a 'principal organ' of the UN. To clarify matters, new terminology was introduced to cover ECOSOC's relationship with two types of international organisations. Under Article 70, 'specialised agencies, established by intergovernmental agreement' could 'participate without a vote in its deliberations', while under Article 71 'non-governmental organisations' could have 'suitable arrangements for consultation'. Thus, 'specialised agencies' and 'NGOs' became technical UN jargon. Unlike much UN jargon, the term NGO passed into popular usage, particularly from the early 1970s onwards.
Source: Willetts (2002).

Box 2.2 The origin of NGOs with the role of World Bank
Between 1980 and the present, NGOs developed and learned a set of political strategies that are well adapted to influencing development and environmental policy issues at the World Bank. Here, their approach made consistent use of eight political strategies shaped by the World Bank's institutional, professional and political environment. The strategies are built around network advocacy, internationalising local issues by focusing on the World Bank's role in domestic policy,

and drawing heavily on the support of the US government to reform and regulate World Bank policy. By the late 1990s, however, many of the same organisations involved in advocacy at the World Bank had become engaged in a broader set of economic policy and trade issues. These issues have required new and different political strategies, forcing NGOs to relearn—even to 'unlearn'—political lessons gained in work on the World Bank. The political and institutional factors that require this political retooling include both the political environment of trade and financial policymaking and the need to relate to growing 'anti-globalisation' social movements whose political approaches differ sharply from those of most NGOs.

Source: Nelson (2002).

Lewis (n.d.) argues that NGOs have existed in various forms for centuries, but they rose to high prominence in international development and increased their numbers dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s. He added that NGOs had been active at the international level since the eighteenth century in Western countries, when national-level issue-based organisations focused on the abolition of the slave trade and movements for peace. By the start of the twentieth century, there were NGO associations promoting their identities and agendas at national and international levels. It is widely accepted that the scope of NGOs working in social development has grown exponentially in the last several decades. Banks and Hulme (2012) classified the trend of NGOs into five different times on the basis of the rising prominence such as until the late 1970s, the late 1970s to 1980s, the late 1990s, 2000s and 2010s (Box 2.3).

Box 2.3 The rising prominence of NGOs

Until the late 1970s: A limited number of small NGOs receiving little external support constitute the NGO sector. Most are northern-based with a southern presence, often based on religious assistance and/or in short-term relief.

Late 1970s to 1980s: 'The NGO decade' takes place amidst the Western pursuit of neo-liberal agendas, with NGOs emerging as a promising development alternative.

Late 1990s: Alongside emergence of the good governance agenda, the first concerns surrounding NGOs take off alongside a focus back on the role of the state.

2000s: A new international aid regime promises greater consultation and focus on non-growth factors. NGOs with their people-centred, rights-based and grass-roots-driven approaches are well suited to continue riding the NGO wave.

2010s: With persistent concerns of NGOs remaining unaddressed and recognition of their limited success in advocacy and empowerment, there is increasing recognition that NGOs are only one sector within broader civil society and they must reorient themselves with their grass roots.
Source: Banks and Hulme (2012).

2.2   NGOs for What and for Whom

Most of the NGOs are working towards the development and well-being for the marginalised and disadvantaged people. Hailey and James (2004) argue that NGOs have a social change mission and specifically work with the vulnerable people and marginalised groups who have often been ignored or overlooked by government services and the mainstream social services. Murtaza (2012) states that NGOs were recognised as successful agents over the last two decades in helping improve the lives of marginalised communities in developing countries through programme and advocacy work. Bromideh (2011) thinks that the NGOs have been pivotal in providing food to the most marginalised people. In developing countries, NGOs often provide essential services that in developed countries governmental agencies or institutions would provide. In general, NGOs are also the source and centre of social justice to the marginalised members of society in developing countries or less developed (failed states). Hailey and James (2004) consider NGOs as 'intermediary organisations' which make a bridge between the donors and beneficiaries. This sector constantly responds to multiple constituencies or clients. There is also a new awareness of the important role of leadership in the development of the NGO

community and the powerful influence of individual leaders in shaping the destiny of local NGOs.

NGOs sometimes have been criticised robustly due to their commercial attitude. This sector is now aggressively pursuing profit-making business enterprise in the major economic sector. The literature shows that many NGOs in developing countries such as Bangladesh have become rent-seeking organisations (Islam and Morgan 2012a) because they charge the highest interest rate (20–30 %) on loans given to the poor, while they themselves receive massive financial assistance from governments and foreign donors at rates of 3% (Molla et al. 2008). Due to NGOs' multiple objectives and diversity of work, it is difficult to know precisely how many NGOs are in the world or even in a country. Some authors put the figure at a million organisations, if both formal and informal organisations are included, while the number of registered NGOs receiving international aid is probably closer to 'a few hundred thousand' (Lewis n.d.). The UN estimates that there were about 35,000 large established NGOs in 2000. There are no accurate figures available for resources that NGOs receive from aid, contracts and private donations. In 2004, it was estimated that NGOs were responsible for about US$23 billion of total aid money or approximately one-third of total Official Development Assistance (ODA) (Riddell 2007, 53).

2.3   NGOs in Global Development Discourse

The role of NGOs in development discourse has been discussed widely. Here, development discourse refers not only to how development is described or talked about, but to also how it is thought about (e.g., its underlying assumptions) and practised (Ebrahim 2001, 80). Perceptions of NGOs in development have been discussed in both positive and negative ways. Some have argued that they are flexible, innovative and efficient vehicles for the delivery of basic services and poverty alleviation, and that they reach poor communities and remote areas at a lower cost than governments (Islam and Morgan 2012a, 2012b; Islam 2014a, 2014b). Vivian (1994) explains NGOs' role as the 'magic bullets' of development. NGOs identify genuine local needs, promote participation and transfer appropriate technologies. Others have argued that most NGOs are started and controlled by charismatic individuals who necessarily limit participatory decision-making (Wood 1997), and that any evidence of NGOs' effectiveness remains weak (Edwards and Hulme 1995). Khandker

(1998) found that in South Asia, Grameen Bank built a worldwide reputation for its work and now operates its activities in a number of other countries. They claim that its credit programmes for poor rural women in Bangladesh attain repayment rates consistently over 90% and that they are entirely self-financed.

Over the past 20 years, there has been a dramatic shift in the provision of basic services in many developing countries (Lewis n.d.). NGOs are now recognised as key third-sector actors on the landscapes of development, human rights, humanitarian action, environment and many other areas of public action. NGOs' social service activities such as services in health care, education and rural credit bring many positive changes among the vulnerable and disadvantaged poor people. This is attributable, in part, to the increasing role of NGOs in development assistance. Whereas 20% of the World Bank-financed projects approved in 1989 included some NGO or CBO involvement, that figure was 47% in 1997. A survey of the World Bank projects approved between 1985 and 1997 found that the institution channelled $1.3 billion of development assistance through NGOs in seven countries alone (Fruttero and Gauri 2005). NGOs' contributions towards development have been highlighted in some other ways such as building good networking, transforming knowledge, campaigning policy advocacy and aiding from international organisations. Roberts et al. (2005) state that people benefit from the links among NGOs and the transfer of knowledge across these relationships. NGO network 'groups of three or more civil society organizations or NGOs that pursue shared purpose' (Ashman and Sugawata 2013, 394) have become key instruments used by NGOs. On the other hand, NGOs are found as high-profile actors in the field of international development, both as providers of services to vulnerable individuals and communities, and as campaigning policy advocates. NGOs could help scale-up international aid efforts by raising financial resources from private donors. The mobilisation of private donations has attracted little attention in the recent literature, even though NGOs are widely considered to play an increasingly important role in supplementing official aid resources (Lewis and Kanji 2009). For instance, McCleary and Barro (2008) reported that more than 40% of development aid by the USA is channelled through NGOs. From the perspective of individual NGOs, whether additional aid funds can be mobilised mainly depends on how private donations react to the 'marketing' efforts of NGOs. In particular, NGOs attempt to attract higher donations by strengthening their development orientation, reducing

unproductive overheads, better targeting of aid activities and offering options to earmark private donations (Nunnenkamp and Öhler 2012).

Nowadays, NGOs have emerged as an alternative development discourse and contributed to state-provided public services and processes through information provision and tactical support, making services and policies more relevant, responsive and effective. The donor-funded partnership offers much promise in supporting these contributions and improving the relationship between governments and NGOs. NGOs are also active in a wide range of other specialised roles such as democracy building, conflict resolution, human rights work, cultural preservation, environmental activism, policy analysis, research and information provision (Lewis n.d.). Cernea (1988, 8) has argued that NGOs embodied 'a philosophy that recognizes the centrality of people in development policies', and gave them certain 'comparative advantages' over government and public sector. For example, Fruttero and Gauri (2005) stated that with multifaceted development interventions 'Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) strives to bring about changes in the quality of life of people'. Two Bangladeshi NGOs in their brochures reveal that Grameen Bank provides credit to the poorest of the poor in rural Bangladesh without any collateral. At Grameen Bank, credit is a cost-effective weapon to fight poverty and it serves as a catalyst in the overall socio-economic development; and 'poverty reduction programmes undertaken so far have bypassed many of the poorest. In this context, one of BRAC's focuses is the ultra-poor' (Lewis and Kanji 2009).

NGOs play an increasingly important role in the delivery of public services in developing countries, but little systematic evidence is available about their strategic choices (Fruttero and Gauri 2005). The fragile and fragmented character of formal political institutions, coupled with the availability of donor aid, led to the emergence during the 1990s of thousands of NGOs in Bangladesh (Lewis 2008). This sector is particularly high public profile and occupies centre stage in the development landscape of the country (Devine 2003, 228; Islam 2014b). This sector is one of the most sophisticated national development networks in the world. There are nearly 22,000 NGOs operating in the country, and, of these, approximately 1,250 receive foreign assistance (Devine 2003, 229). NGOs operate in more than 78% of the rural villages, and their activities directly benefit 35% of the entire population (Thornton et al. 2000). Most of the NGOs' development activities target the vulnerable and poor people. They offer a wide range of services that are fundamental to these people's daily struggle to survive.

These include credit, education, health, agricultural extension and sanitation. NGOs' objectives are to empower these people in terms of their awareness and participation in development activities and improve their financial and social capitals towards quality of life (Islam 2014b). NGOs in Bangladesh contribute some 3–4% of gross domestic product based on an estimate of the microcredit operations of NGOs. The NGOs' share of total aid to Bangladesh rose from 14% in the first half of the 1990s to 24% in 2006 (World Bank 2006). Funds committed to NGOs have doubled since 2006 (NGO Affairs Bureau of Bangladesh 2009).

NGOs have become very popular to the poor people in Bangladesh. This sector is fostering local participation as they are more locally rooted organisations, and therefore closer to marginalised people than most officials are (Islam and Morgan 2012a; Islam 2014a, 2015b). Poor people are often found to have been bypassed by existing public services since many government agencies face resource shortages and elites (Islam 2014b) often capture their decision-making processes. Many also claimed that NGOs were generally operating at a lower cost due to their use of voluntary community input. However, NGOs are seen as possessing the scope to experiment and innovate with alternative ideas and approaches to development. Some NGOs are bringing a set of new and progressive development agendas of participation, gender, environment and empowerment that are beginning to capture the imagination of many development activists at this time (Lewis and Kanji 2009).

Despite these benefits, the importance attached to accountability by NGOs varies significantly. In a study of over 600 NGOs globally, Scholte (2003) found that despite their emphasis on it in principle, most NGOs had given little practical attention to the issue. On the other hand, Murtaza (2012, 111) argued that the accountability of NGOs is currently strongest to boards and donors and weakest to peer groups and communities. It also reveals that NGOs can best achieve the twin objectives of enhancing their own performance and protecting themselves from politically motivated attacks by voluntarily developing coordinated, peer-driven and community-focused accountability mechanisms. The issue of accountability in NGOs' activities is seen as very ignorant and NGOs give very little value to their work (Islam 2014b). Lee (2004) identified the following key questions to help develop NGO accountability frameworks: (1) To whom is the NGO accountable to (to this, we add the question of 'why')? (2) What is the NGO accountable for? (3) How is the NGO accountable? Grant and Keohane (2005) identified two sets of entities which are entitled to hold

someone else to account: (1) those entities that have delegated authority or resources to another entity, and (2) those entities that are exposed to the effects of the actions of another entity. These two categories lead to several different types of accountability: (1) administrative (based on managerial oversight), (2) legal (based on contractual relationships and judicial authority), (3) moral (based on ethical values voluntarily accepted by an entity), (4) political (based on constituent relationships) and (5) professional (based on peer relationships with other similar professionals) (Murtaza 2012). One of the contested issues about development NGOs is their contribution to the political participation of the poor. While there is general consensus that in the long run disadvantaged groups can improve their lot only when they get politically organised and obtain a share of state power, there is a clear disagreement over what role development NGOs play in this regard. Many authors, for example, Fisher (1997), agree that NGOs can and do promote the political association of disadvantaged groups in an admirable way. On the other hand, critics see NGOs as instruments for maintaining elite interests and continued subordination (Islam and Morgan 2012a).

As NGOs in Bangladesh and elsewhere have grown in scale and scope, there has been a concomitant growth in debate about NGO operations, performance and accountability (Gauri and Galef 2005; Murtaza 2012). Increased dependency on foreign donors has created doubts over Bangladeshi NGOs' ability to support a civil society acceptable to the Bangladeshi population. In particular, concerns have been raised regarding NGOs' downward accountabilities, principally to beneficiaries, as NGOs are meeting what are seen as unnecessarily onerous upward accountabilities to foreign donors and to governmental regulatory authorities (Harrison 2007; Mir and Bala 2015). Islam (2014b) found that NGOs faced a number of challenges, including lack of understanding about the local context, initiatives to localise global development tools, developing partnership and space for local people in the development processes. They argued that without securing development ownership the NGOs' activities towards community empowerment of vulnerable people would not be possible.

Despite the popular discourse about the empowering role of development NGOs, little evidence can be found of development NGOs addressing the social structural causes of poverty or contributing to the political participation of the poor. Fruttero and Gauri (2005) argued that their analysis does not find strong support for the claim that NGOs were

targeting poverty, at least at the level of villages in which they chose to locate. In fact, in most regressions the coefficients on indicators of need (poverty gap, literacy, percentage of landless) are not significant. This is not to suggest that beneficence plays no role in NGO activities. There are countless individuals in Bangladesh, as in other countries, for whom volunteerism and personal sacrifice, a special concern for the poor irrespective of where programmes are located, and the appeal of a higher calling are why they work in NGOs. Ulvila and Hossain (2002) reported that most of these NGOs in Bishwanathpur village in Bangladesh and in Markhu village in Nepal were found to be non-political and development-oriented in nature. Typically, the development NGOs pay no or little attention to the oppressive power structures or to the promotion of political participation of the poor. This, in effect, easily leads to the establishment of non-governmental bureaucracies favourable to elite interests. Relations between development NGOs and local elites have been depicted as a kind of antagonism from two aspects. First, the local elites may oppose an NGO if the organisation collapses the existing balance of power by supporting elites' clients. Second, the private sector, which traditionally has been controlled by local elites in rural areas, sees in NGOs a market rival (Makita 2009; Islam and Morgan 2012a).

2.4   Conclusions

Today, NGO is a dominant ideology being pushed around the world. With huge diversity in terms of definitions, types and nature of works, NGOs have become an alternative agent in the development discourse. The scaling up of NGOs in the global arena started after World War II and became popular especially in the underdeveloped and developing countries, where the government public services are poor for the mass people. Despite some criticisms such as the lack of accountability, high administrative cost, bureaucracy, lack of people's participation, political involvement, dependency of foreign donation and lack of transparency, NGOs' contributions have become very popular due to their huge positive impacts on social awareness, education, public health, poverty alleviation, disaster mitigation, human rights, women empowerment and rural development.

Bangladesh and the Emergence of NGOs for Development

Abstract NGOs have become an important development agent in Bangladesh. This sector is increasingly becoming important because of claims that they are efficient and effective; they are innovative, flexible, independent and responsive to the problems of poor people at the grass-roots level (Bagci 2007). The growth of such NGOs over the past four decades in Bangladesh has given an increasingly important role and has led them to forming a distinctive sector within civil society. Over this time, NGOs have been engaged in all sectors of social life like relief, rehabilitation, health, education, development programmes, peace, human rights, environment, and so on. They have been using finance raised from voluntary, private sources and donor agencies, and managing themselves autonomously at local, national and international levels (Bagci 2007; Gauri and Galef 2005). In the last chapter, we have seen that NGOs vary widely according to size, sector of activity, religious orientation, their functions (service providers, social movements, networks or apex organisations), their relationships to donors, their organisational sophistication and other factors. The effects of 'massive proliferation' are perhaps nowhere more evident than in Bangladesh, which has one of the largest and most sophisticated NGO sectors in the developing world (Gauri and Galef 2005). It is said that over 90 % of villages in the country had at least one NGO (Fruttero and Gauri 2005), and foreign assistance to the country channelled through NGOs has been above 10%. This chapter provides a discussion on the emergence of NGOs for development. It

also highlights the main parameters of NGOs. The chapter attempts to integrate various relevant debates of NGOs' activities in the socio-economic, political and cultural development paradigms. It was found that the NGOs have abrasive relationships with state and donors, on the one hand, and global versus local development debates, on the other. The chapter shows how the development challenges might be resolved through consulting both local and global knowledge approaches, so that the NGOs can achieve participatory-oriented development interventions according to the choices of the rural people in Bangladesh. The chapter also explains the determinant factors of how NGOs have become homes for Bangladesh and why Bangladesh bothers NGOs.

Keywords Bangladesh · Socio-economic · Development · Poverty alleviation · Microcredit · NGO financing · Foreign donation

3.1   Country Context: Bangladesh

Bangladesh achieved its independence in 1971, but has deep-rooted traditions and cultural practices. Bangladesh took the inspiration for an independent state from the historic language movement of 21 February 1952, which remains a milestone and a red-letter day for the people of Bangladesh, who had fought long and hard to achieve democracy. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has been a parliamentary democracy since 1991. As a developing country, Bangladesh is progressing gradually, though many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not yet achieved, partially due to its high population growth rate (World Bank 2005). As the Malthusian theory suggests, the country is struggling with the contest between population control and depleting resources. Largely, due to the limitations of the government initiatives, the NGO is increasingly becoming a necessary sector for development in Bangladesh (Devine 2003, 228; Islam and Morgan 2012a; Islam 2015a).

Etymologically, the word 'Bangladesh' is derived from the cognate 'Vanga', which was first mentioned in the Hindu scripture *Aitareya Aranyaka* (composed between 500 B.C. and A.D. 500). Another school of thought defines the term 'Vanga' as derived from *Bodo* (aborigines of Assam) words 'Bang' and 'la', which connote 'wide plains'. Bangladesh is located in south Asia, between 20°34′ and 26°38′ north latitude and

between 88°01′ and 92°41′ east longitude. The country is bordered on the east, west and north by India except for a small strip of boundary with Myanmar on the southeast. The Bay of Bengal lies on the south, and the Himalayas are close to its border in the northwest. According to the last Census 2011, the total area is 147,570 km², with a population of 149,772,364 (79% of whom live in the countryside), crisscrossed by numerous rivers including the Padma, Meghna, Jamuna and Brahmaputra, and their innumerable distributaries and tributaries. The country's capital and largest city is Dhaka (population 12,797,394). The commercial capital and largest sea port is Chittagong (3,858,093) and other major cities are Khulna (1,388,425) and Rajshahi (775,495) (GoB 2011). The total divisions are 8, districts 64, upazilas 545, unions 4,543, villages 87,223, households 32,173,630 and city corporations 6.

3.2 Origin of NGOs in Bangladesh: Socio-Economic and Political Realities

The development context of Bangladesh is related to the country's overall socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. Bangladesh got its independence from Pakistan in 1971 with a socialist ideology to free the mass of people from hunger and exploitation, and equal the distribution of power and resources. Bangladesh was ruled by a number of political parties: a parliamentary democracy (1971–1975, 1991–1995), a one-party socialist rule (BAKSAL in 1975), multiparty political party (1975–1981) and military government (1981–1990). The ruling parties were the Bangladesh Awami League (BAL),[1] Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Bangladesh Jatio Party (BJP). However, the military governments for a long period ruled Bangladesh. On 11 January 2007, following widespread violence, a caretaker government was appointed to administer the next general election. The country had suffered from extensive corruption, disorder and political violence. The new caretaker government made it a priority to root out corruption from all levels of government. To this end, many notable politicians and officials, along with large numbers of lesser officials and party members, were arrested on corruption charges. The caretaker government held a fair and free election on 29 December 2008. BAL's Sheikh Hasina won the elections with a landslide victory and took the oath of prime minister on 6 January 2009 and is continuing her regime.

The country's development is stated clearly in the state's constitution, and Bangladesh is committed to implement its constitutional procedures. Article 16 states: 'The state shall adopt effective measures to bring about a radical transformation in the rural areas through the promotion of an agricultural revolution, the provision of rural electrification, the development of cottage and other industries, and the improvement of education, communications and public health in those areas so as progressively to remove the disparity in the standards of living between the urban and the rural areas'. By inference, I get a directive to address the disparity in the standards of living. Again, Article 19 (2) states: 'The state shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality between men and women and to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens and of opportunities in order to attain a uniform level of economic development throughout the republic' (GoB 2008, 18). Nevertheless, practically the country failed to implement these constitutional procedures. The state policy of socialism was hardly taken seriously and was formally deleted from the country's constitution during the Ershad regime. The operation of the nationalised industries, previously abandoned by their Pakistani owners, was driven by the objective of enriching a few politically favoured private individuals. The initial process of private sector development, as pursued during the regime of General Ziaur Rahman, turned out to be an early version of what is now called 'crony capitalism'. Largely, Bangladesh did not see any significant reversal of reforms, even as governments changed, because both the large parties (BAL and BNP) were broadly committed to carrying out the same economic reform agenda (Mahmud et al. 2008).

It is important to emphasise that the economy of Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable economies in the world, characterised by an extremely high population density, a low resource base, high incidence of natural disasters and persistent sociopolitical instability, especially during the initial years of the state. Moreover, the country inherited a war-ravaged economy after the Independence War. With such extremely adverse initial circumstances, the implications for economic growth were considered extremely unfavourable for Bangladesh. In effect, with extremely bleak development prospects, the predominant theme that persisted during the initial years was one of negative images. Sen et al. (2004, 1) argue that Bangladesh was considered a model of extremities and odds of human existence, an example of a hopeless future, a case of constant fear of some hidden disasters in the making and a permanent cause of liberal conscience

and global welfarism. They add that the country was regarded as a 'landscape of disaster' and a 'catalogue of woes'. Such pessimistic appraisals defined a development discourse that conditioned the mind-set of the domestic policymakers as well as the external donors for the subsequent two decades. The 'agrarian pessimists' highlighted the importance of traditional production relations constraining the future developments of productive forces. Similarly, 'persistent authoritarianism' was considered as the ultimate political fate of Bangladesh (Sen et al. 2004, 1).

Bangladesh already had 6 long-term (5 years) plans, 2 medium (2 years), 2 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (2005–2008 and 2008–2011) plans and 44 annual (yearly) development plans. The 'poverty' issue has been identified as one of the most important problems in the country. A number of programmes and projects such as agriculture, rural development, primary and mass education, health and family welfare, women and children affairs, and labour and employment are considered for poverty alleviation. The social sectors of the government include the poverty-related projects such as agriculture, education, youth and sports, mass communication, cultural affairs and public administration. It was seen that social development and poverty alleviation projects work as supportive efforts to achieve the planning goals in Bangladesh. The social safety net programme of the present budget is of unique character and very extensive in nature.

The Government of Bangladesh has taken the human factor as the instrument as well as the ultimate objective of development. Since it is being gradually recognised that people must be the focus of development for poverty to be alleviated on a sustainable basis, productive capacity of the poor must be raised. The Fifth Five Year Plan in 1997–2002 stated that the best way to do so is to raise the quality of human capital. Therefore, human resources development has been accepted by the Government of Bangladesh as the most powerful and effective strategy for poverty alleviation. The liability of a large population in this most densely populated country can be transformed into a most valuable asset through human resources development. It is seen that the policies aim at promoting a development process that ensures equitable access to benefits, particularly for the poor and the disadvantaged groups, including women and children and their empowerment. The target of all public policies is to create built-in mechanisms for equitable growth. The efforts are now increasingly directed towards combining resources with social mobilisation, local capacity building, environmental sustainability, gender

equality and with participation in and ownership of development activities. Such actions include both targeted interventions that focus on the needs, interests and rights of the poor and disadvantaged groups as well as structural reforms and administrative reorganisation for good governance to create an enabling environment for their economic, social and political empowerment.

The poverty issue in rural areas is more vulnerable and fragile than in the urban areas. In rural areas, poverty refers to forms of economic, social and psychological deprivation, occurring among people lacking sufficient ownership, control or access to resources for the minimum required level of living. It is widely recognised that a multidimensional, problem-solving mechanism is needed to face this challenge. The Planning Commission of Bangladesh recognises that, despite some progress in poverty alleviation and social sector development in Bangladesh, much remains to be done. The Rural Development and Cooperatives Division of the Government is responsible for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating rural development programmes. The Bangladesh Rural Development Board, the Department of Cooperatives and the Academies for Rural Development at Comilla and Bogra play important roles for rural development. The major functions of the rural development agencies include employment and income generation, provision of credit and institutional support to rural target groups, vulnerable group development, formation of rural cooperatives, provision of health care, sanitation, safe drinking water, education, etc.

A number of international organisations, such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2008), Department for International Development (DFID) (2009) and World Bank (2008), together with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB 2007), state that the country is progressing day by day, many businesses are doing well and decades of steady economic growth have helped many people get out of poverty. Many international NGOs, such as DFID, International Labour Organisation (ILO), CARE Bangladesh, ADB and UNESCO, are working with the government sector to stimulate more investment so that it brings economic opportunities for millions of poor people, including the extreme poor. To review the overall development in Bangladesh, the World Bank (2008 in Mahmud et al. 2008) states that Bangladesh has, in recent decades, achieved reasonably rapid economic growth and significant progress in social development indicators such as sustained macroeconomic stability, improved health and education, gender parity in primary and secondary education, and a steady

decline in poverty levels. Still the country needs to concentrate to achieve the goals of the MDGs, and Bangladesh is committed to achieving these by 2020. The goals are included in the country's first PRSP, *Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction,* and were addressed by the reports of the 12 thematic groups that helped prepare the strategy paper. Both the Medium-term Budgetary Framework and the Annual Development Programme have also been tuned to the MDGs. In this regard, the Government of Bangladesh (Government of Bangladesh (GoB) 2007) states that with 8 years remaining for these goals to be fulfilled, this mid-term review will help guide government policies. Sen et al. (2004, 2) argue that in recent years Bangladesh has graduated into the league of 'medium human development', according to the global ranking of the UNDP.

It is agreed that the overall development in Bangladesh is slow, and a number of explanations are offered for this slow progress. I think the major impediments are the desperate initial conditions after gaining independence, lack of resources, natural disasters, widespread corruption and a record of systemic governance failure. Mahmud (2008) argues that the development strategy and the associated economic environment in Bangladesh since the early 1970s have undergone successive shifts and refinements, often linked with change in the ruling political regime. He adds that it was out of pragmatism that the shift in policy away from socialism to private sector development was initiated within a few years of gaining independence. Now Bangladesh faces the enormous challenge of achieving accelerated economic growth and alleviating the massive poverty that afflicts 40–50%. Ahluwalia and Mahmud (2004) argue that the strategies for meeting this challenge have included a shift away from state bureaucratic controls and industrial autarky towards economic liberalisation and integration with the global economy, on the one hand, and building human capital and empowering the poor, on the other. Policies of substantial budgetary allocations for health and education (admittedly within a small total resource base) were also combined with institutional innovations and public–private partnership to venture to develop a human capital base from the very poor initial conditions. The market-oriented liberalising policy reforms were initiated around the mid-1980s with the support of the IMF and the World Bank, and have been followed through since then in various phases. Although aid conditionality did have an important leveraging role, the sequencing, design and implementation of these reforms had much to do with the political incentives in relation to

the economic rationale of such policies. It is generally agreed that economic reforms in Bangladesh have not been matched by progress in building the institutions of political and economic governance (Mahmud et al. 2008).

Despite the history of democratic processes, Bangladesh has its share of the acute syndromes of a fractured polity, bad governance, convulsive society, a dual economy and a political leadership with irreconcilable beliefs, symbols and prejudices. Corruption and poor governance are impeding Bangladesh's efforts to reduce its massive poverty by reducing economic growth and lowering the achievement of social objectives. These can destroy citizens' faith in their government; they also discourage the foreign and domestic investment, which Bangladesh needs so badly, and they undermine the ability of Bangladesh's development partners to sustain their support for the country. The UNDP (2006, 1–2) reported that governance in Bangladesh is on the brink, in large part due to pervasive corruption and élite capture of the state. However, the country is seen by many as mired in a 'crisis of governance' and experiencing 'degraded and deadlocked democracy'. Fifteen years of multiparty rule has not resulted in the consolidation of electoral democracy. The political system has become dysfunctional, institutions have become unresponsive and a systemic lack of respect for and enforcement of the rule of law is generally observed. It is seen that democratically elected governments have fallen far short of delivering on their promises to promote economic prosperity, social justice and attend to the peoples' welfare.

Within these socio-economic and political paradigms, the NGO sector became an inevitable agent for accelerating its socio-economic conditions. The literature shows a number of reasons why the NGO sector flourishes in Bangladesh. The root of the NGOs in Bangladesh is from the colonial period, when private charities and philanthropic groups were formed to establish or maintain schools, hospitals and orphanages. While NGOs existed in the former East Pakistan, the impetus for the birth of the development NGOs in Bangladesh came in the wake of the terrible cyclone of 1970 and the War of Independence in 1971 (ADB 1999, 1). Initially, NGOs were raised at relief and reconstruction. On the other hand, Jackson and Islam (2005, 47–48) claimed that the reason was the shortage of government funds, with Bangladesh increasingly dependent on international donors. The expansion and legitimation of NGOs as influential partners in socio-economic development began largely in the 1980s. According to some sources, the proliferation of NGOs in

Bangladesh emerged as one of the mainstream development interventions to address poverty alleviation and female empowerment only since 1990 (Newaz 2003). There are three important factors that encourage NGOs' expansion in development activities: NGOs' success stories, the aid agencies' use of NGOs for development activities and the NGOs' increased funding sources from both the government and foreign donors (Haque 2002). The ADB (1999, 2) reports that the need for NGOs started when inefficiencies in delivery of goods and services led the government, with support from its development partners, to take measures to break monopolies and allow the market mechanism to operate. The vacuum created by the failure of either the government or the market to deliver services was filled by NGOs. Now development (CD) and NGOs' activities are synonymous in Bangladesh.

3.3   NGOs' Activities in Bangladesh: Hopes for Development

In its broadest sense, the term 'NGO' refers to organisations (1) not based in government and (2) not created to earn profit (ADB 1998). On the basis of size, the NGOs can be classified as big, medium and small. From a purposive point of view, NGOs can be single-purpose-based or multiple-purpose-based (Haque 2002, 415). On the other hand, based on source of funding, working coverage and status, NGOs can be classified into three: international, national and local NGOs. There are contradictory opinions regarding how many NGOs are working in Bangladesh. According to the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) and ADAB, by late 2004 there were 1,882 NGOs registered with the NGOAB, with around 1,100–1,200 receiving foreign funds (World Bank 2006). The NGOAB (2009) lists 2,418 NGOs, but the increase of NGOs in Bangladesh is an issue of concern. The NGO News (2015) reported that now 2,333 NGOs are working in Bangladesh (as on 1 January 2015). The World Bank (2006, 11) states that there are 2,000 NGOs working in Bangladesh, and the bank identifies Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Association for Social Advancement (ASA), Grameen Bank and Proshika as big NGOs, which accounted for 85% of all donors' funding to NGOs. They employ 10,000 employees and handle multi-million dollar budgets. These big NGOs have also provided models for the programmes and organisational structures and practices to others.

Fruttero and Gauri (2005) mention that by 2000 more than 90% of rural communities had some NGO presence. Around 13 million, mainly poor women, are now reached through microfinance programmes, some 80% of primary enrolment is provided by NGO schools, and there are nation-wide health and sanitation programmes, where NGOs are involved. The World Bank (2006, 3) shows that one key factor in the rapid growth of the sector has undoubtedly been the availability of foreign aid: grants to NGOs averaged $160 million annually in the first half of the 1990s, and has grown to about $238 million annually since then.

Development through NGOs has been a landmark in developing countries such as Bangladesh; their contributions have been defined in many ways, such as 'democratisation of development' (Clark 1991), 'sources of development alternatives', 'vehicle for popular participation' (Farrington et al. 1993), 'advocates for the poor' and 'cost effective and efficient' (Nel et al. 2001; Bebbington 2004). Newaz (2003) describes these innovative approaches as conscientisation, holistic and minimalist. The 'conscientising' approach suggests the poor are systematically disorganised by the economic, social and political relationships. It holds that the only long-term solution to the problems of poverty is to assist the poor in challenging the relationships with increasing awareness and help them become organised so that they can use solidarity as a means of escaping their exploitations—social, economic and political. The 'holistic' approach should be focused on non-formal education, social and political awareness building, and political mobilisation to confront patriarchal power structure, particularly for women, to address the gender subordination. On the other hand, the 'minimalist' approach supports providing credit with minimal training or other supplementary support services to generate income (Ahmad 2006; Newaz 2003).

Most NGOs in Bangladesh provide a strikingly homogenous set of services, with credit dominating. The World Bank (2006) reports a survey of 300 NGO branches in 2003 and shows that, while the total range of NGO interventions is wide, the typical NGO branch provides between three and four services. Around 90% of all NGO branch offices provide credit services, followed by health (56%), sanitation (52%) and education (45%). Islam et al. (2005) conducted a study of NGOs which provide non-formal education. They found that most had included income generation vocational training as a major content area (100%), followed by fisheries, poultry, apiculture, agriculture, animal husbandry, general education and the practice of literacy skills, health and nutrition, social

development (gender equity, cooperative, decision-making and leadership) and cottage industry. Nevertheless, the sector is dominated by some élite NGOs, such as Grameen Bank, BRAC, ASA and Proshika. The impact of microcredit is an increasing income, aiding female empowerment, children's schooling and the health status of the rural poor whilst reducing household vulnerability. These social gains are also associated with the complementary social mobilisation, training and awareness-raising activities that typically go hand in hand.

Several NGOs have established commercial enterprises, whose profit stream is earmarked to support their development programmes. This 'endowment model' is designed to reduce dependence on donors and other outside funding sources, and is an innovative solution also used by foundations and charities elsewhere. A further innovation is the NGOs' role as 'social venture capitalists', developing 'frontier' markets with commercial ventures, such as Grameen Phone and Arong of BRAC. The World Bank (2006) indicates that the profitability of NGO enterprises varies and larger NGOs tend to have the edge. The current market share of most NGO businesses is small, with some notable exceptions. Overall, NGO businesses that are separately incorporated from the parent NGOs' social programmes perform better because separation allows for greater specialisation, more strategic business planning and improved governance.

The NGOs' relationships with the government and donors have been viewed in three ways: legitimacy, financing, and monitoring and supervision. The World Bank (2006) states that the legal framework relating to NGOs is obsolete, with an overabundance of laws and official agencies with limited capacity. The NGOAB is widely recognised as the primary regulator of development NGOs and administering the laws relating to foreign donations in Bangladesh. There are 12 laws for registering and regulating NGOs, but most NGOs register under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961, administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare (World Bank 2006; Ahmad 2006). Staffing at the NGOAB has barely changed since 1990, even though the number of NGOs the agency is supposed to oversee has tripled. As a result, delays are common, financial reports are not scrutinised adequately and basic data relating to foreign-funded NGOs are not maintained systematically. The microcredit apex body, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation, introduced some standardised financial management practices for microfinance programmes, but accounting and auditing practices are

also influenced by donor financial reporting requirements. Such require-
ments are highly variable and typically focus on the donor-financed project
rather than on the whole institution.

Due to its historical dependency on external aid, Bangladesh has one of
the strongest local presences of donors, both globally and within South
Asia. This large presence has created the need for mechanisms that can
help to coordinate the activities of the various donors and the Government
of Bangladesh. One such mechanism was the Bangladesh Development
Forum (BDF), which functioned as the apex body for dialogue and aided
coordination at the international level until 2005, when it was replaced by
the first PRSP Implementation Forum. Both the BDF and its successor are
comprised of members from the Government of Bangladesh, as well as
international and local representatives of donor agencies. The BDF existed
under the name of the Bangladesh Aid Group (BAG), also commonly
referred to as the Aid Consortium until 1999, when it was renamed the
BDF. In the mid-1970s, the World Bank took the initiative to establish
the informal Local Consultations Group (LCG) to meet the demand for
local aid coordination and donor–Government of Bangladesh dialogue on
development issues and priority reforms in Bangladesh. Since its begin-
nings, the LCG has gone through an evolutionary process, which has
considerably enhanced its scope and significance, and it currently func-
tions as the forum for local aid coordination and policy dialogue between
the government and donors in Bangladesh. The LCG subgroup on gov-
ernance functions to promote an active dialogue on good governance in
Bangladesh, and to strengthen coordination and cooperation both vis-à-
vis the government and with the donor.

NGOs and donors increasingly face the twin challenges of demonstrat-
ing effectiveness in their work and accountability in their relationships
with various stakeholders. Donors, on the one hand, are particularly
concerned about accountability of NGOs in the efficient and effective
delivery of services. NGOs, on the other hand, are often concerned that
accountability to donors can overshadow and overwhelm their account-
ability to communities and to their own missions (Ebrahim 2004, 4).
There are a number of ways that the donors provide direct fund to
NGOs in Bangladesh. The most common is funding for specific projects.
Where financing needs are large, donor funds may be pooled and a donor–
liaison function introduced to coordinate support and reduce transaction
costs for the NGO. In some instances, donors have financed the whole
range of NGO activities, and in a few of these cases, the institution

develops into a different legal entity by the end of the funding period. In recent years, the recognition that partnerships with smaller NGOs carry high transaction costs has increased reliance on wholesale vehicles, in which an agency manages a pool of money for which smaller NGOs compete (World Bank 2006).

It is argued that the main role of government is in modernising the legal and regulatory framework, and ensuring effective oversight of NGO activities. It is important that all parts of government recognise NGOs as allies in development and accept constructive criticism as supportive of a democratic polity. Government should withdraw where NGOs have the clear edge in the delivery of certain services. As the process of decentralisation evolves, local governments can play a more active role in delivering services in partnership with NGOs. Government ought to strengthen monitoring and contracting procedures to improve the effectiveness of aid that is channelled to NGOs. The Government-NGO Coordination Council should be revived to provide a forum for regular government–NGO discussions. Donors should continue to support NGO activities in Bangladesh, both to improve pro-poor service delivery and to promote a broad-based civil society, while ensuring that they do not undermine the accountability of NGOs to Bangladeshi stakeholders.

The NGOs' development interventions became popular and effective for development in Bangladesh for various reasons. Their close links with the community, their quick response to new circumstances, ownership and participation, basic needs, human rights, gender equality, the environment and sustainable development have assigned greater power of NGOs' activities (Haque 2002). The World Bank (2005) states that Bangladesh has nearly achieved the MDGs' goals relating to elimination of gender disparity in schooling opportunities. Dreze (2004) says that Bangladesh is doing better on most social indicators, such as lower infant and maternal mortality rates, higher child immunisation rates, better access to 'improved' water sources and sanitation and higher primary enrolment rates than India. Kahler (2000, 10), through some case studies of NGOs' intervention in developing countries, argues that NGOs' flexibility in programming has allowed for significant innovation. Developing localised, tailor-made responses to technical development problems has forced NGOs to innovate.

Perceptions of NGOs' contributions towards development are mixed. Some believe that NGOs are flexible, innovative and efficient vehicles for the delivery of basic services and for poverty alleviation. The NGOs can

reach poor communities and remote areas at lower cost than governments. They can identify genuine local needs, promote participation and transfer appropriate technologies as the 'magic bullets' of development (Gauri and Fruttero 2003). On the other hand, today NGOs are involved in all stages of political processes within the UN, influencing decision-making and policy implementation from the inside. Others have argued that most NGOs are started and controlled by charismatic individuals, who necessarily limit participatory decision-making (Wood 1997), and effectiveness remains weak (Edwards and Hulme 1995). One of the significant problems that NGOs are facing at present is partnership problems with different groups, including GOs versus NGOs and NGOs and funding agencies. For example, regarding GO–NGO partnership, the NGOs' view is that the governments often attempt to maintain control over the development process initiated by the NGOs and that their operations are under constant threat. The World Bank (2006) commented on the public image of the NGOs' perceived illegitimate shift into for-profit activity, low service quality and limited development impact. But the bank agrees that the Bangladeshi NGOs are building good networks with accountability and trust relationships among service users, politicians or policymakers, and service providers. In South Asia, for instance, Grameen Bank has built a worldwide reputation for its work and now offers development advice and consulting services to a number of other countries (Gauri and Fruttero 2003). It claims that its credit programmes for poor rural women in Bangladesh attain repayment rates consistently over 90% (Khandker et al. 1998) and that they are entirely self-financed.

NGOs' microcredit programmes have been robustly criticised. Haque (2002) argues that large NGOs in Bangladesh are turning into rent-seeking institutions because they charge among the highest interest rates (20–30%) on loans given to the poor. These are now aggressively pursuing profit-making business enterprise in major economic sectors. As a result, the original mission of NGOs such as Proshika, Grameen Bank and BRAC to eradicate poverty has become marginalised (Wood 1997). But Newaz (2003) and the Microcredit Summit (1997) state that microcredit to the poor, with a view to achieving equitable and sustainable gains, is the key element for economic and social development in the twenty-first century. Islam and Mia (2007a) find that most of the NGOs have programmes for socio-economic development but a very few of them have innovative elements, for example, in non-formal education linked income generation programme (IGP) for poverty alleviation.

Buckland (1998) argues that a common criticism is that they are small-scale and consequently do not seriously affect widespread poverty. Hedrick-Wong et al. (2001) examine the impact of microcredit on poverty alleviation initiatives of Proshika and found two problems, such as poor knowledge about the use of microcredit and NGOs' imperfect enforcement to utilise this credit. Newaz (2003, 65) argues that NGOs are accountable to the donor, not to the people, and this upward accountability has skewed NGO activities towards a donor-driven agenda for development rather than towards indigenous priorities. As a result, Bangladesh is still a 'test case for development', and its bargaining power runs through development aid. Westergaard and Hossain (2005) claim that misuse of loans and its overlapping are very common in microcredit programmes. Because of their 'donor dependency', their accountability for human services is very loose. They say that recent studies have, however, documented that many women give their loans to their husbands, which causes a big confusion about female empowerment through microcredit programmes.

To consider the aforementioned discussion, the conclusion is threefold: first, the overall development in Bangladesh is managed by the NGOs and their overall development is mixed. But NGOs' development trend is still slow and emphasis is given to the economic issues (e.g. increase of per capita income, employment and microcredit) rather than to sociocultural development (e.g. quality of education, self-reliance, community awareness, peoples' participation in development activities, population control, improvement of nutrition status and human rights). Moreover, NGOs' contributions have been calculated on the basis of quantitative measurement, but their quality of services in terms of social development has been either ignored or taken second place. For example, the rate of child enrolment in school, the number of people under microcredit schemes or the number of people who are taking service from the particular NGO have come to the front of their success. But the quality of education, peoples' sociocultural improvement, self-reliance or sustainability issues have been ignored. Secondly, NGOs' development activities are more donor dependent (e.g. financing, policy issues and development strategies). And thirdly, NGOs' relationships with the government and donors are not reasonably good. Major problems are related with regulation, financing, monitoring and supervision, and NGOs' freedom for working. As a result, NGOs fail to bring satisfactory progress in social development in Bangladesh.

3.4   WHY DOES BANGLADESH BOTHER NGOs?

As a newly established independent country, Bangladesh is still struggling with a huge population, low per capita income, mass poverty, political unrest, unemployment and underemployment, illiteracy, child labour, malnutrition, corruption and related social problems. Natural disasters occur frequently, with floods massively affecting the poor economy every year, delaying its progress. As development agents, many NGOs (both national, local and international) are working to solve these problems. As stated earlier in this chapter, due to shortages of government funds, Bangladesh is increasingly dependent on international donors. Various studies report that there are disparities regarding the NGOs' contribution for community development. Some of their main weaknesses are low levels of people's participation, less concentration of local resources and lack of resource mobilisation, on the one hand, and donor dependency, on the other. As a result, 'intellectual aid' (a gift of useful knowledge, which is a very different matter from material aid) (Schumacher 1973) is becoming more important for Bangladesh. In this regard, Burns (1996) emphasises the small business and entrepreneurship. Bornstein (2004) argues that social entrepreneurs are demonstrating new approaches to many social ills and new models to create wealth, promote social well-being and restore the environment in the globalised world.

Bangladesh was colonised historically by different nations between 1757 and 1947 by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British. I argue that the colonialist or early missionary mentality in Bangladesh is still very much alive. There is still a widely held view that anything associated with culture[2] and hereditary values is pagan, and thus backward, as reflected by the vast number of urban people who feel hesitant, if not somewhat embarrassed, to associate themselves with their own cultural background. It is time to encourage a more informed recognition of this deeply rooted mentality as the product of a particular time and of specific policies in human history, and to acknowledge the limitations it imposes on development as well as its devastating effects on the natural environment. I argue that many socio-economic problems of Bangladesh are related to culture and attitude. The majority of urban youth still pledge to the 'American dream' and, on a minor scale, to the 'urban dream'. The growing trend towards urbanisation is encouraging thousands to discard their indigenous knowledge in the belief that new knowledge and new opportunities are to be found in town. Yet the

realities of mass unemployment, the high costs of urban life and of further education, and the growing pandemic diseases (such as HIV/AIDS) testify that this is not the case. Many end up homeless, jobless and penniless, with neither the traditional skills that sustained their ancestors, nor the specialised and expensive skills required for employment in a modern town. The inevitable result is poverty.

The existing literature shows that there are debates about which kind of knowledge approach favours the progress of developing countries such as Bangladesh. Some turn to indigenous knowledge, some global knowledge, while others believe in the integration of the two. Each has been practised to varying levels and degrees, and Bangladesh already gains from some of these experiences. But the result is not satisfactory (see Barr and Dixon 1998; Howell 2003). In facing up to the challenges of globalisation, there is a great demand for a shift from the traditional paradigm to the new paradigm. In this connection, the development literature in Bangladesh needs to investigate a new knowledge paradigm, which considers the global and local realities. This paradigm would look for maximum benefits, but minimise the disadvantages for community development through NGOs' interventions.

3.5   Conclusions

This chapter has highlighted the main parameters of NGOs. The chapter attempts to integrate various relevant debates of NGOs' activities in the socio-economic, political and cultural development paradigms. It was found that the NGOs have abrasive relationships with state and donors, on the one hand, and global versus local development debates, on the other. The chapter shows how the development challenges might be solved through consulting both knowledge approaches, so that the NGOs can achieve participatory-oriented development interventions according to the choices of the rural mass of people in Bangladesh.

Notes

1. BAL, also translated as the Bangladesh Peoples' League, is the mainstream secular political party in Bangladesh and was the political catalyst for Bengali discontent and rebellion in 1971. The League, with co-founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as its leader from 1953, was an opposition party in

Pakistan and had a moderately socialist ideology. The party's candidates won a majority in the 1970 elections, but the central government in West Pakistan banned the League after war between East and West Pakistan erupted in early 1971. When Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) won its independence in late 1971, the party was the nation's dominant political force. The party is now headed by Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of the late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In 1981 and again in 1991, it was defeated in a popular election by the BNP. The League, however, went on to win the 1996 parliamentary elections (Encyclopedia 2003).

2. Culture generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. Cultures can be 'understood as systems of symbols and meanings that even their creators contest, that lack fixed boundaries, that are constantly in flux, and that interact and compete with one another' (Findley and Rothney 2006). Culture can be defined as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population which are passed down from generation to generation. It has been called 'the way of life' for an entire society. As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, norms of behaviour such as law and morality, and systems of belief as well as the art (Goodall 1986).

Globalisation and Indigenous Knowledge: NGOs' Role for Development

Abstract In recent years, the arena of NGO action has expanded rapidly from local and national settings to the international level due to globalisation. At present, NGOs are facing twin dilemmas in management and operational levels. First, NGO management is a big concern. Most of the NGOs are managed by the external agencies because they mostly depend on foreign funding agencies who decide how the NGO programmes will be managed and organised. Another is NGOs' local pressure because they are working with the local community people who have different demands and needs. But in most cases, they implement the global knowledge-based universal development frameworks. This chapter presents a comparative discussion of indigenous and global knowledge approaches within the globalisation process. The chapter highlights and explains each of these concepts and attempts to establish a significant link with a new role of NGOs for development. This theoretical discussion looks at NGOs' capacities in the paradigms of indigenous and global knowledge approaches. The main purpose is to find out the gaps, for example, what are the general explanations of these concepts, and which are effective for Bangladesh?

Keywords Globalisation · Indigenous knowledge (IK) · Foreign donation · NGO management · Liberalisation · Knowledge debate

4.1   GLOBALISATION: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FOR NGOS IN DEVELOPMENT

Globalisation is not easily understood for its multidimensional nature, asymmetric impact and complexity. It has been characterised by many components and elements which are not easily measured. Ludden (1997) argues that it cannot be understood simply as the result of one dominant force. He adds that the technologies that lower transportation and communications costs do facilitate globalisation, which we can measure as a process by physical movements from place to place, but the globalisation project is neither explained nor mandated by technology. He again says, within moral theories, scientific paradigms, religious passion, cultural mythology and legitimate authorities, people are moving across the old boundaries to the new world. Concretely then, the *globe* in globalisation is a type of human territory, a space that is marked with human aspirations, meanings and power. It is a domain of human control and social order, like any other kind of territory.

The concept 'globalisation' is a dynamic and deliberated word; it means many things to many people. However, globalisation is at the centre of a starkly polarised debate over the major policy issues in the world today. Attempts to define globalisation usually seem clumsy, partial and complex (Sen 2002). Sen argues that it is still not altogether a well-defined concept. A multitude of global interactions are put under the broad heading of globalisation, but it varies from the expansion of intellectual and cultural influences across borders to the enlargement of economic and business relations throughout the world (United Nations 2004b). Different authors often concentrate on very dissimilar aspects of this phenomenon. Globalisation offers many possible meanings, which depend on ideology, context, perspective and location. It is a hotly disputed and contested issue (ILO 2004). Harcourt (n.d.) notes that some global advocates, such as Ohmae (1990, 1995), write enthusiastically about the 'borderless world' and 'the end of the nation state'. Some social scientists prefer a broad, rather unfocused definition, such as the 'movement of people, information, symbols, capital and commodities in global and transactional spaces'.

Most economists understand the concept as free trade and see the modern form of globalisation as part of this process. For instance, Eslake (2000) says, '...globalisation is...simply the logical extension of the tendency towards specialisation and trade that has been going on almost since mankind first walked on the surface of the earth'. Others, like

Friedman (1998), regard globalisation as being not just about trade, but also about the triumph of market forces, technologies and democratic forces throughout the world. Gunter and Hoeven (2004) state that it means gradual integration of economies and societies, driven by new technologies, new economic relationships, and the national and international policies of a wide range of actors, including governments, international organisations, business, labour and civil society.

From the sociological and cultural point of view, Ludden (1997) says the term globalisation refers to human networks of influential interaction which are measured and explained by many factors, including migration, trade, empire, technology and the spread of languages and disparate cultural elements. Mittelman (2000) argues that 'globalisation means an historical transformation in the economy, of livelihoods and modes of existence; in politics, a loss in the degree of control exercised locally . . . and in culture, a devaluation of a collectivity's achievements . . . Globalisation is emerging as a political response to the expansion of market power . . . [It] is a domain of knowledge'. On the other hand, Sen (2002) sees globalisation often as global westernisation. Ottone (1996) says that globalisation is commonly referred to either as 'the knowledge society', 'the information society', 'the communication society', or more generally, 'the post-industrial society'. According to the Free World Academy (2005), globalisation is the integration of democracy, legal reforms, capital, technology and information across national borders, in a way that is creating a single global market and a global village.

Globalisation enhances global markets, technologies, ideas and cohesions. It reduces space and time, and fades borders. It opens the door to opportunities. On the other hand, it increases human insecurity as the spread of global crime, disease and financial volatility outpaces action to tackle them (UNDP 1999). However, it describes not just an increase in the flow of goods, services, images, ideas and people, but a change in the way of production, distribution, consumption, and other defined and undertaken activities.

The literature published by the World Bank and the IMF highlights globalisation as a process of money transformation. For example, Harcourt (n.d.) argues that there are mainly four dimensions in which globalisation appears to human society: trade, investment, organisational change and 'new economy' technology. Dependency and Marxist approaches have emphasised the inequalities as inherent in the global expansion of capitalism. Bello et al. (1998) argue that the capitalism of

Southeast Asia and the nature of globalisation are flawed. They add that increasing liberalisation results is unhappiness for the majority, while enriching a minority and benefiting business in rich countries. Gunter and Hoeven (2004, 8–12) review over 1,200 articles and books on the social impacts of globalisation and find that all factors may have brought some economies and some societies closer together, but they may have also marginalised many countries and individuals. The second aspect of the globalisation process concerns the increasing homogenisation of policies and institutions across the world, for example, trade and capital market liberalisation; the reduction of the welfare state; international agreements on intellectual property rights and the standardisation of policies and behaviours that have promoted globalisation.

Leen (2003) argues that globalisation is neither novel nor new; it is a real danger of cultural homogenisation as the result of contemporary 'Western'-driven models. Current global processes have been shaped by the neo-liberal ideology. It accents the rights and control of the individual by advancing the role of the market place into the economic, political and social sphere (Buckland 2004, 127). Deacon (2000) argues that globalisation is undermining equitable public social provision. On the other hand, many authors argue that globalisation is a new and effective means for development. Sen (2003), for example, argues that globalisation has provided appropriate local steps. In the purest sense, it is not a threat to local cultures—imperialism is. It is seen that developments linked with globalisation have opened up boundless possibilities and new opportunities for human progress and enhanced the quality of life for many people in the developing countries. Local knowledge (LK) is not useful to solve many problems, such as the flood problem in Bangladesh. Some authors have mixed opinions about globalisation. For example, Morgan (2005) argues that the rapid process of globalisation has clearly destroyed and damaged many indigenous and belief systems in recent centuries, though he argued that this is simply an inevitable process of historical change. As Karl Marx says, human beings make their own history, but not always, as they intend and not in circumstances of their own choosing (Layder 1987).

Globalisation provides access to resources to use the political strategies of cooperation, negotiation and contestation, through which rural groups challenge their poverty. Recently, the argument has been raised that due to globalisation the development organisations (like NGOs) are facing varieties of challenges in this new millennium. For example, Buckland

(2004, 128, 139) argues that the NGOs (mainly big NGOs) have been encouraged to directly confront policy-level constraints to development and move out of programme implementation. These changes have been significantly influenced by official aid agencies and NNGOs, and complex implications for indigenous NGOs and local communities. He adds that many people, including local poor people in Bangladesh, have benefited by the scaling up of reform-oriented development organisations. But this strategy has not overcome other powerful local, national and global constraints to development that have led to persistent poverty, gender bias and economic change that has not benefited the poor.

However, we understand that globalisation is a dynamic as well as a complex concept. We see that there is much academic discussion about whether globalisation is a real phenomenon or only a myth. The term is widespread; it is seen that the characteristics of globalisation have already been seen at other moments in history. Also, many note that those features include international trade and multinational corporations, which are not as deeply established as they may appear. Globalisation evokes different feelings to different people. Some look at globalisation as 'the panacea'—the elixir that eradicates all poverty, removes disparity and enables the global citizens to enjoy a decent lifestyle—the lure of globalisation. Others view globalisation as 'the evil' that further enslaves them to the rich.

4.2   Indigenous Knowledge: A Local Development Intervention for NGOs

'Indigenous knowledge' (IK) is an important term in contemporary development studies. Since there are increasing international concerns about the negative impacts of globalisation, IK has been considered a key aspect in sustainable development. It calls for the insertion of local voices and priorities, and promises empowerment through ownership of the process. However, there has been little critical examination of the ways in which IK has been included in the development process (Briggs and Sharp 2004, 661). IK has been used since the dawn of civilisation, but it was first formally recognised as invaluable to sustainable development at the Rio Conference[1]: 'Our Common Future' in 1987. Since then, many institutions have shown increasing interest in it and numerous international conferences have taken place concerned exclusively with IK.

IK is also known as 'local' or 'traditional' or 'rural peoples' knowledge' and is not easily or simply defined. It is a diverse concept. In anthropology, it refers to the original inhabitants of a specific geographical area, a land which may have been occupied subsequently by migrants or colonists (Morgan 2005). In the 1960s to the late 1970s, the word then took on a more explicitly populist flavour of 'grass-roots politics' and 'folk cultures' in the sense of 'indigenous' as opposed to state of *high culture*[2] (Scoones and Thompson 1994). In view of the marginalisation process, IK today means 'non-Western' or 'anti-Western' knowledge'. Knowledge is much more than a collection of facts; it relates to the whole system of concepts, beliefs and perceptions that people hold about the world around them. IK includes the way people observe and measure what is around them, how they set about solving problems and how they validate new information.

Many authors and institutions describe IK as a system or body of knowledge, which evolves from a variety of sources within a social process. For example, Johnson (1992) states that IK can be defined as 'a body of knowledge' built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature. Such knowledge evolves in the local environment, so that it is specifically adapted to the requirements of local people and conditions. It is also creative and experimental, constantly incorporating outside influences and inside innovations to meet new conditions. It is usually a mistake to think of IK as 'old-fashioned', 'backwards', 'static' or 'unchanging'. On the other hand, some authors describe the concept with some components in a specific framework. Others state that IK is based on some specific group of people (called traditional/indigenous or aboriginal people). I think that the first two views are more accepted than the last one. I believe that IK has already been proved as a body of knowledge given its enormous literature and widespread application. The third view explains the concept narrowly. I think that it is also important to understand how the concept evolves. My argument is that no definition is complete, but taken together they explain what IK means. I agree with Cheng (2003, 6), who argues that IK is the knowledge that has been tested as valid in a local context, and accumulated by the local community or people. The usefulness and validity of IK varies according to time and social context.

IK covers numerous components and aspects, which make it wide and complex. It includes agriculture and horticulture, astronomy, forestry,

human health, traditional medicines and healing, knowledge of animals, fish and ecological systems, sustainable use of natural resources and the environment, traditional classification systems for living, learning systems and oral traditions, spirituality, symbols, traditional arts and culture, designs, symbols, scientific and ecological methods, crafts, music, dance, songs, stories, foods, medicines and wellness (or disease prevention), and products (Hoppers 2004). Such knowledge systems are cumulative, representing generations of experiences, careful observations, and trial-and-error experiments. IK does not exist in a vacuum; it belongs to a community, and access to this knowledge is gained through contact with that community. No one person, authority or social group is the single repository for this knowledge or can claim to know the entire body of knowledge. It is more widely shared locally than specialised scientific knowledge (Sillitoe 2002). With this view, Dr Erica-Irene Daes, Chair-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, explained in a 1994 report that IK is a complete knowledge system with its own concepts of epistemology, philosophy, and scientific and logical validity (Kooy and Vizina 2006, 6).

IK is locally based and recorded, for example, in the memories of the living and transmitted orally. But it is dynamic and is 'developed to very specific biological, ecological, climatic and socio-economic conditions'. It is a mixture of knowledge created endogenously and acquired from outside, but then absorbed and integrated within the society by 'trial and error'. The broad set of IK includes information of a functional and of an aesthetic character. The processes and products can be used in agriculture or industry, as well as intangibles of cultural value. IK is not static; it evolves and generates new information as a result of improvements or adaptation to changing circumstances. The context and forms of expression of IK vary significantly (Correa 2001). Correa adds that some IK is codified, that is, formalised in some way (e.g. textile designs, *ayurveda* a traditional medicine). A great part of IK, however, is non-codified or tacit, such as 'folk', 'tribal' or 'indigenous' medicine, which is based on traditional beliefs, norms and practices accumulated through centuries of experiences of trial and error. It is holistic, qualitative and is a cultural property rooted in a social context (Johnson 1992). It is non-formal, dynamic and adaptive (Boven and Morohashi 2002, 12). It is traditional, which is 'a fluid and transferring agent with no real end' when applied to knowledge. Negotiation is a central concept.

4.3   INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE VERSUS GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE: NGOs' NEXUS ROLE

IK for development is an emerging issue in social sciences, including development studies. In recent years, this has been considered a significant research topic in higher education. Thaman (2003) argues that the incorporation of the indigenous perspectives in higher education is an imperative because (1) various vibrant indigenous cultures have their own views of the world which deserve recognition and acknowledgement, (2) the academic institutions should recognise the ownership and control of IK by indigenous people rather than by the academy and (3) the academic centres (in the context of specific studies) needed indigenous cultural knowledge to validate and legitimise their work.

A vast amount of literature has been published on the context of knowledge and development. As a result, the knowledge-based development paradigms have divided into a number of groups. This process causes tension among development actors such as NGOs. Despite some significant advantages of global knowledge (GK), IK is still considered as an important knowledge approach for development in countries such as Bangladesh, where a significant portion of the population and their occupations are based on IK. Guhathakurta (2004, 115–122) discusses past and future options of the development paradigms in Bangladesh and argues that the development options have shifted through a number of paradigms. These are from self-reliant autarchic goal to integration with the world economy; from public sector to privatisation; from poverty reduction to efficiency; governance, gender and human rights; and modernisation and growth versus indigenous perspective. The overall socio-economic texture of the society in Bangladesh remains traditional. According to his view, Bangladesh needs to emphasise an indigenous approach for development. This approach has become an important development topic given the failure of top-down, externally driven development interventions. Seeland (2000) calls it an invention of a postmodern development approach. The great value is that it can be a key element of the social capital of the poor and constitutes their main asset in their efforts to gain control of their own lives (Gorjestani 2000). However, this issue becomes more complex in some developing countries, where the socio-economic and cultural situations are comparatively poor, diverse and heterogeneous.

IK in Bangladesh is an integral, valuable resource based on deep-rooted traditions. Craft persons have acquired various skills, developed

through the wisdom and experience of successive generations. The knowledge, culture, skills and practices based on IK have been woven into community development, most of them being established through a process of trial and error, which underpin their ontological and epistemological basis rather than through scientific research. However, they do have some scientific principles behind them, though such principles may appear somewhat obscure or even immersed in knowledge bases, which are not at present fully recognised as scientific approaches. However, the practitioners and other beneficiaries of this indigenous and traditional knowledge and these technologies are not fully aware of the scientific principles behind them due to illiteracy, ignorance and lack of social education.

Currently, there is a big debate about how development organisations such as NGOs will introduce development interventions, which consider a meeting between IK and GK. These reflect tensions that occur between the global and the local, between the universal and the individual, between tradition and modernity (and now postmodernity), between long-term and short-term considerations, and between the need for competition and concern for genuine quality of opportunity (Delors 1996, 15 in Morgan and Tujman 2000, 56). Delors states:

> Culture is steadily being globalised, but as yet only partially. We cannot ignore the promises of globalisation nor its risks, not the least of which is the risk of forgetting the unique character of individual human beings; it is for them to choose their own future and achieve their full potential within the carefully tended wealth of their traditions and their own cultures which, unless we are careful, can be endangered by contemporary developments. (Delors 1996, 15, in Morgan and Tujman 2000, 56)

The most urgent needs in Bangladesh are about reshaping educational systems to foster knowledge and love of local ecological and cultural diversity. The integration and development of the local language is essential for more equitable and effective means of communication and cooperation across the differences (Rhea 2000). The key challenge here lies in the creation of 'a concept of knowledge to which a concept of experience corresponds'. Lewis et al. (2008) suggest a form of representation, which would capture the subjective dimension (universal dimension) of social reality, whilst simultaneously allowing an objective knowledge (true in certain times, places or people) of the world.

The important thing is how to save and hold up the worth of human diversity in the face of the powerful negative potential that globalisation exerts (Rhea 2000). Cheng (2003) argues that the relationship between LK and globalisation in education is dynamic and interactive. Localised globalisation (globalisation based on the local sociocultural, economic and political situation) in education can allow for better utilisation of values for local developments if local creativity and adaptation can be induced in the process of operational change and cultural change. Cheng agrees that this integration is a big challenge for national and international NGOs for community development. Cheng further adds, from a perspective of long-term local and global developments, the integration of both localisation and globalisation would be a preferable choice. So, it is a contemporary question to the NGO providers, policymakers and development workers whether to investigate a new policy framework (which might be called a 'new knowledge paradigm'), where NGOs' capacity for social capital and community empowerment can function to achieve sustainable community development and self-reliance. This new paradigm would focus on 'people' rather than 'interventions' and identifies the 'client', not the 'policy', as an important step in addressing the social, economic and political needs of the people.

4.4   Conclusions

This chapter highlights different aspects of GK and IK, and looks at the space for NGOs in development activities. The chapter proves that both knowledge interventions are important for NGOs' development activities. In this case, NGOs are facing twin pressures, such as the local pressure from the local people and global pressure from the donor agencies. Globalisation brings a lot of opportunities and development initiatives for the NGOs, which are proved as productive and effective for rural development. On the other hand, NGOs are taking place local peoples' opinions in the decision-making process through local-level planning and local-level participation, which is based on LK. However, it clearly proves that an initiative is emerging, which might resolve this twin pressure for a greater success of the NGOs' activities.

Notes

1. Of equal concern to many world citizens is the uncertain status of the IK that reflects many generations of experience and problem solving by thousands of ethnic groups across the globe. Very little of this knowledge has been recorded, yet it represents an immensely valuable database that provides humankind with insights on how numerous communities have interacted with their changing environment including its floral and faunal resources (Warren 1996, 81).

2. 'High' refers to those aspects of culture which are most highly valued and esteemed by a given society's political, social, economic and intellectual elite. Opera, yachting and Tom Stoppard are associated with high culture in the USA. Generally, the most powerful members of a society are the ones who have the most influence over cultural meaning systems, and therefore the more powerful classes tend to enjoy the privilege of defining 'high culture' (Carlisle 2006).

NGOs' Facet in Social Capital and Community Empowerment

Abstract Social capital and community empowerment are two important domains for NGOs' development activities. Social capital is the quality and quantity of relationships, networks and norms among people and organisations that facilitate collective action. The objectives are bonding strategies that build trust and cooperation among individuals and within communities; bridging strategies that break down barriers across groups and communities and enable collaborative action on shared objectives; and scaling up strategies that connect communities in collective action for social change and development at the policy and/or systems levels. On the other hand, community empowerment is a broad term that involves social action processes, and individual and collective efforts and outcomes. It refers to individuals, families, organisations and communities gaining control within the social, economic and political contexts of their lives in order to improve equity and their quality of life. The objective of this domain is to promote development by providing motivation, education and proper cognitive, democratic and social skills; increase communities' capacities and resources to bring people together around common goals and interests; increase participation of the communities in decision-making and problem-solving processes; enhance exchange and partnership with local, regional and international communities and groups; and build-up social capital. This chapter elucidates the complex intersection between social capital and community empowerment. The chapter provides a solid theoretical

discussion about different aspects of NGOs' development and then examines how social capital and community empowerment are widening where NGOs' role is significant.

Keywords Social network · Human relation · Social relation · Social capital · Community empowerment · Social development

5.1   SOCIAL CAPITAL: A WIDENING FIELD
FOR NGOS' ACTIVITIES

Social capital has become one of the most striking concepts in social sciences over the last decade. This is particularly true of work in development activities. It has been treated as a key feature of phenomena, which includes so many aspects that cannot be described within limited space and time (DeFilippis 2001; Portes 1998; Islam 2015b). Many definitions are now attached to the concept, which lead to justifiable confusion about what constitutes 'social capital' (National Statistics 2005). Morgan (2008, 35) argues that the concept social capital is still relatively vague and underdeveloped as a concept of policy value. It is described as a *muddy* (Evans 1996), *elusive* (Kilpatrick et al. 2001), *robust* (Paldam 2000) and *divergent* (Fedderke et al. 1999) concept. It has been called social energy, community spirit, social bonds, civic virtue, community networks, social ozone, extended friendships, community life, social resources, informal and formal networks, good neighbourliness and social glue (National Statistics 2005). I would say that it is hard to encapsulate in a single sentence because its elements, nature, theoretical development and measurement are continuously widening over time.

Social capital is a relatively new concept (Bayat 2005, 2), though the term was first used by Lyda J. Hanifan, a state supervisor of a rural school in West Virginia, in 1916, to explain the importance of community development for successful schools (Olate 2003, 9). It was then used in 1950 by a team of Canadian urban sociologists in 1960 by an urban scholar Jane Jacobs, and in 1970 by an economist Glenn Loury (Olate 2003, 9). The concept was developed in the 1980s and 1990s by Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1986), James Coleman (Coleman 1988, 1990) and Robert Putnam (Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000a). Portes (1998) argues that this concept dates back to Durkheim's work, which emphasise Marx's distinction between an atomised class-in-itself and a mobilised and effective class-for-itself. After the 1990s,

this concept became one of the principal topics to social researchers. Baum (2000) states, before 1981, that the number of journal articles listing social capital as a key word totalled 20, between 1991 and 1995 this has risen to 109, and between 1996 and March 1999 the total was 1,003. I guess the number would now be several thousands.

5.2   MEANINGS AND ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

In 1985, Pierre Bourdieu was the first sociologist to use this term in community development as a neo-Marxist model (DeFilippis 2001). Bourdieu (1986) says that the sources of social capital combined the actual and potential resources, concurrent to tenure of a strong network of more or less institutionalised relationships or reciprocal relationships (e.g. membership). His explanation was concurrently both economic and a set of power relations that comprised a variety of dominions and social interactions generally thought of as non-economic (DeFilippis 2001).

The American social scientist James Coleman (1988) brought social capital into the mainstream. He argues:

> Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors . . . within the structure. (Coleman 1988)

Robert Putnam's redefinition of social capital adds new dimensions. Putnam, who may be the most important author on the subject, defines

> 'Social capital is features of social life-networks, norms, and trust-that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives'. The norms and reciprocal networks that make collective action possible are themselves contingent on an existing foundation of social trust and solidarity. (Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000)

The most important characteristics of Putnam's definition are (1) social capital is twisted by individuals or groups of people in regions, communities, cities, countries or continents; (2) it becomes mainly a normatively good thing and is given credit for (a) promoting good, democratic government and (b) generating and sustaining economic growth and development; (3) it can be simultaneously a 'private good' and a 'public

good'; (4) it refers to the norms and networks of civil society that lubricate cooperative action among both citizens and their institutions; (5) network of trust and voluntary associations are 'win-win' sets of relationships in which everyone involved benefits; and (6) it was based on scientific investigation (DeFilippis 2001).

Kilpatrick et al. (2001) intend to categorise all of the major definitions of social capital into two main groups that can be called 'collective benefit' and 'individual benefit'. They say that the definitions by Putnam and Narayan are collective benefit groups and Coleman and Bourdieu's are individual benefit groups. Like DeFilippis (2001), I think that there are two key components of Bourdieu's work, which have been lost in current discussions of social capital. First, he almost envisages capital and power as synonymous, and he differentiates between the social networks that an individual is embedded in, and out of which social capital precipitates (or emerges), and the outcomes of those social relationships. Secondly, social networks should not simply be associated with the products of those social relationships that might be intense, but are unable to generate resources because of lack of access.

Coleman stated different sets of actions, outcomes and relationships as social capital. Social capital for him is inherently functional, and it is whatever allows people or institutions to act. DeFilippis (2001) argues that this definition is normatively and morally neutral. That is, neither desirable nor undesirable; it simply allows actions to take place by providing the needed resources. Putnam's definitions are also criticised for their lack of potential utility for community development as limited support comes from either theories of political economy or the empirical realities; it is quantitative (e.g. more or less) not qualitative (better or worse) change. But I argue Putnam's explanation is wide and based on empirical evidence, where he explains how and where this concept develops at individual and group level in the community.

Based on existing literature, Vitásková and Mateju (2006) sum up two significantly different approaches to the conceptualisation of social capital. The most dominant stream defines social capital primarily as an attribute of societies, as an inherent characteristic of social environment based on the high degree of interpersonal and institutional trust facilitating people's cooperation. The other stream defines social capital in terms of mutually beneficial exchanges based on social connections and informal networks allowing individuals to achieve their own particular goals. The former approach prevails in 'Western' countries, while the

latter prevails in the study of social change in post-communist societies, where social capital drawing from interpersonal trust seems to be rather low.

The use of the concept 'social capital' is very wide, and it is widening across the disciplines over time; it refers to norms, 'neighbourliness' and networks that enable people to act collectively (Narayan and Woolcock 2000). It includes institutions, relationships, attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development (Grootaert and Bastelaer 2001). It is called the relationships among actors (individuals, groups and/or organisations), which create a capacity to act for mutual benefits or a common purpose. However, the core elements of social capital are interaction, trust, cooperative ventures, agreements, norms and reputations, emotive behaviour, networks, sanctions and long-term relationships, the local commons, dispositions, belief, economic performance, conformism and contagion, and culture.

Social capital is now considered as one of the most important assets of society. It is an accumulation of social, psychological, cultural, cognitive, institutional and related assets that increase the amount or probability of mutually beneficial cooperative behaviour. It can be formed as structural (roles, rules, precedents, procedures and networks) and cognitive/normative (arising from mental process and resulting ideas, culture and ideology, norms, values, attitudes and beliefs that contribute to cooperative behaviour and mutually beneficial collective action). Putnam (1998) makes a further distinction amongst these dimensions, highlighting a difference between *informal* and *formal networks.* Informal networks include the relationships that people have with their families, partners, friends and neighbours; whereas formal networks include relationships at work, within community groups and churches, and with formal bodies, such as businesses and governments. Woolcock (2001) specifically classifies three types of social capital: bonds, bridges and linkage. Bonding social capital refers to relations among family members, close friends and neighbours. Bridging social capital refers to more distant friends, associates and colleagues, in general people who share similar demographic characteristics. If bridging social capital refers to the horizontal dimension, linking social capital refers to the vertical dimension. Linking social capital is defined as the capacity to leverage resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community. Carroll (2001) classifies social capital into six domains: family and kinship connections, community

networks, cross-sectoral linkages, institutional policy framework, socio-political (state–civil society) relations, and social norms and values.

In general, capital can be categorised into six headings, such as human, social, financial, cultural, physical and natural/environmental. The function of each is to create wealth and human well-being. Human capital includes knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals, which facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. It also includes motivation, moral behaviour and attitudes. In this regard, Putnam (2000b) notes that human capital refers to individuals, whereas social capital refers to connections among individuals and the social networks, and the norms of reciprocity that arise from them. It arises from family, schools, local communities, firms and national or sub-national administrative units and other institutions. On the other hand, Bourdieu (1986) argues that social capital is never completely independent, like physical and human capital, because of its homogeneity and multiple effects. Coleman (1988) suggests that, like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, but it can be depleted if it is not renewed. In addition, Putnam (2000b) also suggests that the more people work together the more social capital is produced, and the less people work together the more community stocks of social capital are depleted. Schuller (2000) argues that cultural capital is more academic. It refers to the credentials and cultural assets embodied in individuals and their families. It has been used in two constructing directions: the reproduction of social hierarchy, as elite families endow their children with the cultural capital, which enables them to succeed in maintaining their élite position. It is also used to explain how to manage and use education to move from non-élite positions into élite positions.

There is a big debate whether social capital can produce benefit and productivity like physical and human capital. In this perspective, Grootaert and Bastelaer (2001) argue that the key attribute of capital is that it is an accumulated stock from which a stream of benefits flows. Here social capital is an asset, which characterises actual capital, and it is more than just a set of social organisations or social values. They again state that the social capital studies and the empirical literature elsewhere document that social capital can directly enhance output and lead to higher productivity of other resources, such as human and physical capital. I believe that the scope of social capital and cultural capital is broad and covers a lot of components that do not fall under the conventional categories of physical and human capital.

There are a large number of opinions whether social capital is a measurable concept. For example, Grootaert and Bastelaer (2001) argue that social capital is difficult, if not impossible, to measure directly like human capital. For empirical purposes, the use of proxy indicators is necessary. They show an example that years of education and years of work experience have a long tradition as proxies for human capital and have proven their value in numerous empirical studies. They also argue that social capital indicators differ both geographically and sectorally. For example, measures of membership in associations were found to be a relevant indicator in Indonesia, Kenya and countries of the Andean region, but not in India and Russia, where informal networks are more important (Grootaert and Bastelaer 2001).

At present, a wide range of literature has been published on measurement of social capital where different authors use different indicators. A brief description of international attempts is shown in Table 5.1. However, it is seen that most of the authors use a number of aspects for this measurement. But a number of elements, such as network, trust,

Table 5.1 Measurement of social capital

Authors and year	Indicators of measurement
Coleman 1988	Children's educational attainment included personal, family and community dimensions
Robinson 1997	Family relationships, as these relations are the basis of all other relationships
Onyx and Bullen 2000	Attitude, trust, participation in the local community, reciprocity, personal empowerment, diversity/openness, relation within the workplace, attitude to government and demographic information
Grootaert 1998	Horizontal associations (e.g. local institutions, kin homogeneity, trust, community organisations, etc.) Civil and political society (e.g. civil liberty, political rights, democracy, corruption, etc.) Social integration (e.g. social mobility, divorce rate, unemployment, etc.) Legal and governance aspects (e.g. bureaucracy, court system, etc.)
Cox 1998	Unobtrusive measures, measures of attention and wider interest in the society, sociability and engagement, attitude measures—how people express their feelings, expectations and the multidimensional picture

Table 5.1 (continued)

Authors and year	Indicators of measurement
Narayan and Cassidy 2001	Structure Vs norms, sources Vs outcomes, form Vs function (formal and informal groups, networks, etc.) and narrow Vs broad (social institutions)
Krishna and Shrader 1999	Structural (membership and involvement of organisations, network mutual support, collective actions and conflict resolution) Cognitive (solidarity, trust, reciprocity and cooperation)
Putnam 2000	A wide range of services (housing, day care, family health clinics), their responsiveness and involvement to public, private, voluntary, civic and cultural services (e.g. postal, telephone, club, sports, etc.) and social trust
Green et al. 2000	Neighbourhood, network geography, reciprocal help and trust, trust (system and personal), civic engagement and efficiency, health, lifestyle, economy
Cote and Healy 2001	Coverage of key dimensions (networks, values and norms) and should be balanced between the attitudinal/subjective and the behavioural (such as cultural context for measure behaviour and attitude)
National Statistics 2005	Participation, social engagement, commitment Control, self-efficiency Perception of community-level structures or characteristics Social interaction, social networks, social support Trust, reciprocity, social cohesion
Spellerberg 2001	Behaviour (giving to strangers, participation in voluntary organisations, participation in voluntary organisations, participation in informal networks, wider interest in the society, community participation and compliance with rules and norms) Attitude and belief (beliefs about self, attitude towards others, trust and reciprocity, attitude to government and others, social institutions, values and norms, and outlook for and confidence in the future) Population groups (demographic, family, cultural, employment and communication) Organisations (number, type, size of 'membership', structure, capital and networks, and mode of operation)
Krishna 2003	Membership in labour-sharing groups, dealing with crop disease, dealing with natural disaster, trust, solidarity and reciprocity
Stimson et al. 2003	Qualitative assessment (awareness of community events, perceptions of the community, community activities and perception of what residents want/do not want in their community) A structural survey approach (informal structures, formal structures, informal norms, formal norms)

Source: Adapted by author from different sources.

membership, relationships/association, social integration, attitude, social support and social norms/values, are very common. I argue that the authors use different scientific methods and statistical tools (e.g. correlation, regression), but most did not state the limitations of their studies, as I believe that there were some limitations. One significant limitation is the question of the reliability and validity of the indicators, such as the data collection instruments and methods (Paldam 2000; Ostrom and Ahn 2003), and generalisation of this measurement (Portes and Landolt 1996). Each of those measures has merits in the specific context in which it was used. Due to the strong *contextual* nature of social capital, it is unlikely that it will ever be possible to identify a few 'good' indicators that can be used everywhere as universal indicators for such measurement.

The aforementioned discussion shows that social capital has received increased attention in the literature and has been studied at multiple levels, including the individual (Burt 1992), organisational (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998) and societal (Putnam 1993). At the individual level, social capital has been defined as the resources embedded in one's relationships with others. At the organisational level, it has been defined as the value to an organisation in terms of the relationships formed by its members for the purpose of engaging in collective action (Freel 2000). Social capital is an attribute of individuals and their relationships that enhances their ability to solve collective action problems (Ostrom and Ahn 2003). The role of social capital has also been examined on a more macro-level in terms of its impact on the well-being of regions or societies (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1990; Putnam 1993). We see that the concept has been robustly criticised both for its original assumptions and theoretical foundation, as well as for the acceleration of its uptake and practice. I argue that much of this criticism is made based on ideological position, limited theoretical review and restricted empirical examination.

5.3   Social Capital, NGOs and the Development Debate

I stated earlier in this chapter that the term 'social capital' has been the subject of great interest and debate in the development literature. As a result, it has been elaborated so widely that it is very difficult to explain its theoretical context briefly. Evans (1996) suggests the importance of a more regionalised social capital to overcome locally confined solidarities in order to increase representative bargaining power and access to

information. There is a general agreement that it is something that exists between individuals and organisations. This 'something' emerges from connections between entities and is further developed through trust, mutual understanding and mutual actions, based on shared norms and values (Kay 2005). In a study of 13 development programmes in Asia and Africa, Brown and Ashman (1996) found that higher levels of social capital in terms of the number and quality of grass-roots organisations, and the degree of intersectoral links between public and non-governmental actors, resulted in more effective programme design, implementation and significant long-term change. They concluded that the creation and strengthening of social capital is essential to building intersectoral collaboration in order to mobilise local resources and direct energies towards future problem solving.

Newton (2001, 206) states that voluntary associations are alleged to create the cross-cutting ties and social networks that bind society together. They create social bonds between like-minded people and bridges between different social groups, wherever there is an overlap. Abom (2004) argues that NGOs can play a role in encouraging social capital between the community and the state by standing with grass-roots community groups by helping to broker a 'place at the table'. In the process, opportunities are provided for collective action that may allow people to exercise their own power.

Abom (2004) states that some scholars argue that social capital is not inherently linked to noble ends, such as democracy, equitable economic development and inclusion that Putnam and others have attributed to it. Rather it has been seen that nepotism, exclusivity and divisions among families and communities may result from strong forms of social capital. NGOs seem to impinge on social capital both positively and negatively, depending on their intervention approaches. For example, as observed, some NGOs limit or obstruct social capital formation by providing direct services. Abom (2004) argues that this strategy, implemented mainly by Northern-led and Northern-funded NGOs, aims to reduce the immediate suffering of the 'poor' and meet their short-term visible needs in the hope that the 'poor' may get themselves back on their feet to 'escape poverty'. Such NGOs glimpse their role as the 'doer', placing low expectations of participation and commitment on beneficiaries.

It is agreed that this approach does provide for the human and physical relief and development of many 'poor' people. But many argue that this non-participatory approach minimises the wider social capital-

building processes, primarily by contributing to people's mentality of dependence on others, perpetuating top-down values and acting as a barrier to more fundamental structural change. Moser's (1996) investigation of urban squatter communities finds that communities served by top-down delivery systems, including NGO welfare programmes, had less developed community-based organisations. Buckland's (1998, 239) case study of some prominent NGOs in Bangladesh highlights how advances made by highly technical income-generation projects came at the expense of community self-reliance and the 'ability to communicate and promote organisation among the rural poor'. On the other hand, Dowla (2006) finds that the microcredit of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh had created and cultivated a substantial level of social capital by creating trust, norms and networks.

5.4 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

The concept of 'empowerment' is a buzzword. Empowerment is a process whereby individuals struggle to reduce personal powerlessness and dependency by having increased control over their lives (Lord and Hutchison 1997). It is highly advocated by prominent development actors and mainly NGOs (Bodja 2006). As a broad concept, it represents more than a simple increase in income level or access to material resources (Islam and Mia 2007, 15). Empowerment enables people to organise and influence change on the basis of their access to knowledge, to political processes and to financial, social and natural resources (Bodja 2006). The concept has been defined in the literature in two ways: individual empowerment and community empowerment, but there is no universally accepted definition. It means different things to different people, and it varies across countries and cultures. It provides rebalancing of the structure of power within a community by addressing control of resources, control of decisions, control of information and physical domination (INTRAC 2005). It helps to expand the assets and capabilities of the poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives. The basic elements of empowerment are rights, resources and support to information, inclusion/participation, accountability and local organisational capacity (Narayan 2002; Islam and Morgan 2012a).

Now the discourse of 'community empowerment' has become the common denominator of action for development agencies in a

global world (Tembo 2004; Islam and Morgan 2012a). The concept was used in development in the 1990s to replace community participation (Rifkin 2003). Rifkin uses the CHOICE (C=capacity building, H=human rights, O=organisational sustainability, I=institutional accountability, C=contribution and E=enabling environment) theory provided by the Nobel laureate Amartya Sen (Sen 1999). He shows how health equity can be achieved through community empowerment. The emergence of empowerment as a development topic is associated with the overall shift to alternative development as policies that are derived from mainstream development. Empowerment as an 'alternative development approach' is now approaching, which allows social aspects of development and local communities to enhance participation through using local resources. Laverack (2006) reviews a number of authors' 'domains' approaches of community empowerment, and then he develops nine components of these domains. This subchapter considers these nine domains, such as improving participation; developing local leadership; increasing problem assessment capacities; critical awareness of people's needs; building of organisational structures; improving resource mobilisation; strengthening links to other organisations and people; creating an equitable relationship with outside agents; and increasing control over programme management. These domains influence and allow individuals and groups to become better organised and mobilise themselves towards community change. Laverack states that there is considerable similarity between the domains. He adds, however, that there is no consensus on which particular combination is the most effective for community empowerment. Instead, the domains provide a guide to community development practitioners in their planning, application and evaluation of community empowerment in a programme context.

Laverack says, although these domains have been used by practitioners for many years, their purposeful integration in a programme context is a more recent idea. The role of the practitioner in using an empowerment approach has been conventionally concerned with facilitating the movement of people along a continuum. These domains give a more precise way of developing strategies for progression along the empowerment continuum. Laverack argues that this domain approach is very flexible and can lead to individuals and groups developing empowerment strategies to better identify their problems and solution through collective action.

NGOs have certain characteristics and advantages, which allow using those empowerment elements successfully compared to state implementing agencies. Wuyts et al. (1992, 134) argue that the empowerment approaches can work successfully with the NGOs' advantages, such as acceptance and relation with marginalised groups, organising participation, quick and flexible response, and cost-effectiveness. Even with such features, there are a number of arguments that suggest that NGOs perform differently to the aforementioned assumptions. Bodja (2006, 20) contends that NGOs are accused of hijacking genuinely needed development aid by well-established élites. These élites are also seen as new structures to perpetuate existing systems of neo-patrimonialism in poor communities. NGOs, mainly international ones, have expanded their structure that they have lost their efficiency in terms of delivering cheaper and quicker service. Moreover, these NGOs are often blamed on the grounds of misunderstanding local conditions and hiring amateurs with less skill (Bodja 2006, 20), which interrupt the target of community empowerment.

5.5 SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT: NEW PARADIGM FOR NGOS' DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Over the last three decades, three major schools of thought have dominated research on underdevelopment, namely growth model or stage theory, modernisation theories and dependency model or world system perspective. These 'borrowed concepts' and 'conventional development theories' and practices characteristically have come from outside. In such schemes, knowledge of and links with the recipients are virtually minimal. These not only imply ineffective 'transmission of development' but also indicate little recognition of the process of internal generation. VanSant (2003) describes that there are three ways by which the NGOs deliver their activities. First, relief and welfare—involves primarily the delivery of inputs, such as humanitarian assistance. Secondly, small-scale local development—involves service delivery and building of some local capacities for self-help. And thirdly, sustainable development systems—involve grass-roots mobilisation and policy advocacy.

Due to globalisation, the concept of development regarding the role of NGOs needs to consider some important indicators. The former Secretary General of the UN Kofi Annan (2001 in VanSant 2003) says, 'Today's real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated'. I might add that

development is often the ticket across these borders. Networking as a part of social capital is an aspect of globalisation and is a major strategic device for NGOs. Networks contribute to adaptability and problem-solving strategies. Networks can more swiftly discover and adapt new techniques. Networking, as John Clark (in VanSant 2003) notes, does not mean working only with like-minded groups; it means building partnerships to tackle issues that would be impossible without particular strategic alliances. In this connection, some new concepts, such as community empowerment, social network, social capital, self-reliance and sustainable development, have become important components and objectives of development. It is because of this that the change of NGOs' role, from relief to development (Davis 2006, 4), and from development to sustainable development, is now getting more attention. This approach is now overemphasised with a growing recognition of the role of non-government development organisations. In the context of globalisation, NGOs need to focus on expanding space for poor people (about 80 % of developing countries) to engage with emerging forms of states and markets for their livelihood advantages. This implies creating space, where the poor can effectively negotiate the global discourses and frameworks of development from their particular experiences and images of reality (based on local knowledge) (Tembo 2004). Within this discussion, I argue that the NGOs' interventions are now needed to reshape from the conventional approach. In this connection, there are three important development indicators which help to reshape the content of NGOs' development activities, where a new definition is emergent. These are:

- the great involvement of NGOs in development sectors in community level as a part of globalisation,
- the emerging of social capital with huge prospectus and
- NGOs' community empowerment movement towards sustainable development and self-reliance.

Within livelihood assets and institutional processes, 'knowledge' (including information) is the key indicator, which helps to achieve community empowerment. It is accepted that knowledge, in all its forms, is a means to the attainment of economic self-determination and self-reliance. Every aspect of human activity, in terms of the use of knowledge, is becoming a vital component of socio-economic and political interaction. This system evolves through human interactions, as well as with nature. The NGOs

are the key actors, which provide knowledge as their development interventions to the community people. Here, the main interaction happens between community people and development agencies (NGOs) (Tembo 2004). The NGOs' role for developing countries, such as Bangladesh, is more important, when a significant number of populations are out of this knowledge system. The most important thing is that knowledge can be considered as powerful when it can solve the practical problems of the community. Simply, this knowledge is called social capital, which can be invested directly for community well-being. It is accepted that the ultimate purpose of this knowledge, which is disseminated as interventions by NGOs for developing countries like Bangladesh, is to generate social capital and community empowerment for social development. Which knowledge approach should be used, either local or global or an integrated approach, is important for such a development. However, this is a debateable agenda, and globalisation makes this complex, where the NGOs' role becomes challenging.

Many research papers have been published on NGOs' role in sustainable development, where NGOs' capacity for social capital with IK's role has been criticised meticulously due to globalisation. Mathias (1995) claims that NGOs still appear to make little use of IK, though it is considered a valuable resource for social development. Roue (2003, 536) even finds that the fundamentalism of some NGOs does more harm than good to indigenous populations. Tembo (2004) calls it 'an actor-oriented development approach', which has failed to create a proper negotiation between global knowledge and local experience. Donor dependency is one of the ubiquitous criticisms of NGOs' activities, which is considered a big threat for indigenous initiatives (Devine 1996). Briggs (2005) argues that much effort is expended on designing and disseminating 'solutions', but too little time is spent on understanding the problem. Sillitoe (2000) claims that the confusion between scientific and indigenous knowledge in Bangladesh occurs in NGO level because of misunderstanding the IK agenda and the attitude of scientists. In keeping with these views, I have seen that there are three different strategies where the NGOs use knowledge approaches, such as 'patent', 'transfer' and 'mixing'. Each of these three strategies has been practised in Bangladesh, but the positive community change has still not been achieved. The third one gave some comparatively positive outcomes in many countries, but still there are few examples of where it has done so successfully. Stephens (2000, 11) shows how a new knowledge paradigm can be developed through integration of IK and GK. My argument is that it

is ideally possible, but the application of this new knowledge would be difficult to achieve its desired success. For example, Barr and Dixon (1998) show how the farmers' and fishers' local knowledge failed to integrate with the scientific knowledge into natural resources in Bangladesh. They argue that there were considerable intellectual difficulties and practical problems with this integration. However, there are some examples where this integration gave a positive outcome. For example, Howell (2003, 8) shows that this combination can offer a more appropriate, reliable and comprehensive early warning indicators of cyclones for vulnerable rural people in Bangladesh.

Very few research-based documents are available in Bangladesh. Khan et al. (2000) argue that the research and documentation of IK are still at an embryonic stage in Bangladesh. They provide a list of IK-related literature, but most of them are in forestry, agriculture, flood and irrigation, livestock, health and management. None of those is methodological or purely general development issues. However, some progress was found and some countries achieved some success, but these initiatives have been criticised. Moreover, the distribution of resources, power relations, sustainability of development, stand of culture and public health status is questionable.

Let us look at the literature, which considers how a new knowledge framework is possible, what the constraints are and how we can overcome them. For example, regarding rural development through agriculture, Briggs and Sharp (2004) show that this new approach should be matched without any challenges of its content, structure or value system of this view with modern science. One of the probable gaps is scientific language, which might be inadequate for describing the complex and changing experiences of farmers and other actors in rural development. Briggs et al. (2007, 247) examine the implications of the local environment knowledge in two Bedouin communities in Egypt and find that the traditional IK-based environmental knowledge cannot work successfully. Instead, they recommended considering it with economic and socio-cultural realities for sustainable development strategies. Tembo (2004) identifies these as 'ideological', 'language' and 'image conflict'. As a result, 'knowledge', other than those derived from formal science, is still observed doubtfully by many in the development community. It is feasible to be incorporated into development practices where indigenous technical solutions are straightforward and uncontroversial. But I argue that this attempt may not be possible for developing countries such as

Bangladesh, where sociocultural variations are enormous. In this connection, Craig et al. (2000) claim that lack of scaling out local capacity building and empowerment policies for 'scaling up' to the larger regional or national level could fail. Because of the lack of local roots, the large-scale plans can be consent from above, but 'participation' cannot be imposed from above. It develops differently at different paces, depending upon local context.

I argue that an ideal policy framework should be developed using both knowledge systems with consideration of local context, local resources and capital, local peoples' capacity, local institutional capacity and local people's needs. It should be developed through authentic people's participation, the community's ownership and within an environment where a joint/partnership initiative can run as a learning process. It is a new form of knowledge approach, which is the principal thrust of the research investigation. I argue that it is neither possible by patent nor transfer—neither possible by mixing nor integrating. I think that mixing is a way in which emphasis is given on the basis of immediate needs and requirements, and with sharing positive sides of both. It offers neither sustainability nor self-reliance.

Social capital has become an important analytical concept and policy tool within development (Bebbington 1997). From an analytical perspective, several researchers have tested whether social capital does underpin successful economic development and/or poverty alleviation programmes. Kay (2005) agrees with the importance of social capital for community development and considers it as 'social energy'. He states some of the results to emerge from a 3-year research project (CONSCISE Project) in Western Europe. Kay looked at the contribution of social capital and found that social capital made a great contribution towards community development. He found it as 'glue' (binds a community) and 'grease' (enables things to happen smoothly), which enhanced community mobilisation, capacity building, planning, partnership, community renewal, place management, social entrepreneurship and sustainability (Kelly and Caputo 2005; Ingamells 2006). In this way, social capital has been linked to collective norms, values and relationships reflecting the involvement of human individuals in 'a common life based on family and community'. Here development is generally defined as a social learning process, which serves to empower individuals and to involve them as citizens in collective activities aimed at socio-economic development (McClenaghan 2000). Mohan and Stokke (2000, 247) argue that development based on local and social

capital approach has moved away from holistic theorisation towards more localised, empirical and inductive approaches. A more liberal and populist approach to local empowerment centres on such an open-ended interpretation of participation described as a 'paradigm shift'.

As a non-threatening language of trust, networks, reciprocity and associations, social capital binds communities together and ensures both political and economic progress (Mohan and Stokke 2000). Social capital is the density of formal and informal institutions, which links other kinds of inputs into development and brings them centre stage. Importantly, these analysts perceive social capital as a vital local endowment leading to local development. At the level of macro-policy, the World Bank sees social capital underpinning a wide range of developmental initiatives (Fox 1997). The broad objective of social capital is to secure an asset-based community, which is a relatively new approach for participatory development. This process helps to join up environmental, economic, social, demographic, technological, political and other issues by empowering communities. In this regard, social capital becomes an important analytical concept and policy tool within development (Bebbington 1997; Brown and Ashman 1996). It is a vehicle which strengthens the bond with social networks. And the NGOs' role in this context is crucial. I argue that NGOs can bridge the gap between the government and the community, organise poor people, take collective action, fight for peoples' rights and represent the interests of the community members, facilitate the supply of inputs into the management process, mediate between people and the wider political party, networking, information dissemination and policy reform. For increasing social networks and community participation, the NGOs should respect the community's indigenous contribution as manifested in their knowledge, skills and potential.

Empowerment is also considered as an important outcome of community development (Barnes et al. 1997). Kamata (2000) argues that after the failure of top-down and blueprint development model 'participatory development' has been a frequently discussed topic for the new model of 'people-centred' development. The concepts of empowerment and IK have been introduced into the context of the developing world and are becoming widespread. Decentralisation (Brinkerhoff and Azfar 2006), citizen participation (Eklund 1999), downward accountability (Kilby 2006) and capacity enhancement need assessment (McNeil and Woolcock 2004) under community empowerment are now considered important aspects

for community development. Stubbs (2006) shows in his case study in Croatia that alongside concepts of globalisation and neo-liberalisation, a third process, that of NGOisation, needs to be addressed for successful development. Rifkin (2003) presents the progression of the concept of participation to the present term of empowerment, and the links among empowerment, equity and health outcomes. I stated earlier in this section that recently Laverack (2006) provided two case study examples of how community empowerment can be better conceptualised, planned and applied within a programme context by using a 'domains' approach in community development practices.

5.6   Conclusions

The chapter discusses different aspects of social capital and community empowerment with the role of NGOs for development activities. Despite many contradictions and criticisms, it is clear that indigenous and global knowledge systems have been considered as powerful tools for development. There are many aspects of the approaches of social capital and community empowerment where NGOs can play a significant role for sustainable development. I argue that there are still many opportunities for the indigenous NGOs where the application of these approaches can be justified, and these should be researched. This is also a concern that many NGOs still cannot reach the local poor people properly. On the other hand, globalisation brings many prospects as well as tensions, which may reconsider the process with NGOs' interventions. It appears that a qualitative investigation would be useful to formulate appropriate local-level planning for reaching local people and their development. However, I do re-emphasise three important aspects from the aforementioned discussion. First, the NGOs' role towards social capital and community empowerment is significant. Secondly, globalisation creates a number of opportunities for development, which we should consider according to the local conditions rather than applying straightforward, otherwise this approach may destroy many IK-based resources. Thirdly, it is a crucial policy issue that NGOs' development activities should follow an appropriate policy as an effective contribution towards socio-economic development.

NGOs' Capacity for Social Capital
in Bangladesh

Abstract This chapter discusses NGOs' capacity for social capital development with the evidence of two NGOs: Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) and Proshika working with two smith communities such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths located at Mostafapur Bazar, Faridpur, and Mirpur (1) Market, Dhaka, Bangladesh, respectively. The findings looked at the two programmes: the Markets and Livelihoods Programme (of PAB) and the Small Economic Enterprise Development (of Proshika) programme. Data were collected through a qualitative case study, where a multi-method data collection procedure, such as semi-structured interview, social mapping, participant observation, in-depth case study, focus group discussions and documentation survey, was employed. The Practical Action (formerly Intermediate Technology Development Group) was established by E. F. Schumacher, the author of the book *Small Is Beautiful* (1973). It started working in Bangladesh in the early 1980s in response to requests from a number of prominent national NGOs. In 1990, a Bangladesh country office was formally established with its head office in Dhaka. From 1997, PAB began implementing large-scale programmes in the technology areas of food production, agro-processing, small enterprise development and light engineering. The vision of the organisation is 'a world free of poverty and injustice in which technology is used to the benefit of all'. The mission aims 'to eradicate poverty in developing countries by developing and using technology, and by demonstrating results, sharing knowledge and influencing others'. On the other

hand, Proshika is one of the largest NGOs of Bangladesh, which started out in a few villages of Dhaka and Comilla districts in Bangladesh in 1975, although the organisation formally took its first step in 1976. The central ethos of Proshika is human development and empowerment of the poor, who gradually stand tall to achieve freedom from poverty by themselves. The working areas of Proshika cover most parts of Bangladesh. The main activities of Proshika are people's organisation building, human development training, practical skill development training, universal education, urban poor development, development policy analysis and advocacy, employment and income generation, small economic enterprise development, organic agriculture, livestock development, fisheries development, social forestry, irrigation and tilling technology service, sericulture development, housing, health infrastructure building, health education, development support communication, people's culture, disaster management and preparedness, policies for risk and vulnerability management, integrated multisectoral women's development, computer in development, assistance to other organisations, research and demonstration project, and legal aid services.

Keywords Proshika · Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) · Poverty alleviation · NGOs · Social capital · Social network · Mutual benefits · Enterprise development

NGOs' capacity for social capital is a relatively new area in development studies (Islam and Morgan 2012a, 2012b; Islam 2015a, 2015b). This approach is gaining increasing attention within the sustainable development paradigm, where the NGOs' microcredit versus macrocredit debate reaches its peak (Islam and Morgan 2012a). The literature on social capital suggests that NGOs' capacities are not limited to providing financial help to poor people, but also to creating capital available in the community, so that a community can be empowered, on the one hand, and the community people can use this capital for their development, on the other (Islam and Morgan 2012a). The local institutions are good sources of social capital. Putnam (1993, 1994) and Evans (1996) argued that the elements of social capital are features of social organisations, which facilitate, coordinate and distribute mutual benefits for the community people. In their recent studies, Mondal (2000), Huda et al. (2005), Mannel and Chowdhury (2005), Kabeer (2003) and Purvez (2003, 2005) find that

Bangladeshi NGOs are creating significant levels of social capital. Yet Mondal found that both governments' and the NGOs' social capital formation in Bangladesh is little known. This section considers NGOs' capacities according to the four fundamental components of social capital, namely collective action (interaction between individuals, groups, neighbours, communities and agencies), social trust, coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits, and sharing norms and values.

There were a number of areas, where both NGOs worked to create social capital. With the diverse information and opinions supplied by all groups of stakeholders (NGO staff members, community leaders and smiths), I present the common and general working areas of both NGOs. These included survey and PRA, group formation, family approach, information sharing, meeting and consultation, participatory plan, good staff behaviour, training, programme coordination, market chain, market map, link and work with local GOs–NGOs and community leaders, organisational reputation, jobs and income generation programmes (IGPs), cultural activities and social festivals, observation, communication, counselling and advocacy, monitoring and supervision. I highlight all of these areas, using some broader headings with some examples of NGOs' interventions, where these were frequently used. I acknowledge that it is very difficult to point out individually which NGOs' intervention creates a particular component of social capital, as one component is interrelated with others and therefore problematic to summarise.

6.1   Participatory Planning: Create Routes for Social Capital

Both NGOs constructed a certain level of social capital. Both NGOs followed the 'participatory planning' (PP) under the 'bottom-up approach', which is considered a scientific approach for social development. The advantages of this PP were that it was a process framed through consulting a number of groups, including themselves, and validating diverse groups' opinions and needs. Along these lines, the blacksmiths and goldsmiths found ways to exchange their views or create social networks. These networks increased opportunities for these poor people to improve their ability to work together, providing a safety net for social survival through being part of a group (Purvez 2005, 95). It was more than just public participation, but rather a spectrum of processes, such as involvement, engagement, negotiation, pre-mediation and mediation.

This route enabled these communities to plan activities by using their own traditional human and financial capital. This PP was a valuable tool for integration between local and other institutions, including programmes of NGOs. It established links between different levels of society and government administration, such as the community, Union Parishad (UP) and with the district. This kind of plan also improved peoples' motivation, learning and self-realisation, feelings of ownership, self-esteem and assessment capacities; these were helpful to identify problems and solutions. It generated constructive collaboration among stakeholders, who might not be used to working together, who often came from different backgrounds and might have different values and interests.

The data found that the collaborative collective action was motivated not only by self-interest, but also through mutual trust, which strongly promoted participatory development, social capital and empowerment through horizontal alliances (Mondal 2000). The NGOs' first linkage starts with the community members, community leaders and local institutions through a community survey. The field staff members took opinions from the community people and from other groups and institutions, such as UP, Thana, district, civil society and local GOs–NGOs. The staff members said that both NGOs provided their supports to a group rather than towards to the individuals, who had a business, business knowledge and experience, and cash capital. This participatory plan gave opportunity to the staff members to explain the reasons and the impacts of participation to the programmes. At the end, most people viewed broader participation as positive because this plan gave them a voice beyond the community leaders. The NGOs continued to share values and norms with blacksmiths and goldsmiths through their continuous supervision and monitoring services, though they had finished their particular project with them.

By using this participatory approach, both NGOs were successful in achieving the socio-economic improvement, reducing programme costs and ensuring that needs were met. Moreover, the NGOs created social capital by forming new norms of trust and association, largely between themselves and the smiths. However, the networks and formations of trust were mediated by the agency practitioners, and therefore created new bonds of dependency. The blacksmiths and goldsmiths were not fully clear about the objectives and goals of this PP. They found this plan complex and doubtful. In this regard, Buckland (1998, 237) argued that successful NGOs need to be both

lauded for the successful extension of social capital, but also implored to work at further localising it. In addition, one of the problems was that the communities in Bangladesh are not homogeneous. There were huge gaps in terms of social roles, power relations and social positions between and within different groups of the communities, such as local leaders, general community people, civil society and local administration. This argument was true in both NGOs as their approach demonstrated 'group capacity building' for collective action as the most difficult to accomplish, but was 'at the heart of the development process'. A group capacity was 'the ability to act together, not once, but consistently' to 'get ahead collectively'. Nevertheless, both NGOs were rarely evaluated on their group capacity building, largely due to measurement difficulties. However, the whole process of participatory plans created many rooms, where different elements of social capital were found.

6.2   Channel of Communications: Sharing Values, Norms and Mutual Benefits

There were a number of working areas where both NGOs developed channels of communications based on IK and GK interventions, including interpersonal contact, business networks, consultations, face-to-face meetings, sharing values, visits, training, monitoring and supervision. In all cases, the NGOs established this communication as the way of horizontal relationships with smiths, community leaders, local institutions and with their colleagues. The NGOs introduced new knowledge and technologies via traditional and informal channels of communication through interpersonal contacts, including family, friends and colleagues. The business networks began through such interpersonal contacts, which provided social support and self-confidence. A firm's trade network, concerning links between smiths and users of these goods and services, and its knowledge networks focused on the flow of information and exchange of knowledge (Malecki 1998). Such kinds of business projects were transpired through three types of networks, each serving a different function for the entrepreneur: networks for service and assistance, for example, to solve a specific problem; networks for information and structuring, especially for knowledge about whom to contact for a specific purpose; and networks for entrepreneurship and product development. However, I found that local entrepreneurs' networks and local traditional trust-based

relationships were critical, and it could not function as well as the NGO workers expected. In the absence of trust, communication was less frequent and full cooperation did not occur (Malecki 1998).

In the office environment, both NGOs followed a horizontal type of communication pattern, where everybody referred to each other as *bhai* (brother) *apa* (sister) among Muslims or *dada/didi*[1] among Hindus, as it was their office decorum. This norm was followed from the top to bottom. Both NGO staff members said that they had very good relations with their colleagues, and that they were helpful in exchanging information, knowledge and experiences. Both NGOs had face-to-face consultation meetings, where the smiths shared their knowledge and experiences with each other and benefited from this group environment. The staff members generally found these group activities to be dynamic processes for sharing information, updating technologies and improving skills among the smiths. However, I found that the smiths had difficulty with this kind of formal communication. Many of them could not understand the meaning and importance of such communication due to their poor education, and they partially failed to share their norms and values. Though within a group, an individual had the chance to develop both human and social capital by observing and practising group rules, group principles, values and norms, leadership and management skills. For instance, Proshika formed approximately 18,417 Group Federations[2] up to December 2007 all over Bangladesh (Proshika 2008). These federations brought people together in cooperation on mutually beneficial projects, thus enhancing communication, reducing objectification of others and increasing interdependence and trust. As a part of the institutional involvement, both NGOs permitted the smiths to use them as referees as many blacksmiths and goldsmiths got loans from NGOs, such as Proshika, ASA and Grameen Bank.

The frequency of face-to-face interaction through monitoring and supervision and group meeting among smiths and staff members generated common social norms ('social glue') and created predictable behavioural patterns (Svendsen and Svendsen 2004, 28). This process gave a sense of 'belonging' to the organisation, establishing trust amongst them in helping to develop a stake in organisational goals. Significantly, the meetings demonstrated an enormous amount of 'social energy' (Mannel and Chowdhury 2005, 1). The decision-making, reporting and internal learning operated as closely intertwined processes within the organisation. The minutes of meetings, periodic activity reports and reports of visits

across the organisation were maintained in written form. This practice created a constant flow of information throughout the organisation, both vertically, from centre to field and back to the centre, and horizontally, across subcentres, area and divisional levels. In this way, social capital defined as people's ability to cooperate enhanced economic growth in society (Svendsen and Tinngard Svendsen 2004, 31).

Both NGOs had different events for improving collegial relations. For example, the Gana Unnayan Procesta (GUP), the partner NGO of PAB, held a meeting called *shakal shava* (morning meeting) before starting their actual office work, where they openly discussed their office matters. I found this a good practice. Accordingly, SEED had a weekly staff meeting, where they did the same. Their monthly area staff meeting at head office was another event, where all area officers shared their observations, thinking and experiences in terms of what they were able to do, what they could not do and what they would aim to do in future. Then the head of the area officers passed this information to their area office colleagues. The relationships of shared values were not simply contractual, but based on a deeper collective commitment to social change. NGOs, donors and communities shared this vision for positive change through discussions on what constituted a 'successful' development intervention (Ebrahim 2004). Both NGOs claimed that they had some environs where they shared their agency values and norms with other agents. The Human Resource Policy Manual of PAB (Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) 2005, 15) denotes that Proshika has a human resource information system which ensures that 'the right person is in the right job'. The meetings and workshops helped to share the concerns, ideas, learning processes and experiences within the two or groups of employees. These benefited staff members not only by reducing the gaps, but also by improving and developing the employees' level of knowledge, teamwork, attitude, common objectives, values, ownership, participation and thereby ensuring appropriate conditions to achieve the organisational mission and goals.

Sharing IK with others, so to speak, meant that knowledge that was shared was respected. Sometimes this required a lot of care and attention. As Cajete (2000) pointed out, modes of indigenous experience are evident, not only through collective cultural expressions of art, stories, rituals and technology, but also through the more subtle and intimate expressions of individual acts of respect, care, words and feelings that are continually extended. In this connection, I found that the smiths' as well as the NGOs' practical knowledge was highly valued, stored and connected,

and used for other projects carefully. For example, the PAB staff members said that because of experience PAB's local resource collection techniques, service delivery strategies and management quality had improved. On the other hand, the smiths were more cooperative; they felt freer to share their experiences for their common benefit.

Both NGOs also encouraged effective partnerships with other local institutions, NGOs, GOs and donors to share their processes and values in searching for 'collective actions'. Both NGOs' partnership with donors was helpful in developing their practices, where both parties benefited from each other. With this connection in mind, Dave Brown (Brown 1994; in Ebrahim 2004) emphasises the *Mutual Accountability Model*[3] to make partnerships with NGOs and donors, which is, perhaps, the most challenging to develop, but also the most suitable for creating 'partnerships' among organisations. It is helpful in establishing a joint commitment among actors to a shared vision and goals in bridging an understanding from multiple perspectives, in building a collective capacity for social and institutional learning.

PAB's 'exposure visit' was one of the more successful communication events, where the local blacksmiths met urban blacksmiths and businessmen. In this way, the smiths increased their social networks, business and human skills, got new knowledge and renovated their existing knowledge and skills. They knew the urban market, urban industry and urban shops, and got exposure to urban life and society. For example, a blacksmith got new knowledge and skills from other blacksmiths. It was an opportunity where local blacksmiths were able to meet the urban wholesalers and obtain orders. On the other hand, a wholesaler was able to find the smiths and bought products at comparatively cheaper prices. This channel created a new 'business route', where the blacksmith coordinated his traditional skills with global knowledge and demands, and this IK could be integrated smoothly with GK. In this way, they found 'a new way of life and culture'. The PAB thought that it had significant social impact for sharing understanding about the urban community and new knowledge rather than just to build links with the urban community. This process helped to improve confidence and sometimes their mobility encouraged them to migrate to the urban community.

Both NGO staff members and smiths said that training interventions were helpful in creating human and social capital, such as improving skills, management, personal confidence and overall social awareness. In general, training is an exposure-changing programme for improving skills and

working experience. It introduced a new thrust of knowledge and increased a certain level of self-confidence. It found that this exposure could spread among other colleagues through 'cascade training'. Poston (1994) conducted a study in Sub-Saharan Africa and found that training systems, sharing local knowledge and traditional apprenticeship systems were more appropriate and contributed to a community's capacity. It was helpful to build up networks with the local smiths in connection with community leaders, local governments, local NGOs and cooperatives, and local business communities.

6.3   Relation Matrix, Market Channel and Market Map: Examples of Collective Actions

Both NGOs used the 'market/business channel', which was considered as an important social network. It enabled the smiths to enter into a competitive market, where they benefited through collective actions. They built up circles with different community people, community leaders, business partners, wholesalers, designers and suppliers. They had an opportunity to justify their existing skills. For example, when a blacksmith entered a market channel, then he needed to know where he got his raw materials (such as coal, iron, steel and electricity). Then he needed to build up relationships with customers, local markets and suppliers, where they sold their products. Sometimes, as I stated earlier, they made contacts with the wholesalers, who bought their products and then sold these in the urban markets. This process was helpful to generate opportunities for gaining social, human and financial capital. This is because, when a smith travels the market map, s/he has to follow a number of channels at different levels, which helps to acquire such capital.

PAB observed that markets matter to the poor. It was made increasingly clear that in tackling rural poverty market-related issues, including access to information, institutions, linkages and trade rules, were vital considerations. Failure to address these issues meant that the benefits of other developments threaten to bypass the rural poor. In considering this, PAB adopted market chains for mapping the market. The market chains comprised of economic actors, who produced and transacted a particular product, as it moved from primary producer to consumer. They included smallholders and larger-scale smiths, input supplies, traders, processors, transporters, wholesalers and retailers (Albu and Griffith 2005). The map included three components, such as market

chain actors and their linkages, enabling business environment factors, and business and extension service providers. This was a key route, which different groups could travel and access new knowledge bases and experiences. The aim was to identify inefficiencies, inequalities and losses, which could be remedied. The smiths could find the inequitable relationships between actors, and then help stakeholders realise mutual benefits by improving the system. The second component helped to find the 'enabling environment' factors. This knowledge could help determine avenues and opportunities for realistic action objectives, lobbying and policy entrepreneurship. The third component is the range of services that could potentially add input supplies, market information, financial services, transport services, quality assurance—monitoring and accreditation as well as technical expertise and business advice; veterinary services; and support for product development and diversification. The mapping 'services' identify particular service needs and their locations within the market chain in order to get an overall picture of the opportunities to improve market chain efficiency or equity. This mapping was a 'precursor' to subsequently assessing the most appropriate mechanisms for delivery of services, in terms of outreach, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

The market map proved a very useful way to visually represent and concisely correspond with knowledge concerning specific market chain actors, operations, contexts and needs to different stakeholders. The participatory market chain analysis (PMCA) is a key approach in operating the Market Map framework—changing the conceptual framework into a practical tool, which facilitated efficiency, improved coordination, stimulated innovation and reinforced trust within the market chain. This process of exchange worked based on bonds and trust (Purvez and Ahmed 2003). Actual and perceived disparities of power within the market chain could, however, get in the way of participatory analysis. In practice, the blacksmiths of the Mostafapur Bazar were not much aware of this market map, though they agreed that they understood that they were better organised regarding their trade than previously. The staff members stated that they could not organise them under this formal market map system, but they believed that the blacksmiths benefited from this market map in many ways. For instance, it facilitated the blacksmiths' sharing of information and reduced transaction costs. One solution was for facilitators to orientate weaker participants in advance so that they understood their role in these events and had realistic expectations of PMCA process outcomes.

Therefore, it proved that skills, knowledge and organisational capability through the market chain helped to earn greater income, more reliably, and sell products and increase profit in existing and new markets.

6.4   IGPs Versus Social Trust

At present, the IGP is an important indicator for sustainable development with a view to making people more self-reliant and their livelihoods more sustainable. One of the common and major interventions of Bangladeshi NGOs is to create IGPs (Islam et al. 2005, 17). Bangladeshi NGOs have been successful in this area, which results in socio-economic improvement. Both NGOs generated a significant number of income activities. The success of these programmes was related to the growth of social capital, in the form of new norms of trust and association, largely between the agency, practitioner and the participant (Buckland 1998, 237). Trust is at the very heart of the problem of social order and is crucial to the conduct of everyday life (Cook 2005, 6). Large-scale social exchange is not likely to occur without formal agreement unless firm social bonds, rooted in trust, have been established. Trust also brings all sorts of good things, from willingness to get involved in communities, to higher rates of economic growth by job creation (Putnam 1993, 1995; Knack and Keefer 1997). Due to the high unemployment rate in Bangladesh, we found that these IGPs helped to create 'trust' among smiths and NGOs. Trust is considered here as 'the chicken soup' of social life. It was observed that a particular solution was tailored depending on local circumstances to build other types of trust. The NGO staff members said that people often trust them more than they did members of their own community; it indicated that families would tell an NGO worker about a problem before telling a friend or neighbour (Abom 2004, 350). When trust was built up between actors or agents, it led to beneficial action through mutual cooperation (Purvez and Ahmed 2005).

The NGOs provided income facilities both by recruitment in the organisations and IGPs in the communities. These had a wide range of impacts on financial, human and social capital in the society. Proshika had 7,138 staff members in June 2007. It covered 24,181 villages, 2,109 slums, 1,919 unions (rural) and 328 wards (urban), 234 *Upazilas* and 59 districts until December 2007. Total primary group members were 2,804,287; households 2,146,985; poverty-free household 1,236,074; and beneficiaries 11,808,421. It is noted that it created 10.51 million

employment/self-employment facilities and it had 20.52 million human development training and 1.16 million practical skill development training participants (Proshika 2008). On the other hand, the PAB's reducing vulnerability programme successfully trained 5,265 beneficiaries, Markets and Livelihoods Programme 155 and infrastructure services programme 75 in 2006, and they claimed that they created a good number of income generation facilities in Bangladesh. An enterprise development enabled the poor beneficiaries to come out of poverty and settle on a sustainable basis. Chaudhury (2006) says that, on average, the beneficiaries of Markets and Sustainable Livelihoods (MSL) (PAB) were able to more than double their income within 3–4 years after receiving training and other business-related services from the project. A majority of the beneficiaries expanded their existing business/enterprises (71%), and more than a quarter of them started new businesses (26%). Through conducting a survey of 39 entrepreneurs in Dhaka City, Small Economic Enterprise Development (SEED) (2006) reported that after receiving interventions from SEED, the smiths' monthly average income was nearly doubled, and socially they were in a good position.

From the aforementioned discussion, this chapter found that the notion of social capital has been articulated as a concept, which is homogeneous and recognises primarily 'positive' social norms, values and practices. The fact is that the communities in both NGOs were rarely discrete entities, and one had greater power to define and legitimise meaning, values, norms and practices than another. Bangladesh and other poor countries are immersed in multidimensional relationships, whether these are hierarchical or reciprocal (Wood 2005). I observed that access to community membership and power relations was structured intra- and intercommunity conflict and competition. I can consider the statement of McClenaghan (2000, 571), who suggests that Putnam refers to the crucial 'bridging function' of social capital, but gives little attention to inequalities in the distribution of income or other economic, physical, environmental and social advantages, which structure relations in the field of community life. This finding can be compared with Bayat (2005, 10), who stated that the lack of consideration of power as an important shaping feature of social capital might lead to horizontal associations, while neglecting vertical relationship. Clearly, the traditional associational ties and forms of closure to which Putnam refers may well contribute to the reproduction of these advantages and, by implication, the reproduction of disadvantage and exclusion. Nevertheless, I observed that the social inequalities in terms of loan distribution, distribution of wealth and

resources, power relations, social control and decision-making in both communities made it difficult to get the benefits of social networks. This process clearly reinforced the very exclusion that social development activists in disadvantaged smith communities were struggling against to those of groups that are more powerful. Sometimes the social network or relationship pattern was seen more or less linked with interest-gaining processes, which sometimes stopped the natural flow of social relationships.

The chapter found that social capital is the fabric of society. However, the chapter supports the argument that the networks trust and shared values of social capital brought human values, knowledge, skills, expertise of blacksmiths and goldsmiths from their daily communication between and within their neighbours. These appear to be the raw material of communities as Coleman (1988) mentions. The blacksmiths and goldsmiths used their social networks, norms and values, and collective actions through their everyday interactions and contributed to economic and social development. These interactions were considered as 'bottom-up' phenomena, which were derived from their social connections and networks, such as trust, mutual understanding and norms of action. I found that, though there were some group conflicts among the local leaders, but their social connections and networks helped to build up a common sense of 'civic' responsibility that integrated them more than a collection of individuals. As a result, both communities improved 'we' feelings attitude and they understood the positive aspect of group interactions. I believe that, without a degree of common identification with forms of governance, cultural norms and social rules, it is difficult to imagine a functioning society as mentioned by Grootaert (1998) and McClenaghan (2000).

However, the contributions of social capital were found in the study as follows:

- The norms and values of blacksmiths and goldsmiths were the form of the basis of their social identity as they earned these distinct characteristics through their daily practices. The community people recognised them in this way.
- The social interactions and networks provided them the instruments for productive output, which started their skills learning process to product marketing. This process brings social mobility, alliance, social adjustment and adaptation capacities, and improved their leadership quality.

- The social trust and cooperation offered them an indispensable unity in the social context to ensure that collaborative efforts were integrated in a sustainable way, where social cohesion and harmony were mutually beneficial and important for their ultimate output.

In networks-based resources (networks referring to Coleman's 'structure of relations'), social capital was seen as significant in an economic development to the smith communities on marketing networks. The external resources, such as loans, training, counselling, monitoring and supervision, were essential for such kinds of small enterprises. However, cooperation was most important to link with one another that the NGO provided to the smith communities. These kinds of enterprises run through cooperation in a number of market channels. Indeed, the constituent elements, such as trust, norms and networks, that they achieved from their communities were important to maintain their day-to-day life. This finding is supported by Malecki (1998). Buckland (1998, 241) asserts that trusts, norms and networks are essential for achieving indigenous efforts at community development. Local social cohesion and mobilisation ensured the vibrancy and success of both local community and broader state development projects. The local cohesion and mobilisation were viewed as the willingness and capacity to cooperate and engage in collective action for mutual benefit. Like Woolcock (2001), this chapter found both bonding (between close family members, friends and neighbours) and bridging (between more distant associates and colleagues) social capital, but it was observed that social capital was not created in a direct way; rather within the market map, the local producers used the metaphor of various kinds of commodities from consumer goods to durable goods. Then social capital took time to build and hence represented an investment for future return, such as forging relationships or membership in associations, but differed from other investments in that the process itself could provide satisfaction.

6.5   Conclusions

The chapter has identified some critical aspects of NGOs' interventions, where social capital approach is more feasible among the smith communities in Bangladesh. The analysis shows that the NGOs were facing some contradictions to create social capital because of the low level of education of their beneficiaries, poor socio-economic and cultural conditions,

non-cooperation from community leaders, lack of government initiatives and NGOs' donor dependency. I observed that the NGOs partially failed to create a congenial atmosphere in the market, where the smiths could sell their products. In some cases, the NGOs could not build up effective networks with the negotiation with other community people, GOs' initiatives, community leaders and with the external donors. In addition, the evidence shows that NGOs' political networks had developed a negative trend towards human services. More or less both NGOs had money-laundering tendencies, and they had leadership and management crises, and donor dependency. It is important that both NGOs recognised the spontaneous participation problem from the community people and community leaders. In this connection, NGOs' social trust with community people and GOs became hard-nosed. Still we have seen that the NGOs' contribution in social capital development was incredible in some areas, for example, participation of the smiths in the development activities, social networking and sharing mutual benefits, collective action, leadership and income generation. However, the overall assessment of NGOs' capacities was convincing in terms of community awareness, sharing values and norms, introducing new technologies, increasing human rights and problem assessment capacities, responding to financial crisis, encouraging participation and mobilising local resources.

NOTES

1. *Bhai/apa* and *dada/didi* translates as brother and sister (*with the former referring to a Muslim dialect of Bangla and the latter referring to a Hindu dialect of Bangla*) who themselves think that they are equal to each other who hold the same power with their different responsibilities. In one sense, it is a relation where 'power relations' are minimised.
2. The federation formed a group of people which is formed by Proshika. It created this federation from a union/ward level to district levels. It has formed 18,244 group federations (14,899 village federations, 1,863 slum federations, 1,316 union federations, 136 upazila federations and 30 urban area federations) till June 2007 (Proshika 2007).
3. In which multiple actors seek to build shared values and goals as a basis for joint action and where there are compacts of mutual responsibility rather than formal contracts.

NGOs and Community Empowerment in Bangladesh

Abstract This chapter discusses NGOs' capacity for community empowerment with the evidence of two NGOs in Bangladesh, which were discussed in Chap. 6. The concept of 'empowerment' is one of growing interest in development discourse. It is a process through which individuals struggle to reduce personal powerlessness and dependency and increase control over the circumstances in which they live their lives. It is advocated by prominent agents in economic and social development and especially by NGOs. As a broad concept, it represents more than a simple increase in income level or access to material resources. Empowerment enables people to organise and influence change based on their access to knowledge, to political processes and to financial, social and natural resources. This chapter considers the nine domains of community empowerment suggested by Laverack (2006). These are improving participation, developing local leadership, increasing problem assessment capacities, critical awareness of people's needs, building of organisational structures, improving resource mobilisation, strengthening links to other organisations and people, creating equitable relationships with outside agents and increasing control over management. The evidence investigated NGOs' capacities for these components in the context of competing IK and GK approaches. The evidence found a number of areas of NGOs' capacities for community empowerment and gathered opinions through different sources, including field data.

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Keywords Community empowerment · Community participation ·
Problem assessment · Local leadership · Resource mobilisation · Social
enterprise

7.1   Community Participation Versus Community Empowerment

Community participation in all its forms has become an increasingly important aspect of urban and rural policy in both north and south (Lyons et al. 2001, 1233). Lyons et al. (2001, 1233) find that participation has a significant effect on empowerment for sustainable development, which Friedmann (1996) calls 'socially sustainable conditions'. The discourse of participation and empowerment has become the common denominator of action for development agencies in a global world (Tembo 2004, 1025; Islam, Siti Hajar and Haris 2013) The literature suggests the terms 'participation' and 'empowerment' are used interchangeably (Rifkin 2003). Participation is now considered an important component for securing peoples' decision-making and equitable opportunities. It must not be seen as a short-term or casual involvement of people. It is a 'social experience shared by individuals and groups, who live in economic and social relations to each other in a society' (Malki 2006).

Participation is a prerequisite to collective action (Mondal 2000, 463) and an integral element of economic improvement and social change efforts (Bowen 2008, 65). The community workers should work on assessing community feelings through their active participation and then transform these into constructive community action plans. The participatory plan (PP) of the NGOs was most useful where the smiths (blacksmiths and goldsmiths) improved their confidence, traditional attitude, experience and skills. It was helpful to justify and verify their thinking within institutional arrangements. Both NGOs believed that more participation on such kinds of institutional arrangement decreased individual fears, apprehensions and limitations, on the one hand, and increased their 'social mobility' towards social empowerment, on the other.

The staff members of both NGOs said that they began this participation through their community survey, where they investigated all types of social networks and encouraged the active participation of local people. The staff members also said that this kind of participation transpired

extensively through a 'market chain' (as stated earlier in this chapter), where all types of social networks were established through 'collective actions' to achieve greater community empowerment. It was perceived as 'genuine' or 'real participation', which took place as now the populace had a voice in defining or diagnosing its problems. Therefore, development had a solid chance of meeting the real needs of the population. It was such participation which was started, or at least sanctioned, by the interested 'non-élite' population, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths at the beginning of their decisions. It matured into a 'social force' exercising a critical mass of participating communities 'enabled to enter into spheres of decision or action' beyond their immediate problem-solving (Hamyaran 2006). In this sense, participation was seen as a 'stable, continuous and dynamic process', rather than 'infrequent, occasional and broken' within some contexts and not others to keep it in compliance with the preferences of the powerful actors. It gave smiths, especially the 'hitherto excluded', the opportunity to manage their own affairs, influence public decisions and participate in activities that affected their lives.

PAB arranged the exposure visit, where a blacksmith had a chance to talk directly with other blacksmiths, brokers, wholesalers and businessmen (both urban and rural), designers and suppliers. Many blacksmiths said that their exposure visits and participation in different blacksmith enterprises in Dhaka improved their confidence and working attitude. They were more interested and felt more confident in exploring Dhaka further on those occasions. This gave them more freedom and democratic rights as it was formed by the people and for the people. It was also essential for the repositioning of political power in favour of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development. However, the staff members of PAB agreed that they were unsuccessful in some cases as they could not bring out the smiths from the exploitation of local élites, such as wholesalers. Such participation was helpful to minimise the exercise of power. The participation inevitably became simply 'a concrete manifestation of a broader political process of democratisation' (Dudley 1993, 160). In Bangladesh, NGOs created many examples of working with poor people, where such kinds of participation reached a practice of 'authentic development' accomplished by 'passive subjects'. This ultimately turned smiths into 'active subjects' that made their own dignity, social identity and social position into their livelihood struggle.

7.2   USE OF SCIENTIFIC TOOLS: INCREASE PROBLEM ASSESSMENT CAPACITIES

Under the 'bottom-up' participatory development, the improvement of problem assessment capacities among the poor people is now a crucial area for community empowerment. It is more important in developing countries such as Bangladesh, where a significant part of the population is illiterate, and they are not fully conscious about their problems. However, their opinions and decisions are important, regarding the sources and causes of problems, impacts and constructive solutions. The NGOs should have the capability to assess these in the local context.

The tools the NGOs use are important to assess local people's attitudes, culture, norms and values, and political situation. Both NGOs used a number of scientific tools, such as community surveys, participatory market chain analysis, market assessments, PP approach, rapid market surveys (RMS), participatory rural appraisal (PRA), training, technology fairs and also monitoring and supervision as part of their assessment methods. The NGOs developed these scientific tools through the 'trial-and-error' process. These tools were particularly useful to new entrepreneurs to increase their assessment capacity. The RMS was used to assess the present market situation. The smiths found this an easy and useful method, where they could record all necessary information. For example, the milk marketing (for milk processors) of MLP (PAB) included the following information: the name of the milk processor and address, daily receiving amount, form of milk (e.g. solid content), processed items, source/purchasing point, suppliers, milk price (Tk/lit), payment, requirement and possibilities of sale and extra requirement of milk. It was helpful to assess the total market situation, including current supply, price and extra requirement of quantities of milk.

PAB offered some other scientific tools to the smiths, such as learning log sheets, relationship matrixes, need assessment tools and the market actors' behaviour assessment tools. In this way, PAB could assess the most useful resources through identifying specific actions, contributed team success and actions for better in future. The relation matrix was useful to assess the possible outcomes in favour of producer groups, where all possible related parameters/indicators were identified. This matrix was able to locate the current and future baselines based on possible parameters. It shows how the milk producers and milkman relationship was developed in terms of information sharing, quality control, price

settlement and improvement of trust. It was also helpful in improving social networks and social trust among the different groups of the community.

Proshika developed a number of scientific techniques and measurements for proper performance assessment of the smiths, staff members and trainers. These included the methodologies to develop good trainers, strategies for speaking, indicators of good trainers, questionnaires of producers' personal characteristics, producers' evaluation form and indicators of training demands, principles of communication, learning strategies, techniques of memorising capacities, experienced-based learning circle, visual aids of training and principles of group learning. The SEED staff members followed the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) strategies and PRA, which they used to provide statements about the 'needs' and 'problems' on the running projects. In order to do this, they had to complete the weekly monitoring schedule form and submit the loan monitoring report. They also had to make a report on programme performance and problem identification to the area coordinator. SEED used to gather experiences from their other projects, such as microcredit.

Through considering the appropriateness and evaluating the impact of these tools, I found that many of the smiths and the staff members could not own the global knowledge-based assessment tools. The main contradiction was that those tools were not developed through considering the local context; rather the NGOs used them directly, which they developed from the global development interventions. PAB used many tools, such as the market chain analysis, PRA, development frameworks (such as sustainable livelihood framework from DFID), which were to some extent helpful to increase their problem assessment capacities. SEED had links with many donor agencies, such as DFID, ADB, World Bank and IMF, and some reputed research and educational institutions, such as the University of Bath and the University of East Anglia.

7.3   GROUP WORK PRACTICE: INCREASE LEADERSHIP EXERCISE AND QUALITY

Leadership is an important determinant for organisational performance. The key elements of leadership are vision, innovation, decisiveness and a strong people orientation (VanSant 2003). It is one of the keys to realistic assessment of problems and opportunities, establishment of priorities and

the marshalling of internal and external resources to address these priorities. In effective institutions, leadership does not reside only at the top; elements of it are evident at various levels of the organisation. The leaders, their selection, their training and skills, and the balance between their economic and traditional influence in the community are important considerations in this leadership pattern (Jones and Laverack 2003).

Both NGOs observed that most of the communities in Bangladesh suffer from leadership-related problems. First, the NGO staff members developed leadership for two reasons: one was that they were working with group-based enterprises, where a leader had a vital role to maintain and sustain these group activities; and secondly, the NGO workers wanted to share their organisational values and norms with a leader, who would be able to disseminate and share these values and practices with his/her group members. The staff members found that the reputable leaders are better than the appointed leaders. This kind of leadership can be compared with Gramsci's[1] 'organic' intellectuals, who are developed through their own social processes. This study found that these kinds of leaders were developed in a group through market channel and business plan, involved people with different existing associations and clubs, and made links with different social networks.

PAB developed local leadership through making partnerships and building forums, such as producer group forum, private service provider forum and business development service (BDS) provider forum. As a lead NGO, PAB provided financial, managerial and technological supports to the partner NGOs. For instance, GUP worked with the blacksmiths at Mostafapur Bazar under this partnership. The PAB staff members claimed that at the local level these sorts of forums played significant roles towards exchanging information and knowledge. PAB had 23 types of producer groups with 455 members with association of partner NGOs. On the other hand, as stated earlier, by December 2007, Proshika had established 220 area development centres (ADCs), 149,776 peoples' organisations and 18,417 group federations (Proshika 2008), which were maintained with proper organisational rules and regulations, principles and values. These were helpful for developing leadership and leadership qualities among the smiths. Proshika also formed business associations. These associations had a number of activities regarding local leadership. The staff members and the local community leaders confirmed that a good number of their leaders participated in the local administration elections, and many of them were elected as UP chairmen, ward members and ward commissioners.

Both NGO staff members claimed that they had leadership training, which they served throughout their programmes. Significantly, it was a fact that I did not find any kind of training manual on leadership training, nor did the community people agree with this opinion except business training. This finding was established by the office documents and observation methods. The staff members of GUP (partner NGO of PAB) stated that leaders could never be made through formal training, rather so it actually develops naturally in the society through practising and dealing with their group activities. Gramsci argues that the 'organic' intellectuals are genuinely popular, more conscious and much committed in a constant struggle to achieve both domination and hegemony (Morgan 1987). Some staff members of both NGOs agreed that they had no specific leadership training or training manual, but they always included leadership concepts in their business training.

Although I am in agreement with such observations, I found a contradiction between the opinions that the stakeholders provided during focus group discussions (FGDs) and case study sessions. The NGO staff members said, 'We have a wide range of leadership training', which was a false statement by these NGOs. The NGOs also needed to provide management training, which would be helpful for improving leadership as both groups of traders were involved in their business management. Both NGOs claimed that they provided business and management training to all of their service users. However, I found that only a very few of the smiths got such kind of training practically.

7.4   More Social Networks and Capital: Improve Resource Mobilisation

The ability of the community to mobilise resources, both from within (land, property, authority), and the ability to negotiate resources from beyond itself (training, finances, equipment)are important factors towards capacity building (Jones and Laverack 2003). One of the major functions of the NGOs was to improve resource[2] mobilisation. Network structure(s) can create enabling conditions for the mobilisation of social capital within communities and for people to feel empowered (Dale et al. 2008, 143). As stated earlier in this chapter, social networks helped many of the smiths by providing work opportunities, financial support, justice and social security (Purvez 2005).

Intense networks of interaction also probably widen the participants' sense of self; developing the 'I' into the 'we' or enhancing the participants' 'taste' for collective benefits (Putnam 1995). Zain and Ng (2006) argue that network relationships elicit and inspire firms' initial internationalisation intention, internationalisation pace and pattern; influence firms' market selection decision and entry mode decision; access to additional relationships and established channels and to local market knowledge. These help firms in lowering costs and minimising risk of internationalisation, and constrain firms' future scope and market opportunity. It was therefore seen that resource mobilisation was helpful to utilise many social, financial, natural, cultural and human capitals.

Both indigenous NGOs were working to develop local resources through coordination of social networks and integration of knowledge systems. The NGO staff members believed that due to the shortage of financial (e.g. donations) and physical capital (e.g. technology, technological tools) they needed to acquire capital from the donors, but they were also working to mobilise local human, social and natural capital. Both NGOs shared knowledge through a number of activities, such as exposure visits, training, and supervision and monitoring. It was seen that both NGOs used many local resources, such as local trainers (e.g. cascade training) and local raw materials.

Both NGOs had relations with other organisations as a part of their programme and experience-sharing scheme. The NGO staff members confirmed that they encouraged and helped their beneficiaries to link with other organisations. They invited the local people, administration and institutions to their different events, such as training periods, and community survey. These NGOs shared their opinions through discussions, meetings and workshops. They had also training exchange programmes with many organisations and encouraged smiths to attend the local fairs, where they involved the local administration and institutions. Through partnership programmes, PAB made excellent links with many local small NGOs, such as GUP.

The PAB file documents showed that the MSL worked with a number of organisations as a part of this partnership scheme between April 2006 and March 2007. These organisations were Bangladesh Agricultural University, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, Wheat Research Centre, Rural Development Academy, Vocational Training Institute, Palli Karma Shahyak Foundation, CARITAS Bangladesh, Parbatya Boudha Mission Bangladesh and Art Institute of the University of Dhaka. They also participated in the 'local market development forum' and shared experience with information,

communication and technology (ICT)-based organisations. The SEED staff members claimed that they had good relations with many market- and business-level GOs and NGOs.

The MLP programme of PAB emphasised capacity building, partnership development and collaboration between GOs and NGOs. This programme provided a significant number of credits, inputs and amount technical assistance, which were mobilised and channelled to the project beneficiaries. For example, a number of partner NGOs had started an enterprise development loan with MLP, where Tk. 21,787,500.00 (£213602) was credited to 1011 small enterprises. Mondal (2000, 34) found that under the saving scheme of Proshika the development workers encouraged their target people to save a small amount of money from their everyday income to face their crises and further investment for more income. I found that about half of their income or profit was used on human development or placed in savings. According to a SEED office data sheet, their total investment was Tk. 177,756,941 (£17,42710), net profit Tk. 66,71,440 (£65,406) and self-sufficiency was 162 from July 2006 to June 2007.

7.5 Social Enterprise: NGOs' Holistic Approach

The concept of 'social enterprise' is a recent feature of NGOs' activities. Freer Spreckley first developed the term 'social enterprise' in 1981. The social enterprises are businesses with social objectives (Cheung 2006), whose surpluses are primarily reinvested to achieve social objectives or used in the community, rather than being driven to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. It is a means for non-profit agencies to maximise their mission-related performance through the development of new ventures or by reorganising activities to improve operational efficiency (Gray et al. 2003). The first Bangladeshi Nobel Laureate (in Peace) Professor Mohammad Yunus introduced this concept with his NGO Grameen Bank, which has now become a new dimension of social development in the NGO sector.

In NGOs' activities, the term includes privately owned ventures that have a very strong blended financial and socially responsible return on investment. It looks into how locally available traditional resources can be a viable policy option for societal transformation. It also encourages improving a continuous engagement from local communities, on the one hand, and secures sense of ownership to them, on the other. It makes stronger community development capabilities, maximising social

impacts and improving vision for organisational sustainability. I think that there are many reasons why Bangladeshi NGOs should follow this social enterprise approach for their projects, such as with blacksmiths and goldsmiths. The criticisms of the NGOs' microcredit programmes, such as commercial attitude and poor people's exploitation, furnished the issue as a hot development agenda. It is now proved that the microcredit is not a kind of programme to achieve a comprehensive development strategy for safe sustainable human development as it targets a particular area of development.

It was observed that it secured neither individual development nor that of the community as whole, where social enterprise can be effective to achieve broader development, as it attempts to secure interactions with many social networks, on the one hand, and its impact is more holistic and comprehensive, on the other. This strategy empowers the local people to generate their own capital in a sustainable manner. This approach can work significantly, where many local NGOs are facing funding crises and where NGO–state relationships are often fraught with tension. The representatives of state institutions may see NGOs as a threat and are often intent on keeping a tight eye on their activities, especially those perceived as being potentially profitable (Phillips 2005). This approach can be used as an alternative mode for empowering citizens. Cheung (2006) finds this an innovative NGO approach (in meeting new needs), which creates huge job facilities, enhances integration into labour markets, becomes self-reliant and increases the density of community network and cross-sector partnerships.

The positive side of NGOs' activities as social enterprise is that this works through an effective partnership. The aforementioned description illustrates that it is one kind of joint venture where the NGO is a partner that works with the government and other business sectors. One of the merits of this partnership is to take social responsibility and accountability from the multiple agents as it does not work with one wing. The best value of this approach is that it shares all earning benefits with the smiths, where they own this enterprise. It improves their dedication, sacrifice, care and attention to the enterprise. I mentioned earlier in this chapter that SEED established a partnership with the business sectors, social enterprise agencies and government. The goal of SEED was to promote sustainable income growth amongst the micro and small entrepreneurs, and create employment opportunities for the poor. Until June 2006, the SEED disbursed Tk. 725.86 million (£6.60 million) among 5,640 entrepreneurs. Up to

December 2006, a total of 13,441 entrepreneurs (40 % female) were organised at 76 Proshika ADCs, and Tk. 742 million (£6.74 million) loans were disbursed among them. A total of 43,095 new jobs (54% full time and 46% casual) were created (Proshika 2008). Both formal and non-formal training was given to around 2,000 entrepreneurs. The business counselling, technological and marketing extension supports were provided to them. It included some other supportive activities, including social scheme, relief and rehabilitation. This social scheme provided a number of facilities, such as scholarships, further loans, medical and job facilities, for SEED members. This was more comprehensive, holistic and accountable for a sustainable community. One SEED staff member compared its social accountability with the bank sector in Bangladesh:

> Banks never go to the community; banks do not provide business plan, training, motivational and counselling supports to the community; they don't have social schemes; rather SEED goes to the community and it builds up social networks with different sectors.

As a socially responsible organisation, Proshika widened its experience and skills base by carrying out relief and rehabilitation activities during the floods of 1984, 1987, 1988, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2002, 2004 and 2005; the cyclones of 1985, 1991 and 1997; the tornadoes of 1989, 1996, 2005 and 2006; and the *monga*[3] of 2005. The floods of 1988 and 1998 and the cyclone of 1991 were colossal and imposed unprecedented damage. During the 1988 flood, *Proshika* carried out an extensive relief and rehabilitation programme at a cost of Tk. 71.90 million (£0.65 million). The relief and rehabilitation programme carried out during the 1998 flood was even more extensive, involving a cost of Tk. 192.30 million (£1.75 million) (Proshika 2008). The activities conducted in response to these disasters were food and baby food distribution, running health camps, repairing tube wells and latrines, vaccinating cattle and poultry and providing fodder for them, loan disbursement, seed distribution, etc. With such long and successful experience of carrying out disaster rehabilitation, Proshika played a significant role in mitigating the sufferings of the poor people affected by the 2007 cyclone and restoring their livelihood opportunities.

It was seen that both NGOs' enterprise schemes offered the prospect of a greater equity of economic power and a more sustainable society by combining market efficiency with social and environmental justice. These were social mission driven organisations, which dealt with goods or

services for a social purpose. The necessity to deliver on financial, social and environmental performance targets was often referred to as having a 'triple bottom line'. Here, the aim was to generate profit to further their social and environmental goals, which helped to consider NGOs as 'social firm' encompassing trusts, cooperatives, associations and institutional belonging. These social objectives helped to tie together the power of local communities and fabricated a wide range of goods and services. The benefits of social enterprise included enhanced livelihoods and employability for the marginalised groups of blacksmiths and goldsmiths; production of reasonable cost, good quality, socially useful and environmentally sustainable, mobilisation of public and private resources to advance social justice and economic opportunity (Jackson 2005). Those brought a change towards a significant new dimension of non-profit performance.

7.6   COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING: STRENGTHEN LINKS WITH OUTSIDE AGENTS AND IMPROVE CRITICAL AWARENESS ABOUT NEEDS

Empowerment has been seen as the transfer of control over decisions and resources to communities or organisations. It is also seen to lie in improving a community's negotiation with external agents. It does not work as a facilitator of rights in general, but as a realisation of rights to enable greater control over livelihood resources (Lyons et al. 2001, 1234). The evidence shows that the NGOs used mainly four types of communications channels for improvement of critical awareness about the community needs. These were aid channel and knowledge transfer, partnerships and links with like-minded GOs–NGOs, PP and media, including website connection.

Both NGO staff members explained that, due to the shortage of financial capital and lack of government help, they had to depend on external agents, such as donors, as an 'aid channel'. But they confirmed that this 'aid channel' was helpful to build-up their capacity, particularly the management skills, new technology and innovation, and development policy between the north and south. The NGO staff members said that the donors had diverse experience working with different countries and with different communities. These networks were frequently international in reach for the purpose of fostering social change (Bebbington 2004). They were called 'transactional networks' (Radcliff 2001), where both NGOs were embedded. However,

this study found that the NGOs faced two types of contradictions. One is 'how such transferred global knowledge able to consider the local issues in Bangladesh?' The second is 'how the NGOs overcome the problem as it is difficult to talk glibly of northern and southern NGOs as discrete entities?'

The evidence shows that the outcome was a notion of empowerment, which focused on the intellectual and social assets of communities or organisations. Though the NGOs stated that their relationships with outside agents including donors were horizontal, it was in fact practically vertical. Many authors consider this as 'patron–client relations' (PCR).[4] Because of power relations, the donors and NGOs' relationships were as 'providers-recipients' under the certain terms and conditions. Through searching financial sources, I found that this PCR was less in Proshika than PAB; this is because Proshika already increased a substantial amount of funding through their microcredit and savings schemes. About 70 % of their fund now comes from its own budget. But PAB's total fund comes from central office and they have no microcredit and saving schemes.

It is necessary for the NGO to have precise knowledge and understanding of local people and their problems. This approach challenged the conventional development approach in which development strategies were imposed from the top. Laverack (2006) argued that rather than using a formal education approach the practitioners should help the people by working with them in small groups, analysing why some people are facing bad conditions and others not, why some people are living in poor conditions and others not, and what local, state and national actions might remedy their particular circumstances. This kind of notion helped them to increase their level of critical awareness. This was called 'critical thinking' or 'critical consciousness' (Jones and Laverack 2003).

PAB has partnership programmes through shared responsibility to effect change, mobilise resources and exchange experiences (Jones and Laverack 2003) with local NGOs, such as GUP. The MSL programme worked with 70 rural NGOs and 200 private 'like-minded' service providers together to ensure 12,646 rural smiths' (e.g. smallholder farmers, non-farm enterprises and rural potters) access to skills, credit, information and technology, and market linkage until 2006. More than 20 government offices in project areas supported the smiths by either improving their own training curriculum or providing training, credit and other material support (Chaudhury 2006). The NGO staff members claimed that their collaboration with other NGOs, GOs and smiths was established successfully.

Both NGO staff members claimed that they followed the PP approach through PRA, FGD, dialogue, campaign and rally, and they successfully shared knowledge with the community people. The NGOs also knew how they would develop their work according to the needs of the smiths. This plan included local culture and practice, peoples' choice, needs and demands, and norms and values. It was a 'learning process', where an organisation learned and found the suitable interventions. Both NGOs took initiatives to find out the real 'mentors' in the local community from whom the smiths learned about their products. The NGOs also had continuous interaction with the smiths through monitoring and supervision via mobile phone. In an evaluation of the MSL project, it was found that the programme had been able to change the real-life story of many rural smiths by facilitating such technology. I found that this kind of technology was used in market assessment Chaudhury (2006, 64) argued that the MSL programme of PAB for poverty alleviation through the adoption and implementation of the BDS approach was successful. The staff members described this as 'knowledge flow', which was documented and shared with other local communities across the country.

Both NGOs had individual websites, which were accessible to the beneficiary groups. PAB reported that during the reporting period of May 2006, 16 articles were published on different technologies of MSL programme in the most popular national daily newspaper named *The Prothom Alo* which were read by 100,000 readers. The Bangladesh Radio broadcasted ten programmes on the small businesses. By assessing letters, phone calls and discussion, the radio authority decided that at least 20,000 rural listeners benefited from this broadcasting. The private and national TV media provided coverage on the rural technology exhibitions, product fairs and training activities on several occasions. On the other hand, Proshika made over 245 audios and 819 participatory videos produced on democracy, human rights, gender equality, good governance and awareness about environmental protection.

7.7   DECENTRALISED AND AUTONOMOUS MANAGEMENT

At present, 'empowering organisational structures' in terms of management sufficiency, control over management and 'ensuring mutual support groups' (Laverack 2006) are important elements of NGOs' work. Many authors state that, in an increasing global world, whether a local NGO is using financial resources from its own funds is an indication of its move

towards 'self-reliance' and relieving donor dependency. From this point of view, I found that both NGOs had donor dependency for their funding, though I stated earlier that Proshika already created a substantial amount of its own funding.

Both NGOs had independent advisory and management boards, and they were adequate to control through autonomous and decentralised management. The MLP of PAB was managed by the head office located at Dhaka, linked with their main office in the UK. The head office of SEED of Proshika was located in Dhaka. According to the opinions of area office, they had full autonomy to work, and their central office did not impose any administrative decisions on them. The allocation of funds was through the head office. The head office took all working decisions according to the needs and demands of the local communities. Both NGOs had more organic relationships at community level; they seemed the most appropriate service delivery partners and were invited more and more by multilateral organisations to implement these programmes. However, I suggest that their organisational structures did not fit the new large-scale requirements; their accountability systems were not matching either and they might end up in difficult political situations with both governments and the populations they serve.

I reviewed the organisations' capacity development, followed by a model provided by Horton et al. (2003). They show how an organisation can achieve its organisational capacity through a number of internal and external resources gradually. These include monitoring the external environment, reviewing the organisation's strategies, identifying capacity needs and plans, negotiating external supports, implementing and managing the capacity development processes, and monitoring and evaluating the process. Jones and Laverack (2003) mention that an empowered organisational structure is able to establish coordination mechanisms in each village to allow the representation of different social groups and leaders from existing village institutions and organisations. It is envisaged that this would facilitate the project to develop a more consequential relationship with people in the villages and facilitate the project to organise project resources more effectively. This would entail a wider range of people in decision-making exercises. In the light of this, I found that the NGOs were partially successful in improving the first two, but failed with the third. They both developed some subsectors.

For example, the subsector of PAB arranged 16 group meetings with two partner NGOs in Dinajpur District in February to April in 2007,

where a number marketing issues such as the vaccination for profitable cow rearing, the necessary care for pregnant and milking cows and the experience of the quality milk production were shared among group members. This meeting was important for improving group functioning, but the question was about the improvement of decision-making. The group did not have the autonomy to decide what sort of help was needed, but received the interventions as the MLP decided and provided. So, the study found that the PCR still existed. On the other hand, SEED also had links with other mutual peer institutions, such as the Bangladesh Women Enterprise, ASA and BRAC, and their attempts for community empowerment were comparatively successful. As Fatmi and Islam (2001, 253) argued, Proshika's model for social development and poverty alleviation emphasises total empowerment. Proshika therefore followed an approach of 'walking on two legs'.

7.8   CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, although the NGOs showed potential as agents for community empowerment in Bangladesh, their actual contribution in developing local leadership, creating empowering organisational structures and increasing people's control over management was weak. I found that both NGOs followed the so-called PP and tried to consider the community feelings through their active participation, and then integrated these in community planning. But, practically, they faced contradiction as they could not include many marginal and ultra-poor within their PP. The PP could not achieve 'real' or 'genuine' participation as a substantial number of bureaucratic and top-down methods existed. The NGOs used a number of scientific tools, such as the community survey, participatory market chain analysis, market assessment, RMS, PRA, training, technology fair and monitoring and supervision, as part of their assessment. Nevertheless, many of the local producers and NGO staff members claimed that they could not persist with such interventions as they could not own them effectively. I found that a good number of staff members believed that in many cases they failed to fit with the local context and with local producers' needs and feelings.

This chapter argued that the reputational leaders/the 'organic intellectuals', who informally serve the community, had a better chance of building community capacity. It was found that both NGOs believed that leadership is not a process which could be developed by training; rather it should be developed through usual group activities, such as a PP, market

channel and business plan, involving people with different existing associations and linking with different social networks. But this initiative was blocked by some of the local socio-economic and political processes, such as cultural lag, irrational attitudes, political influence, lack of GOs' help and non-cooperation of the local power structure. On the other hand, NGOs' communication and knowledge-sharing practices strengthened linking capacity with outside agents and improved critical awareness among the local producers about their needs. It was found that both NGOs used aid channel, knowledge transfer, partnership with like-minded GOs–NGOs, PP and media, including website connection, under these interventions. The chapter showed that decentralisation and autonomous management systems were significant aspects of community empowerment. I found some contradictions, such as self-dependency versus donor dependency and centralised versus decentralised management systems. It argued that without decentralised and autonomous management systems the NGOs could not take any kind of decision independently, which would be in support of community empowerment. NGOs' social enterprise concept was proved an effective intervention for community empowerment. It was considered to be a holistic approach, which could open many windows to coordinate and accommodate many social networks through partnerships. The chapter illustrated that NGOs' recent trend towards social enterprise was convincing, but the NGOs faced some contradictions, which included the sociocultural barriers (e.g. self-interest attitude, cultural lag and rigidity of traditional practice, financial insecurity) to such new social technology.

NOTES

1. Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) was the leading Marxist theorist produced by Western Europe since Marx and Engels themselves. By 1917, Gramsci was an influential member of the Italian Socialist Party, and in 1921 he became a leader of the new Italian Communist Party (Morgan 1987, 301).
2. This is something that can be used for support or help and is a human-centred concept. Resources refer to things, such as money, property, assets, wealth, capital or goods, which have economic and social value. In order for something to be considered a resource therefore, it must be perceived to have some attributed value.
3. *Monga* is seasonal food insecurity in ecologically vulnerable and economically weak parts of northwestern Bangladesh, primarily caused by an

employment and income deficit before *aman* (one kind of paddy) is harvested. It mainly affects those rural poor, who have an undiversified income that is directly or indirectly based on agriculture (Zug 2006, 2).

4. PCR is a mutually obligatory arrangement between an individual who has authority, social status, wealth or some other personal resource (the patron) and another person who benefits from his or her support or influence (the client) (Anthromorphemics, n.d.).

NGOs' Limitations and Challenges for Social Capital and Community Empowerment: Local Dynamics and Global Pressures

Abstract This chapter looks at the major limitations and challenges of NGOs' capacities for social capital and community empowerment approaches. This chapter highlights the evidence of the two NGOs—Practical Action Bangladesh and Proshika—that we discussed in Chaps. 6 and 7. A growing number of critical assessments suggest that the operational impact of NGOs in development activities was less than claimed. NGOs may pursue a 'service delivery' paradigm, where the provision of services is strictly separated from engagement in the broader polity. In reference to this connection, NGOs become providers of goods to the poor 'consumers' rather than the 'facilitators' of collective action and empowerment (Rahman 2006, 452). This growing predominance of service delivery programmes among NGOs is problematic for the goals of empowerment and poverty alleviation. Based on the evidence and literature, this chapter shows that the NGOs could not archive their development targets because of the local dynamics and global pressures. There are a number of local dynamisms such as local context, political issues, NGOs' conventional role, NGOs' monolithic development approach and lack of accountability. A number of global pressures were noted such as the lack of local funding and donor dependency, global development frameworks and decentralised management system.

Keywords Local dynamics · Global pressures · Financial vulnerability · accountability · Centralised management · Donor dependency

The evidence shows a complex notion in highlighting these approaches individually rather than as combined; it was because the same kind of limitation was accountable to different elements of both approaches. The summary of the findings from both NGOs is presented in Table 8.1. It is envisaged that there were some common limitations which were seen in both approaches. The NGOs individually found a number of distinct limitations. It was also observed that some limitations were aggravated because of NGOs' weaknesses (e.g. a monolithic approach and the exclusion of ordinary people, unhealthy empowerment and malpractices of power, and management problem). Some limitations were related to the country's poor socio-economic and cultural conditions (e.g. lack of social trust, role local power structures and negative role of religious leaders), and the rest were created by the government and donor agencies (e.g. continuing debates

Table 8.1 NGOs' capacities for social capital and community empowerment: main limitations

NGOs	Barriers for social capital	Barriers for community empowerment
Both NGOs (common barriers)	Illiteracy, social ignorance, financial crisis of the smiths, lack of confidence to the new ideas, marginality and isolation, class conflicts, leadership problems, power relations, business secrecy, 'knowledge poverty', shortages of financial and other capital, lack of social trust, non-cooperation of local leaders and GOs–NGOs, negative role of brokers, lack of control over the market, exclusion of ultra-poor, reluctance to work with GK, lack of sharing attitude, negative donors role, NGOs' commercial attitude and short period of project, overlapping of projects, *chatabaji,* partnership problem, natural disaster and management problem	Lack of social education, social ignorance, traditional habits, financial crisis of the smiths, lack of unity and psychological limitations, reluctance to use GK, lack of knowledge ownership, role of brokers and other exploiting groups, non-cooperation of local leaders and GOs–NGOs, lack of government initiatives, inaccessible local markets, shortage of financial and other capitals, lack of social trust, class conflicts, power relations, *chatabaji,* lack of decentralised management, external intervenors and donor dependency, lack of update knowledge, unavailability of local resources, shortages of training resources and high market competition

(*continued*)

Table 8.1 (continued)

NGOs	Barriers for social capital	Barriers for community empowerment
MLP (PAB)	Demoralisation and problems of knowledge transfer	Demoralisation, lack of communication, problem of knowledge transfer and project discontinuation
SEED (Proshika)	Political involvement, political pressure, non-cooperation from the community, lack of dedication and low qualification of the staff members	Lack of dedication and low qualification of the staff members, bad relations with the government, low staff salary, high staff turnover, malfunctioning of associations and negative role of religious leaders

Source: Author based on field data.

between IK and GK, donor dependency, inaccessible market and lack of government initiative, and challenges of knowledge transfer).

8.1 LOCAL PEOPLES' POOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

In Bangladesh, the general observation is that the rich people have better access to loans, savings and credit than the poor have. Furthermore, even when financial services were extended, the poor might have difficulty taking advantage of them due to feelings of powerlessness because of socio-economic inequalities. There were two sets of issues regarding sustainability. Other obstacles to sustainability were location or remoteness and social constraints, for example, 'illiteracy and female seclusion' (Johnson and Rogaly 1997). I found that those in remote areas had a lower survival and sustainability rate than those in urban areas (Vargas 2001, 18). The evidence shows that due to disadvantaged socio-economic conditions the gap regarding expectations between smiths and NGOs was high. They did not get even a single local person's participation in some of their workshops and meetings. One blacksmith expressed his opinion:

> We are labourers, we are illiterate, and so our opinions are valueless. We only know we need Tk.200.00 (£1.80) daily to live. We are all satisfied with those (NGOs) who will help us to get that.

Some PAB staff members said that many smiths, who were hand to mouth, asked what kind of financial help (such as loans) the NGOs would provide when there was any dialogue with them. They found that many of them left the room rapidly when they knew that they would offer training facilities. The NGO staff members observed that the smiths suffered from 'knowledge poverty'. The staff members stated that they could not take many scientific initiatives due to local peoples' lack of awareness, conservative attitude and social ignorance. One goldsmith stated:

> NGOs' loan is not a prestigious matter. It has been recognised that the people who take loans from Proshika are considered as poor.

As a result, the NGOs could not consider many development messages and advance knowledge in their development services. Most smiths could not follow the global knowledge-based guidelines and training instructions. They were also slow in understanding and processing information (Kusumahadi 2002, 4). They were rigid and afraid to share their own local knowledge and experience as they thought they might lose their customers and markets if they did so. One goldsmith stated:

> Design is the most valuable part of a goldsmith's work, but nobody wants to share this design as it is their personal and business advantage.

The smiths' financial vulnerability was one of the prime reasons to maintain robust links both within and outside the village (Cahn 2008). Many smiths reported that they were afraid that they would be unable to face the challenges of global competition. The NGOs observed that none of the smiths could take the risks of GK because of high cost, safety and security. It is because of their financial inability, on the one hand, and lack of scientific knowledge, on the other. The goldsmiths felt such kinds of difficulty as they were expecting to introduce a new and scientific carat measuring system to be introduced to determine quality and price. One gold businessman said:

> Initially the businessman will lose money while adjusting to this new system. Many workers will lose their job. Jobs will be more challenging and competitive.

It is true that lack of social education had limited the space, where they were located. One SEED staff member said:

> The goldsmiths do not need to use high technologies as they are not educated to do so. Those take more cost and risks. They are not aware of the benefits of those and many do not feel comfortable accepting those as they find more competition there.

Both NGO staff members said that much of their innovative thinking was not being implemented because of such non-cooperation of the smiths. The staff members found this problem to be a 'vicious circle' and, at times, it took a long time to overcome this barrier.

8.2   NGOs' Conventional Role: Questions of Accountability

The NGOs' conventional role towards smiths in terms of development has been extensively debated. Bebbington (2005, 937) noted that NGOs' interventions became biased towards the less poor. It was observed that the NGOs were concentrated in urban areas, where replication of their activities was frequent, but many of the bottom people were excluded from NGOs' target. NGOs' bureaucratic approach could not ensure a 'sustainable community'; rather, they further marginalised many local people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. Significantly, the exclusion of many poor people in programme objectives is quite a common feature of NGOs' activities in Bangladesh. The realities of those who were poor and marginalised are often ignored or misread (Chambers 2004). The notion of social exclusion focused on inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power (Hunter 2004).

Notably, microcredit-based NGOs such as Proshika did not provide loan support to those goldsmiths, who were not guaranteed to repay such loans. In addition to this, the replication of a programme in a community had a strong negative effect on the flow of programmes of the same sector or run by the same NGO (Kusumahadi 2002). As a result, many of the extreme poor remained beyond their services. Recent research has also criticised NGOs for lacking the capacity to involve the 'ultra-poor', and the poorest villages and neediest communities. NGOs' rigid practices kept away such vulnerable communities (Johnson and Rogaly 1997; Buckland

2004, 135, 139). Proshika's social and economic empowerment process usually sidelines the vulnerable population. One gold businessman said:

> SEED selects the people to give loan support who are able to return their loan safely. I cannot find any difference between the normal bank and NGO bank. Both are same. But I think they should provide loan support to them who actually need it.

PAB worked with people's existing employment rather than focusing support on new employment. Some NGO staff members, community leaders and smiths raised questions about NGOs' short-term development approach. This approach failed to sufficiently mobilise indigenous social and political capital that would build, or rebuild, community capacity and ensure sustainability of impact (Buckland 1998).

The NGOs also observed that the indigenous people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, were suffering 'minority' and 'isolation' problems, and their trust of NGOs was marginal. The smiths thought that, due to the expansion of large- and medium-sized industries through globalisation, they might disappear in the near future. There was a clear lack of confidence in their reluctance to face this global competition as their education and quality of production were not sufficient. They were also afraid of the future as they were not getting any kind of GOs' and NGOs' supports, and national and international networks towards their working capital, and modern tools and technologies. The national and international involving technology-based firms were much stronger than the local ones (Hendry et al. 2000).

The finding concludes that, in the 'winners and losers' game of globalisation, more and more people were excluded from the benefits of this so-called progress of development. Only those who could sell their labour or services as a commodity in an increasingly globalised economic system could survive; the majority who could not were left out. The local languages, oral histories and cultural traditions were also threatened. Equity and redistribution were increasingly recognised as the 'missing link'. Devine (2003) found that the 'ultra' poor had been completely marginalised in the NGO budgets in Bangladesh. It was not simply a lack of available resources; it was also fundamentally an issue of unequal power relations in which the poor were permanently marginalised and vulnerable, dependent as they were on local élites (Wood 2003).

The policy documents of both NGOs were well written, and the NGOs had high-flying goals and objectives, and set out interesting programmes. The documents described how these would be achieved within the time framework. Notably, I gathered very good impressions from their meetings with the head office staff members in FGD sessions, who explained how they were helping the smiths. At this point, I would like to emphasise a couple of interesting arguments: the first is about NGOs' written policy, which was just a policy by which they caught the attention of the donors. However, there was a big gap between their written policy and real implementation at the field level. One Proshika staff member stated:

> There is a gap between policy and implementation because of financial dependency. Most of the NGOs are project oriented. When final funding comes it is too small for the purposes, then the NGOs change their target and the donors again shorten their funding allocation during final allocation. Then the NGOs again shorten their project target.

Many smiths and community leaders raised questions about the ultimate controversial objectives of NGOs. A number of smiths and community leaders argued that the NGOs were the 'new money laundering' agencies. They stated that the NGOs were using donations to 'make money for themselves'. Many said that they were confused, whether or not the NGOs used more than 10 % of their resources at the field level, but they had expensive furniture, high salaries, high consultancy fees, etc. Edwards (1999, 367) found the same finding when he reviewed the cost-effectiveness of two NGOs in Bangladesh because of high overheads (a large number of staff and buildings). In this regard, Stubbs (2006, 13) argues that the most active 'high-profile NGOs' are more concerned with personal gain rather than with the wider cause of poverty elimination. In addition, some NGO staff members' attitudes were negative about their own value. They could not believe that their help would contribute a great deal of benefit for the smiths. A field worker of PAB gave this opinion. Smiths also claimed that the staff members came to them just to take their *kisti* (instalment) and they gave them nothing, which eventually benefited them.

NGOs' development approach was 'monolithic'. The Markets and Sustainable Livelihoods (MSL) of PAB just provided training and advocacy, and SEED of Proshika provided the microenterprise loans, training and advocacy. I argue that a credit does not necessarily help the poor to

accumulate assets, improve productivity, escape poverty and improve empowerment (Cosgrove 2002, 62; Nawaz 2004, 170). It is true that microfinance programmes and institutions are increasingly important in development strategies, but knowledge about their impact is partial and contested (Hulme 2000) and promotes lively debate. There were some other concerns within microfinances, such as the distribution and usage. Nawaz (2004) conducted a study in Comilla district in Bangladesh on the microfinance clients of three NGOs—Grameen Bank, ASA and BRAC—and they found that microcredit did not reach two-thirds of the households, and in particular did not reach the bottom layer of extremely poor households. In addition to this, a significant amount of the microcredit was provided to non-poor and non-targeted households. Importantly, I observed that the microfinance does not 'automatically' empower, just as with other interventions, such as formal education and political quotas that seek to bring about a radical structural transformation that true empowerment entails (Kabeer 2005). This approach can foster sustainable development if, and only if, it is integrated in a view of development that links the social, economic and environmental dimensions (Vargas 2001).

The accountability of NGOs, particularly their 'downward accountability'[1] to their beneficiaries, affected NGOs' effectiveness in the process of empowerment for the poor and marginalised people in developing countries (Kilby 2006) such as Bangladesh. This debate is well travelled, and much less concern is given to the NGO's broad values and its effect. There was a considerable gap between 'the talk and the walk' (Keystone 2006). This notion of accountability created practical knowledge gaps. While, in principle, the donors generally assigned a high value to it, in practice the ways in which they managed their grants and investments did not support it. Here, some areas such as common planning tools, reporting formats and information systems did not capture the quality of accountability in relationships between NGOs and their constituents, nor did they actively enable learning and improvement (Keystone 2006). It was seen in the study that the microcredit demanded 'a type and quality of relationship that actually limited poor people's room to manoeuvre'. Moreover, NGOs were replacing traditional informal credit sources (Davis 2006, 12–13).

Informal discussions with the smiths, who were neither the members of SEED nor took a loan from any NGO, suggested that enterprises required larger amounts to be loaned, which the local NGOs found risky, and many of the local NGOs did not have the capacity to provide such enterprise

development loans to the small enterprises. The government and private commercial banks also suffered from bureaucratic practices and required collateral, which the small entrepreneurs in most cases were unable to provide (Chaudhury 2006). In reviewing the conditions of a SEED loan, I found that the SEED provided loans on specific terms and conditions, which the goldsmiths found hard, complex and unaffordable. They calculated that, including all, the interest rate became up to 38%, which a smith had to pay from his first month of the instalment. It was also found from the list provided by SEED (2006) that the flat rate of other NGOs (such as BRAC 15 % and Micro Industries Development Assistance and Services (MIDAS) 16 %) and other government and private banks (Janata Bank 12.5 %, Agrani Bank 14 % and Prime Bank Ltd 15 %) was comparatively low.

The goldsmiths had serious problems formulating loan procedures; for example, to complete nine pages of an application form with information on personal, business, property, business appraisal and profit. SEED required ten types of documents, such as the original property or tenant agreement, two copies of a passport size photograph, letter (with two witnesses) and one copy of a passport size photograph from guarantor, citizenship certificate or two pages photocopy of passport, bank certificate mentioning current account of the business, photocopy of last month's electricity bill, photocopy of last month's rent payment receipt, photocopy of trade licence and two revenue stamps of Tk. 4 and four non-judicial stamps of Tk. 150 (£1.36) each (two by the name of shop, one by the name of producer and one guarantor). In many cases, the goldsmiths had difficulties producing such kind of documents.

8.3   Social Capital Is Meaningless Without the Support of Other Capitals

Social capital is meaningless without the support of other capitals (Islam and Morgan 2012a; Islam 2015a). Social capital alone cannot build the social economy and develop communities; it has to be used in conjunction with other forms of capital, such as financial, human, environmental and cultural capital (Kay 2005, 168). The recent literature has also shown that possessing physical and human capital is not in itself adequate to ensure project success (Nel et al. 2001). Even local knowledge alone was not enough anywhere, but perhaps particularly in rural areas (Malecki 1998).

Both NGOs had limitations of resources as they could not provide additional support for local people, dependent upon their own assets, skills and enterprise. This study found that the smiths had little capital, very limited access to credit, very little power in the market and rarely received support from the formal institutions. Proshika's social programme, a small part of the budget, was the 'glue' that held community groups and the whole programme together (Yildiz et al. 2003). But recently the cuts in the social programme of this NGO had been too deep. Compared to the first three years of phase VI, the social programmes had declined by 90 % for the training and health infrastructure components, and by 40 % for universal education (Table 8.2).

I found that the smiths were keen to participate in those projects, where their immediate financial benefits were obvious. The overall picture was that the smiths' satisfaction level was comparatively poor

Table 8.2   Social component and achievement of Proshika

Social components	Achievement first 9 months compared to Annual Work Plan (2002–2003)	Achievement compared to phase VI targets (1999–2004)
Organisational building		
Area expansion	Low: 27%	High: 139% for village/slum expansion
Primary groups	Low: 40%	High: 86%
Federations	Very low: 6–28%	Medium: 66–74%
Training and popular theatre		
Human development	Low: 25–40%	High: 53–144%
Practical skills	Low: 13–37%	Very low to very high: 22–128%
Cultural programmes	Very low: 7–27%	High: 81–99%
Health		
Health training	Medium to very high: 54% to >500%	High: 73% to >300%
Health infrastructure	Very low to medium: 13–51%	Low to high: 15–100%
Universal education		
NFP school and learners	New schools: 0%	High: 83%

(*continued*)

Table 8.2 (continued)

Social components	Achievement first 9 months compared to Annual Work Plan (2002–2003)	Achievement compared to phase VI targets (1999–2004)
Adult literacy centres and learners	New ALCs: 8%	Medium: 56–61%
Post-literacy centres	New PLCs: 0%	Medium: 49% (first four years)

Source: Adapted by author from Yildiz et al. (2003).

with the long-term social development interventions. Allegedly, the NGOs neither gave advice nor helped to link with other institutions nor were they cooperative in linking with other people, such as business leaders, moneylenders and local administrators. In addition, some smiths argued that they had problems when they said that they were the client of a particular NGO. This situation was worse for the smiths of SEED as they felt that the NGOs should link with the government bank, where they had no access for loan facilities, though they were paying all kinds of taxes to the government. The community leaders also added that the role of NGOs should be that of the 'negotiator'. They also believed that their low amount of microenterprise loan would not be very helpful for their overall development without providing other supports.

8.4   Social Networks and Empowerment (Politically) as Negative Features for Development

The theoretical notion of social network and empowerment is to produce positive outcomes for development. For example, Lin (2000, 787) argued that the poorer social networks mean poor social capital and resources. Purvez (2005) found in his study that the economically poor people in Bangladesh had poor social networks. I agree with these findings and add that, recently, social networks have been a negative feature in some cases in Bangladesh. This observation needs to be located within the country's distinct sociocultural and political conditions (Islam 2015a). Depending

on various causes, social networks might allow the generation of positive or negative social capital. This also depends on the level of power decentralisation in a political system within new institutional and social capital approaches (Svendsen and Svendsen 2004, 173, 175). It is still observed that in most developing nations the power of NGOs has increased in recent years in relation to the state or government.

In the case of Bangladesh, the NGOs have become a formidable force, affecting the political and economic domains, especially the power and legitimacy of the government (Haque 2002, 411). Bendana (2006) calls this the 'NGO-isaton' of movements and politics. In addition, there is a growing trend, in alliance with foreign donors, for the influence of NGOs to expand to the extent that they now compete with the government for scarce foreign assistance at the national level and for sharing political power at the local level. To enter and be involved with the political networks as a result of empowerment of NGOs was not always helpful; rather, these were used for self-interest, where the community people were affected seriously. Here empowerment was seen as 'any process by which people's control (collective or individual) over their lives is increased'. So empowerment was not a neutral force; rather, it was a 'discursive construct, with its assignment meaning resulting from the exercise of power' (Lyons et al. 2001, 1234). The head of the MSL argued that this politically empowered network deformed new feudalism. He stated that:

> [The] new power structure is now polarised in and affiliated by party based political networks in the community. This party based politics are spread out so strongly from grassroots to international levels. All parties have organisations everywhere. They are holding power. There is no power at the hands of educated and conscious neutral people such as teachers, social workers, and young generations.

I found that many local NGOs' executive committee members had political involvement, which ranged from the UP chairman to the ministry level. The local NGOs are now part of the local power structure (Hossain 2006). Proshika was accused of embezzling funds for developing NGOs during the BAL regime from 1996 to mid-2001. It was alleged that the Proshika chairperson (who was also the head of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB))[2] maintained a direct connection with the party in power and tried to

influence the ADAB in favour of his political will (Hossain 2006). Hossain (2006) found that, out of 30 local NGOs in the Rajbari District in Bangladesh, only 2 NGOs had been exploiting opportunities through their networks and membership with the ADAB, which had good connections to national NGOs and NGO leaders at the centre. Even the membership of local NGOs depends on how deeply the personal relationship and political line were being maintained. NGOs' politics appeared factionalised along political lines, and conflicts were confirmed to power, leadership and resources. The focus on power and trust naturally brings up the issue of inequality: Can trust exist among those who are unequal in power? (Cook 2005, 7).

It is also argued that the private power becomes public power when it controls voting behaviour (Islam 1974, 5). Many smiths and community leaders said that the staff and members of Proshika were used in the alliance against the existing government. In this condition, NGOs were not considered as autonomous, rather than it was known as the extension of the existing power structure (Hossain 2006). The NGO staff members said that they often faced extraordinary challenges both at a personal and organisational level. They reported that they had to work long hours with limited resources in uncertain and volatile political and economic circumstances in order to help the most marginalised and disadvantaged members of their communities (Hailey 2006).

8.5   Lack of Social Trust

In Bangladesh, the lack of 'social trust' has become a crucial barrier for NGOs' work (Islam 2015a). I mentioned earlier in this chapter that a number of networks, such as NGO staff members, community people, local leaders, local institutions and administration, funding agents, the government, and civil society, were involved within NGOs' initiative through collective actions and partnership contacts. I found that the 'trust' is absent within and between these networks. For example, one community leader of PAB said:

> I have no faith in PAB. What are they doing for the blacksmiths? I did not find anything there. I heard that they provided some training, but they did not give any kind of capital to utilise their training. It is worthless.

Due to lack of trust, NGOs' social enterprise concept could not function well. It was one of the barriers to achieve mutual benefits. One blacksmith's opinion was:

> Why would I share my business with others? It is my business and I want to get all money as I earn. Why would I give and share my earnings and experience to others? It is my property. I don't think that everybody has trust in each other. Sir, please do not do anything else like that. If you do so I am not with you. We will protest that.

I found that the trust between the cross-networks, such as NGOs with donors or NGOs with community people or community leaders/religious leaders or civil society and vice versa, was low. The trust between NGOs and smiths was limited to the 'give and take' policy as many smiths reported that their relation with NGOs was just for 'loan purposes'. There was neither any mental or social attraction, nor any kind of commitment, other than the financial. I argue that such exchange of trust is so slight and ephemeral that it could not give any guarantee to achieve any kind of long-term social change towards achieving community development. The smiths never believed that Proshika would do something for them in crisis periods, such as *chatabaji* (money collected by someone illegally), business loss, leadership crisis, local conflict and control over the local market. The goldsmiths of SEED found that they did nothing when they suffered from those problems. In response to the question about the involvement with SEED, one goldsmith answered that, like other NGOs, Proshika is a 'new moneylender' (Hossain 2006; Davis 2006), and it was helpful to get some loan from them. His comment was:

> When there is no way to get loan from elsewhere then they take loans from SEED.

This kind of 'NGO dependency' is the dark side of social capital (Huda et al. 2005). On the other hand, the blacksmiths were not significantly happier whether or not PAB would provide them other supports, such as further training, loan incentives and help during leadership crisis, as they found nothing before.

The community leaders of both NGOs said that they were not happy to say that one NGO's relation with another or relevant organisations was good. They observed that the NGOs' relation in regards to knowledge

and experience sharing was not cooperative; rather, some were hostile to each other. One community leader of SEED said:

> I don't find one NGO's relation with another is cooperative. Rather I find there is a cold war among them. I am saying this to see their overlapping activities, commercial motive and exclusion the 'ultra' poor from their activities. I heard from my village neighbours that many NGO staff members caution that they will withdraw their support if they go to another NGO.

The lack of trust from donors is a fundamental problem in the NGO sector. There remains a huge gap between donors and NGOs as to what they expect from each other. It is because some NGOs, such as Proshika, were trying to compromise between the Western knowledge and pressures, which, because of financial supports, became complex. Wallace and Chapman (2003) referred to an experience in Africa, which indicated that in spite of a commitment to participation and bottom-up approaches there was a recognised need for sustainability. They also found that the focus was still on 'us' solving problems for 'them' (be they individuals, households, communities or governments) and little trust was given to agencies.

I found that NGOs' political involvement and corruption limited their capacities. Due to these kinds of involvement, many local people, community leaders, local administrators and the government could not trust Proshika as this NGO was patronised by a political party. It was observed that many local people, who had no political involvement or were of specific political ideologies, withdrew their membership from Proshika, and many social agents became their rivals. NGOs' involvement in corruption was another negative image where people's general faith was completely hampered. The news of corruption, with NGOs taking money from the local poor peoples' savings, is frequently cited in Bangladeshi newspapers. In a study of 20 NGOs, the Transparency International Bangladesh (2007) found that many NGOs were registered with the government in exchange for bribes and some of them had existence only on paper, and the government officials assisted them in the process. This study did not find any proof of such kind of corruption in relation to these two NGOs but, in general, the local peoples' trust for the NGOs weakens the overall perception to the NGOs' activities. There is no regulatory mechanism in Bangladesh for ensuring local peoples' savings and safety of deposits (Jackson and Islam 2005).

8.6   EXTERNAL INTERVENORS, DONOR DEPENDENCY AND ORGANISATIONAL AUTONOMY

The majority of Bangladeshi NGOs are largely designed, funded and managed externally (Hashemi 1996; Buckland 1998). In connection to this, the government–donor relations in Bangladesh (also stated in Chap. 2) are shaped by a history of donor dependence and reactions against it (Green and Curtis 2005). There were a number of issues were important, where NGOs' community empowerment became challenging. Essentially, NGOs' donor dependency became a matter of power relations (Wallace and Chapman 2003). This suggests that NGOs shared an international community development culture reflecting their own national cultural norms.

With this, the local-level planning, organisational accountability, autonomy and social trust became problematic to apply so-called universal knowledge. The 'accountability' problem is traditionally concerned with the unequal relationships within the aid industry between donors, northern and southern NGOs (Lewis 2007; Edwards and Hulme 1995). It is because the donors bring universal values, self-colonisation and elitism, individualism and anxiety. The NGOs often pretend to represent 'fashionable' and universally acceptable development ideas, knowledge and skills. As a result, enormous pressure gets put on the rural poor to comply with certain 'universal conditions'. These universal conditions are considered as inappropriate or invalid, where less consideration is given to its validity (Wood 2007) for the local context. It creates dual dependency (Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995). It is directive, not facilitative (Garilao 1987, 119). Ahmad (2006) calls this 'donorship', rather than partnership. The Bangladeshi NGOs find this inappropriate. This is because there is a fundamental gap between the socio-economic conditions of developed countries and the developing world. This kind of 'imported knowledge' does not always fit well with the national development priorities and development systems. Such kinds of aid-based development practices have long been a barrier to sustainable technology. Schumacher (1973) believes that foreign aid is able to play only a limited role in bringing about sustained economic development. Such substantial input of foreign aid is doing much damage to the spirit of self-respect and self-reliance; its loss is greater than its gains. It creates a 'development' gap, which does not

encourage innovative practices. In connection to this point, one PAB staff member stated:

> Sometimes the donors do not want to extend their projects or increase the funding for those though it needs to continue these for its local community demands. It is a big problem that we cannot provide any follow-up services for them. We all know that these social development projects need to serve continuously for a longer period for achieving actual outputs. But they are bound to stop those at a 'half-done' stage because of donors' discontinuation of funding supports.

Development is not apolitical, and 'the process of organising and empowering communities and poverty groups is in itself a political act' (Garilao 1987, 119). This de-politicisation (see Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995) of NGO development efforts, experienced in Bangladesh over the last 20 years, is part of a broader global trend in NGO policies (Edwards and Hulme 1996; Fisher 1997; Hulme and Edwards 1997; Kamat 2004). As a result, the NGOs were increasingly shaped by the Western-dominated international development discourse (Rahman 2006, 456–457). However, this explanation can also be seen as 'one-sided' (Rahman 2006, 456), 'marginalised', question of 'sustainability' (Grootaert 1998; Khan 2006, 174) since this Western development model ignored the important influence of local conditions that the NGOs face as their constraints and policy choices. Within this discourse, do aid agencies have the right to be the 'voices of the poor' and to decide correct approaches for humankind and to speak on behalf of grass-roots' communities such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths? This study found that this Western model could not explicitly promote participation, but created confusion among smiths versus NGO workers, due to the lack of social trust.

This study conjectured that around the aid process there was insufficient dialogue or an attempt at dialogue that would sometimes be totally unheard. Partnership relations in NGOs' activities in Bangladesh are inhibited by the instrumentality that each side brings to the equation: donors seeking conformity with current reform prescriptions or conditionality clauses, recipients seeking least (political) cost thresholds (Green and Curtis 2005). In this condition, both parties felt constrained in being more responsive and accountable to their superiors than to others. Like Green and Curtis (2005), I believe that under these circumstances improved donor coordination in any form may be conceived more as a

threat than an opportunity by the national government. In addition to this, the South Asian NGOs have tensions regarding cutting-off funding supports from the donors. Globalisation, new (and ever changing) trade agreements and aspects of the emerging new international political order all contain perceived threats.

Due to donors and external pressures, NGOs' organisational autonomy regarding low managerial capacity (Kusumahadi 2002) and inconsistent with the operations (Hulme and Edwards 1997) is now an issue. Both NGOs had mixed opinions about this. Some NGO staff members observed that there were some barriers to increase control over programme management, where a certain level of external/donor pressure existed. Some staff members said that they still had shortages of funds and had to depend on donors. I found that PAB took funds from a number of donor agencies, such as DFID, ETC Foundation and KATALYST during 2001–2006. They faced some problems from the donor agencies, such as project discontinuation and lack of flexibility. Some PAB staff members said that their central management was not decentralised enough to implement some local peoples' urgent demands, such as loan supports, equipment supply and supports during natural disaster. It was seen that both NGOs were based on the new public management (NPM)[3] approach. Both NGOs' staff members believed that too much donor dependency was bad for an organisation. An organisational self-assessment can facilitate some serious realisations to do with investments in learning versus investments in doing, policy awareness versus policy influence, insulation versus influence and independence versus partnership. A foreign partner may damage a local NGO's credibility and effectiveness, especially as a leading voice in the policy arena.

However, in crisis states capacity is often limited, which increases the risk of corruption (Larbi 1999). This was particularly true for Proshika as I stated earlier in this chapter. Moreover, the public-sector reforms were externally driven by the donor conditions and timetables. The overambitious nature and the demand for quick results failed to take account of weak institutional and management capacities (Larbi 1999). These kinds of capacities can use a new technocratic language, whilst failing to deal with political problems and contradictions arising between the situation of people in developing societies and the fashionable neo-liberal ideology (Arce 2003, 855). The study found this kind of evidence in both NGOs' interventions. However, I argue that the NGOs

need to develop partnerships with consideration of fair measures and accountability. It is necessary for funding organisations and NGOs to put themselves in each other's shoes in order to understand better their mutual constraints.

8.7   RELIGIOUS LEADERS FRUSTRATE MANY INITIATIVES

The overall attitude of the religious leaders to the NGOs was very negative; this situation was worse in Proshika than PAB. Traditionally, the religious leaders are hostile to NGOs' activities such as those of Proshika. There were three main causes, for example, political involvement with the progressive political party BAL, using donations from Western country sources and partnerships with them, and taking 'interest' through microcredit for women's empowerment. According to the Islamic belief, interest, in the financial sense, is prohibited. In addition, some extremist interpretations of Islam prohibit some forms of women's empowerment, which Proshika was advocating. This problem was greater in rural areas than in urban. The extent of this problem was not great among the goldsmiths, but it was still problematic among the businessmen who are Muslims. According to a staff member of SEED:

> The Mullah (religious leaders) groups are our main enemy; they want to demolish Proshika's activities. We know that some Mullahs are committed and that they will continue their jihad (a holy war) until they win against us.

As a result, many federations and groups of Proshika could not progress their work. Proshika had 14,000 dysfunctional groups. Still it was not clear how many groups and federations were really functioning. More than half of the groups and federations had collapsed because of organised propaganda and harassment by the extremist religious groups and gangs orchestrated by political leaders. This situation was aggravated by the competition from credit-providing NGOs and the Islamic Bank, and controversial allegations against Proshika. This complex combination of realities had resulted in anxiety among some members, decreased attendance in meetings, and regular savings and withdrawal of savings in some areas of Proshika (Yildiz et al. 2003).

8.8   Local Power Structure, Inaccessible Market and Lack of GOs' Help: Evolving New Initiatives

The local power structure, mainly élites, is a threat in both advanced societies and developing countries (Malki 2006). I found that the local power structures changed and there evolved new forms of power structures through a slow transformation. Edwards et al. (1999, 120) described the civil society as a 'magic bullet'. The changing power structures often conformed to or used approaches utilising civil society (Edwards et al. 1999, 120), middle class (Hossain 2006) and local NGO workers (Hossain 2006; Rahman 2006). However, I found that such power structures were still part of the so-called élite class and not ready to lend itself to building positive social networks and community empowerment. They had political links and worked against traditional NGOs (Hossain 2006, 236–237; Rahman 2006, 452). The local government bodies continue to be dominated by élites (Khan 2001).

The chairman of a local NGO—Jana Unnoyan Bahumukhi Shamabai Shamity (Multi-cooperative Association for Peoples' Development) at Mostafapur Bazar of PAB—was a local political leader of BAL. This finding was supported by Hossain's (2006) study. He conducted a study of two local NGOs (Voluntary Family Welfare Association and Karmajibi Kallan Sangstha (Workers' Welfare Association)) in the Rajbari District in Bangladesh and found that the executive directors of both NGOs had links with the main political parties. It is a relatively recent norm that local power structures are more dynamic, diverse with higher occurrences of bargaining. Internally, these power structures seek to build power bases in the village through pursuing a 'politics of reputation'. Externally, they are active with a broad range of strategies for securing and maintaining external relationships, such as 'NGO-ing', party political manoeuvring and securing patronage from upazila-level administration. As a result, the decision-making process was skewed towards those with more power and resources (Edwards et al. 1999, 120).

This repeated reorganisation of local government structures has not only weakened the power and authority of local government; it has also undermined the legitimacy of local government as an institution for expressing the voice of the citizenry. It has been observed that the local government had become simply another element of the élite contest for political power (Khan 2001). Combined with increasing corruption in

local government and in the provision of social services at the local level, the rural poor had come to see political participation at the local government level as irrelevant, relying instead on kinship and patronage networks for assistance and support (Rahman 2006). In this situation, the local leaders thought that either the NGOs were trying to do something for the local people or the NGOs were taking over the leadership role they hold. As a result, their role with and control over local people weakened. In relation to this, local money launderers, most of them community leaders, thought that Proshika was a big threat to their traditional business, so they viewed NGOs as the opposition. Due to oppression and deprivation, they could not provide opportunities to develop individual capacity (Sen 1999; Rifkin 2003, 169).

I mentioned earlier that the 'syndicate' controls the business sector in Bangladesh, where a group of a few wealthy individuals are controlling this. The smiths were unable to access the wider market. They were stocking all products and controlling the market prices. It was seen that the NGOs failed to work with the market channels as they had outlets through the market map as social networks. The smiths were bound to sell their products at a low price to those brokers; then the wholesalers buy from them and in turn the consumers buy at high prices. Sometimes, the consumers buy faulty products as the brokers and wholesalers sometimes adulterate the products for their own profit. This process destroyed social trust among smiths and local consumers, while smiths had rival relations with brokers, wholesalers and vice versa.

I found that the local wholesalers (known as rich and local leaders and financially rich people) persuaded the blacksmiths (financially poor and uneducated) that the market was not able to pay them a high price for their products and such kinds of undermining and discouragement deterred them. Because of this demoralisation, the poor class remained poor and its transformation was very slow.

The relationship of policy makers (government), funding authority (donors) and implementing organisations (NGOs) in Bangladesh was not cooperative. As a result, many projects could not minimise political and institutional limits and pressure of the policymakers, which resonated with their ideological assumptions. The findings of the research can also be compared with Ahmad's study (2003), which found that NGOs could create new social capital through induced collective action. However, their efforts were hampered because of the short period of time it had been in operation and because of weak government support. The government has always participated, to a relatively

limited extent, as a provider and regulator for microfinance in Bangladesh (Hulme and Moore 2006). It is because historically the relationship between the Bangladeshi government and the NGO sector has ranged 'from benign neglect, to co-option, to smear campaigns and repression', depending on the state's 'perception of the balance of power between itself and the NGO sector'.

8.9   CENTRALISATION IN DECENTRALISED MANAGEMENT

The NGOs' 'control',[4] otherwise known as 'ownership' (Jones and Laverack 2003, 9) over programmes, is one of the key elements of community empowerment. It is comparatively more important to the Bangladeshi NGOs whose funding depends on foreign donations. I stated earlier in this chapter that due to 'donor dependency' most of the NGOs have lost their management control. Either many community leaders and smiths thought that these NGOs were controlled and managed by the donors, who were ignoring the local context or imposing GK, or they were trying to destroy local cultures and skills. Many stakeholders thought of it as a form of 'westernisation'[5]. Many staff members agreed that their management system was the 'personal leadership style'[6] of administration, where the decision came from the top, and some were neglected whilst others were delayed because of bureaucratic problems. Lewis et al. (2008, 10) argue that the managers play the lead role and all other actors remain silent, whilst the organisations unfold their objectives in a participatory way. That is why the NGOs sometimes did not provide many of their funding and resources as quickly as the field-level NGO staff members wanted. Sometimes, the staff members at field level observed that they did nothing as the central-level staff members could not go beyond the restriction of the central management. One fieldworker of PAB said:

> The blacksmiths have been demanding financial support for the last two years, but I could not give any hope to them. There is nothing I can do for them, but I feel they need that. I came to know from the central authorities that they have no funding support for this project except training.

Some other problems were NGOs' lack of communication and turn-over of staff. PAB could not run many projects properly as they had no offices at the grass-roots level. Most NGOs utilise a branch and head-quarters structure in which branches had limited autonomy from

headquarters (Gauri and Galef 2005, 2045). PAB's local office at Faridpur controlled the project offices of Faridpur, Madaripur and Barisal districts. Some of those were 150 km away from their local office. In some areas, they had partnership NGOs such as GUP, which managed the project for the blacksmiths. However, PAB was unable to convey many of its ideas to GUP properly. Some senior-level staff members of SEED stated that junior staff members could not provide efficient advocacy and counselling services as their educational background was insufficient. It found that more than 90 % of the SEED staff members were from a 'commerce' background, which was dominated by the head who was from this background. I argue that a 'multidisciplinary approach' (with different disciplines) is needed together with 'credibility' based on technical expertise (VanSant 2003). The staff turnover was another problem for Proshika. The annual turnover rate was high during year 3 of phase VI. The lack of promotions, low salaries, expressed dislike of the emphasis on loan collection and uncertainties about Proshika's future were reasons for staff leaving. It was difficult to recruit good people in any low-status, low-pay occupation and very difficult to keep them (Ahmad 2007, 362). Because of this turnover, Proshika failed to respond to the community adequately.

8.10   Limitations of Social Capital and Community Empowerment Approaches

The NGOs' capacities, derived from the theories of social capital and community empowerment, had significant implications for Bangladeshi communities. There were some other areas where these two development approaches failed to generate a substantial amount of positive results. It is acknowledged that the NGOs were not based on these approaches, but their programme outcomes were related to the components and objectives of those approaches. In general, the NGO staff members had little theoretical knowledge about social capital and community empowerment approaches used in the research, though they still practised them. Moreover, the measurement of social capital and community empowerment within the role of NGOs was not easy. This is because the definitions used for both concepts are vague, qualitative and open to subjective interpretation. In addition, many of these approaches have limitations in terms of broad applications in the Bangladeshi community. In some cases, the NGOs did take initiatives, but due to some community problems, the

NGOs could not substantiate those in proper ways. Moreover, NGOs' social contributions could not be visualised entirely.

The notion of social capital has been articulated as a concept, which is homogeneous and recognises primarily 'positive' social norms, values and practices. The fact is that the communities were rarely discrete entities, and some communities have greater power to define and legitimise meaning, values, norms and practices than others. Bangladesh and other poor countries are immersed in multidimensional relationships, whether these are hierarchical or reciprocal. Here, the multitransactional ties were strong, both between patrons and their clients as well as more reciprocal within kin groups (Wood 2005, 16). The power relations structured access to community membership and intra- and intercommunity conflict and competition. Putnam refers to the crucial 'bridging function' of social capital, but gives little attention to inequalities in the distribution of income or other economic, physical, environmental and social advantages, which structure relations in the field of community life (McClenaghan 2000). The lack of consideration of power as an important shaping feature of social capital might lead to horizontal associations, while neglecting vertical relationships (Bayat 2005, 10).

Clearly, the traditional associational ties and forms of closure to which Putnam and Coleman refer may well contribute to the reproduction of these advantages and, by implication, the reproduction of disadvantage and exclusion. My findings showed that inequality in terms of loan distribution, distribution of wealth and resources, power relations, social control and decision-making in both communities made it difficult to get the benefits of social networks. It also encouraged a process of 'political mobilisation' to advance demands based on rights, rather than on rebuilding the community through a process of coordination aimed at developing and enhancing social cohesion. This process clearly reinforced the very exclusion that community development activists in disadvantaged communities, such as Mirpur (1) Market and Mostafapur Bazar, were struggling against to those powerful groups (McClenaghan 2000). Sometimes, the social network or relationship pattern was more or less linked with interest-gaining processes, which sometimes stopped the natural flow of social relationships (Purvez 2003) as found through Proshika's political networks.

The findings also confirmed that the NGOs' initiatives towards development created more problems than solutions for powerless people (Kusumahadi 2002, 12), such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. The prescription of the components of community empowerment approach provided by

Laverack (2006) was found to be ambiguous. Laverack listed nine components as 'domains', which the stakeholders felt too many, and some were duplicated. The notion of their feelings about these elements was not positive as they found them complex, long, gloomy, loose and incomplete, and, to some extent, obscure. Moreover, Laverack emphasises the role of small groups in the community, which can improve problem assessment capacity. However, practically, in urban society, the NGO workers said that it was not possible to establish such kinds of groups properly as they faced busy time constraints. I think that Laverack also avoided some important elements; some could be shortened or left out to avoid repetition. For example, the stakeholders could not find the real difference between the 'increase problem assessment capacities' and 'critical awareness about people's needs'. Furthermore, two other elements such as the 'strengthening links to other organisations and people' and 'create equitable relationships with outside agents' looked similar and were repetitious of one another. The reality is that it should be distinguished in such a way that the community people, community leaders and NGO staff members could understand. They could be able to apply them properly.

Secondly and paradoxically, Laverack's approach appears incomplete. I personally feel that there should be added some other important elements such as fulfilling community 'felt needs' and 'real needs'. I found that community participation was not fully secured by increasing people's assessment capacities and critical awareness as they actually felt that they need to fulfil some felt needs immediately, then to address their real needs. It can be called 'social welfare', which is included in the study Kusumahadi (2002). I also think that the elements they used to 'increase access' and 'social control' are two other elements which should be added to Laverack's empowerment approach.

To increase access is also important to build and promote community capacity, and to achieve greater access to all the resources needed. On the other hand, social control is also important to increase control of the environment and all aspects of life, for example, social affairs, economy, politics and technology. The initiatives of the organisational structures and increase control over management could not save the NGOs from bureaucracy and corruption, where there evolved a 'personal type of management'. Ultimately, it failed to improve real participation, mobilise local resources and accommodate outside interventions properly. Significantly, the NGOs failed to improve asset endowments and opportunity structures of the community (Bodja 2006, 26).

Empowerment, it found, was influenced more by commitment rather than by understanding (Kusumahadi 2002). My own assertion is that there needs to be increased access of the smiths to resources and capital, and the NGOs should increase social controls, where their supervision and monitoring systems can work smoothly. The final element 'increase control over programme management' is phrased badly. It should be restated as 'increase self-management'. The concept 'self-management' is more decentralised, understandable and pursuable. This approach would be considered as more convenient for the NGOs as a function of their direct links with grass-roots organisations to gain a better insight into what kind of programmes are needed and desired by the poor themselves. It would also be helpful to grasp comparative advantages and experiences at the micro level be brought to bear on the formulation of alternative and hopefully more successful development strategies.

8.11   Conclusions

This chapter identified some critical aspects of NGOs' interventions, where social capital and community empowerment approaches would be more feasible for developing countries such as Bangladesh. Both NGOs were using IK and GK through their interventions, though the use of GK is increasing over time. The analysis shows that the NGOs were facing some contradictions to use these knowledge approaches. In many cases, the NGOs were negotiating to integrate these two knowledge approaches to overcome those contradictions. However, the overall assessment of NGOs' capacities was convincing in terms of community awareness, sharing values and norms, introducing new technologies, increasing human rights and problem assessment capacities, responding to financial crisis, encouraging participation, mobilising resources and providing income generation activities.

On the other hand, NGOs' contribution towards collective actions, sharing mutual benefits, developing local leadership, empowering organisational structure and increasing control over management was weak. The NGOs partially failed to create a congenial atmosphere, where the smiths could work properly in the market. They could not build up effective networks with negotiation of GOs, community leaders, community people and with the external donors. In addition, the study found that NGOs' political networks had developed a negative trend towards human services. More or less both NGOs had money laundering tendencies, leadership and management crises, and donor dependency. It is important that both

NGOs recognise the spontaneous participation problem from the community people and community leaders. In this connection, NGOs' social trust with community people and GOs became hard-nosed. Moreover, the local peoples' low socio-economic, cultural and political conditions were other barriers to authentic community empowerment of the NGOs.

NOTES

1. The question of downward accountability is sensitive to power issues and the word 'beneficiaries' is problematic in its own right. The term 'downward' reinforces the idea of power asymmetry. Kilby (2006, 961) cautions that the use of the term 'downward' accountability can exaggerate the weakness of the beneficiary or client and so suppresses the essential ingredient of authority inherent in the accountability relationship.

2. ADAB is a unique network of NGOs developed over the last two decades or so and emerged as a model for the development NGOs across the world. It brings together its members working within the broad framework of people-centred sustainable development. One of its central goals is to knit these constituent parts closer together and respond to their needs creatively. It has been playing active roles in strengthening inter-NGO relations, exchanging ideas and experiences, expanding fields of cooperation, developing organisational skills and enhancing functional relations and communication with government, donors and various groups of civil societies. ADAB is registered simultaneously under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 and Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance of 1978. Currently, ADAB has a membership of 886. Of these, over 231 (as of December 1997) are at the central level and 655 are at the chapter level (SDNP n.d.).

3. NPM originated from the crisis of the Keynesian welfare state in the 1970s in developed countries such as the UK, Australia and New Zealand. The use of management techniques and practices drawn mainly from the private sector is increasingly seen as a global phenomenon. NPM reforms have shifted the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management. Key elements include various forms of decentralising management within public services (e.g. the creation of autonomous agencies and devolution of budgets and financial control), increasing use of markets and competition in the provision of public services (e.g. contracting out and other market-type mechanisms) and increasing emphasis on performance, outputs and customer orientation (Larbi 1999).

4. Control is generalised to the broader range of organising efforts such as administration, finance and management (Laverack 2006, 5).

5. Westernisation is a process whereby non-Western societies come under the influence of Western culture in matters such as industry, technology, law, politics, economics, lifestyle, diet, language, religion or values. Westernisation has been a pervasive and accelerating influence across the world in the last few centuries. It is usually a two-sided process in which Western influences and interests themselves are joined by a wish of at least parts of the affected society to change towards a more westernised society in the hope of attaining Western life or some aspects of it (Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa 2004).

6. It is defined as self-confidence backed by conviction and understanding. Another term might be 'personal mastery'—knowing where you stand, where you want to go and what you need to sacrifice to get there. Whatever you call it, personal leadership stems from one's core beliefs and values and is essential to leading others (Heider, n.d.).

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