



## CHAPTER TEN

# FROM RELIEF TO PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

If you see a baby drowning you jump in to save it; and if you see a second and a third, you do the same. Soon you are so busy saving drowning babies you never look up to see there is someone there throwing these babies in the river.

—Wayne Ellwood<sup>1</sup>

The programs of those voluntary organizations (VOs) that style themselves as development organizations represent a variety of strategic orientations. Some deliver relief and welfare services to alleviate immediate suffering. Some engage in community development interventions to build capacity for self-help action. Others seek to change specific institutions and policies in support of more just, sustainable and inclusive development outcomes. Still others may facilitate broadly-based people's movements driven by a social vision. Each one aims to right a perceived wrong, but implicitly works from different assumptions regarding the nature of the development problem.

This chapter looks at the strategic choices that face nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and VOs in particular. It also examines the forces that tend to move NGOs away from addressing problem symptoms and toward an attack on fundamental causes.

### IMPORTANCE OF A DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Tim Brodhead argues that it is impossible to be a true development agency without a theory that directs action to the underlying causes of underdevelopment.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of a theory, the aspiring development agency almost inevitably becomes instead merely an *assistance* agency engaged in relieving the more visible symptoms of underdevelopment through relief and welfare measures. The assistance agency that acts without a theory also runs considerable risk of inadvertently strengthening the very forces responsible for the conditions of suffering and injustice that it seeks to alleviate through its aid.<sup>3</sup>

Without a theory, the assumptions underlying the organization's choice of intervention are never made explicit. Therefore they cannot be tested against experience, essentially eliminating the possibility of experience-based learning.

For the same reasons, an organization cannot have a meaningful development *strategy* without a development theory. To maintain that an organization has a strategy is to claim that there is a well thought out logic behind the way in which it positions its resources. This logic must make explicit the organization's assumptions regarding the forces that sustain the problem condition it is addressing, and the points of system vulnerability at which an intervention will create a new and more desirable equilibrium of forces.

Without a theory, the organization can only proceed to scatter its resources in response to immediately visible needs. This may have been an adequate approach to programming when VOs were mainly interested in providing humanitarian relief to the poor and suffering. However, the more immediate the need that the assisting agency is addressing, the less likely it is that the intervention is truly developmental, i.e., the less likely the intervention will remove the conditions that prevent the sufferer from meeting that need through his or her own efforts.

Our present concern is with the threefold global crisis of poverty, environmental destruction, and social disintegration. These are symptoms of the malfunction of our institutions and values. The more we focus our attention directly on the symptoms, rather than on transforming the institutions and values that cause them, the more certain we can be that the crisis will deepen for lack of appropriate action. Under the circumstances, the need for a theory of the causes of the breakdown is of more than academic relevance. It is a condition of survival.

### THREE GENERATIONS OF VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT ACTION

My own insights into the strategic choices facing NGOs began to take shape in 1985 while I was working with the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). I had been looking primarily to the large donor agencies to serve as instruments for the institutional changes required to support the community-based management of development resources. In 1985 I came to the conclusion that the large donors were not the answer to this need. Their competence was in transferring large sums of money to central governments, not in facilitating complex social and institutional change processes.<sup>4</sup>

The need for more basic institutional change remained as real as ever. If the large donors could not address it, then who would? Colleagues in AID who were also struggling to answer this question

suggested that we should look more closely at the potential of NGOs to assume this role. As I began to look at the experience of NGOs in development from the perspective of this need, I was struck that there seemed to be a definite pattern of evolution within the community away from more traditional relief activities and toward greater involvement in catalyzing larger institutional and policy changes.

This pattern seemed to reflect the learning that many of these organizations had derived from the critical self-examination of their own experience. The pattern seemed to involve three identifiable stages or generations of strategic orientation, each moving further away from alleviating symptoms toward attacking ever more fundamental causes. I decided to identify these stages as *generations*.

The resulting framework, which is presented in this chapter, attracted a considerable interest among those who felt it was confirmed by their own experience. Many said they found it a useful tool for considering the strategic choices facing their organizations.<sup>5</sup>

Since the framework was first formulated, many NGO leaders have been contributing ideas toward its further evolution, including a suggestion that a fourth generation strategy must be added to the scheme to make it complete. Consequently this chapter defines the fourth generation strategy, in addition to updating established statements on the first three generations. See Table 10-1 for a comparative summary of the four generations.

### **Generation One: Relief and Welfare**

First generation strategies involve the NGO in the direct delivery of services to meet an immediate deficiency or shortage experienced by the beneficiary population, such as needs for food, health care or shelter. During an emergency such as a flood, an earthquake or a war this may be correctly characterized as humanitarian assistance, to distinguish it from development assistance—which it is not. The assisting NGO relates directly to the individual or the family and the benefits delivered depend entirely on the funds, staff and administrative capability of the NGO.

First generation strategies grow out of a long history of international voluntary action aimed at assisting the victims of wars and natural disasters, and providing welfare services to the poor. Religious groups commonly have been at the forefront of these efforts.

In 1647, Irish Protestants sent food to North America to aid settlers who were victims of wars with the Indians. Throughout much of the 17th and 18th centuries, private British charities provided assistance to America to support missionaries and schools for Indians, Negroes and poor whites, as well as colleges and learned societies for the affluent.<sup>6</sup>

In 1793, private groups in the United States provided voluntary assistance to refugees who fled revolutionary turmoil in Santo Domingo. In the 1800s, several international relief and missionary societies were established in Europe and America, including the Red Cross.

World War I saw a substantial increase in private international initiatives, with the value of food supplies contributed to Europe by U.S. charities during World War I reaching \$250 million a year.<sup>7</sup> The oldest of the British international assistance charities, Save the Children Fund, was founded in 1919.<sup>8</sup>

Many of the contemporary international NGOs were originally established to help victims of World War II in Europe. These include Catholic Relief Services, CARE, OXFAM UK and the Danish Association for International Co-operation.<sup>9</sup> As recovery progressed in Europe, these organizations turned their attention to Southern countries. Particular attention was given to assisting refugees from political conflicts in China, India, Korea and the Middle East.<sup>10</sup>

The history of the development of NGOs indigenous to Southern countries followed patterns similar to those of NGO assistance from the North. For example, charitable activities in the South were often church- or mission-related and commonly depended on funds and commodities from the North. Until the mid-1960s, NGO activities in Latin America, especially those connected with the Catholic Church, were substantially oriented to charitable welfare actions.<sup>11</sup>

Churches and missionary societies were important in Africa throughout the colonial era, as colonial governments left the provision of basic education and health care largely to church-related organizations.<sup>12</sup> Efforts to respond to the needs of victims of war and national disaster account in large measure for the flowering of indigenous NGO activity in Bangladesh.

NGOs that have undertaken first generation strategies in the name of development have implicitly assumed, perhaps as a result of their experience with short-term emergency relief efforts, that with a little short-term assistance the people assisted would be able to get themselves back on their feet. Or perhaps it was an assumption that the work being done by government and the large donor agencies to stimulate the economy would provide the assisted populations with new opportunities. At least in the early stages of such efforts, NGOs rarely theorize about why the assisted people have unmet needs. If people are hungry they obviously lack food and should be fed. So the NGO attempts to feed them. Theories of development seem far removed from the reality.

In the first generation strategy the NGO responds to an immediate and visible need. The NGO is the doer, while the beneficiary is passive. The management capability required by the NGO is primarily a capability in logistics management. Efforts to provide education on development issues to the general public from whom private donations are solicited are generally synonymous with fund raising appeals. They focus on dramatized presentations of starving children appealing from magazines and TV screens with sad and longing eyes for a kind person to help them by sending money to the sponsoring NGO.

Table 10-1: Strategies of Development-Oriented NGOs: Four Generations

GENERATION				
	<b>FIRST</b> <i>Relief and Welfare</i>	<b>SECOND</b> <i>Community Development</i>	<b>THIRD</b> <i>Sustainable Systems Development</i>	<b>FOURTH</b> <i>People's Movements</i>
<b>Problem Definition</b>	Shortage	Local Inertia	Institutional and Policy Constraints	Inadequate Mobilizing Vision
<b>Time Frame</b>	Immediate	Project Life	Ten to Twenty Years	Indefinite Future
<b>Scope</b>	Individual or Family	Neighborhood or Village	Region or Nation	National or Global
<b>Chief Actors</b>	NGO	NGO plus Community	All Relevant Public and Private Institutions	Loosely Defined Networks of People & Organizations
<b>NGO Role</b>	Doer	Mobilizer	Catalyst	Activist/Educator
<b>Management Orientation</b>	Logistics Management	Project Management	Strategic Management	Coalescing and Energizing Self-Managing Networks
<b>Development Education</b>	Starving Children	Community Self-Help	Constraining Policies and Institutions	Spaceship Earth

Relief efforts remain an essential and appropriate response to emergency situations that demand immediate and effective humanitarian action. A substantial portion of NGO effort continues to be directed to this need. However, relief and welfare assistance offer little more than a temporary alleviation of the symptoms of underdevelopment and should not be confused with development assistance.<sup>13</sup> It was this realization that led many NGOs created to serve as relief organizations to redirect their attention to what are described below as second generation strategies.

### **Generation Two: Small-scale, Self-reliant Local Development**

Second generation strategies focus the energies of the NGO on developing the capacities of the people to better meet their own needs through self-reliant local action. Because of their attention to sustainability, true second generation strategies are developmental in concept, and are often referred to as *community development* strategies. Commonly the activities involve such village level self-help actions as the development of health committees to carry out preventive health measures, introduction of improved agricultural practices, formation of community councils, digging wells, building feeder roads, etc. It is the stress on local self-reliance, with the intent that benefits will be sustained by community self-help action beyond the period of NGO assistance, that distinguishes first from second generation strategies.<sup>14</sup> Often the intervention is described as an attempt to "empower" the village people.

Some of the NGOs engaged in second generation strategies have done so since their founding. However, a more common pattern has been for NGOs working with the poor in Southern countries to begin with first generation strategies. Gradually their experience leads them to question the validity of relief and welfare activities. Yes, they are meeting immediate needs, but the needs substantially exceed their capacities. Furthermore, charity creates dependence, which for many NGOs is contrary to their own values.<sup>15</sup>

Thus many NGOs have come to see the need for a more developmental approach. The welfare versus development debate became quite active in the late 1970s. John Sommer's book *Beyond Charity* substantially influenced the thinking of many NGOs.<sup>16</sup> Community development seemed to provide them with a response to a need that was developmental and yet fit with their small size and limited financial and technical capabilities. Increasingly dependent on government financing from agencies that had come to favor project funding, NGOs began to package their activities as village development projects, fitting the time frame of their efforts to the project funding cycles of their donors.<sup>17</sup>

Second generation strategies focus on groups, usually either a village or some sub-group within it, such as women, or landless agricultural workers. The work assumes a partnership between the NGO

and the community, with the latter expected to contribute to both decision making and implementation.

Second generation strategies involve an implicit theory of village development that assumes local inertia is the heart of the problem. According to this theory the potential for self-advancement rests within the village community, but remains dormant because of the inertia of tradition, isolation and a lack of education and proper health care. The theory suggests that this inertia can be broken through the intervention of an outside change agent who helps the community realize its potentials through education, organization, consciousness raising, small loans and the introduction of simple new technologies.

The implementation of second generation strategies calls on the NGO to be more a mobilizer than an actual doer. Since the interventions are commonly funded in part by public donors who like to package their money as projects, the NGO comes under pressure to develop a capacity in project management.

Since most international NGOs depend on a combination of public and private funding, they also face a need to communicate with private contributors in the North. Efforts to educate the general public on development issues remain closely tied with private fund raising appeals. For many Northern NGOs the focus has remained on starving children on the theory that they have more appeal to potential contributors than stories of self-help village action.<sup>18</sup> Others have felt that their public messages must be consistent with their actions irrespective of the impact on fund raising. Thus their messages are likely to tell of how with a little help from outsiders the poor can get themselves on their feet and meet their own needs through self-help action.

Second generation strategies differ in the extent to which they focus on human resource development or empowerment as the central issue. While second generation strategies almost universally involve a substantial focus on education, the human resource development tradition assumes that the problem lies exclusively in the individuals' lack of skills and physical strength. Develop the economic resource value of the person, and the economic system will provide the needed opportunities for gainful employment. The rallying cry of the human resource development group has been the ancient oriental proverb: "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime."<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, in practice, many second generation program interventions are little more than handouts in a more sophisticated guise. Too many of these interventions give little more than lip service to self-reliance and, in fact, build long-term dependence on the assisting NGO.

More militant NGOs view the problem in somewhat more complex terms, usually combining education with organizing techniques oriented to political confrontation of local power elites, as inspired by the



teachings of Saul Alinsky. They assume that the problem results from a combination of a lack of development of the individual *and* patterns of exploitative relationships at the local level. These NGOs are prone to point out that villagers who live near the water already know a great deal more about fishing than do the city kids that NGOs send out as community organizers. The more substantial need is to insure the access of the poor to the fishing grounds and markets that local elites control.

Second generation strategies are developmental in concept, but it has become increasingly evident that their underlying assumptions are often overly simplistic—even those of groups that attempt to confront local power relationships. Even NGOs engaged in more empowerment-oriented local organizing that acknowledges the political dimension of poverty, commonly assume—at least by implication—that village organizations of the poor, by their own initiative, can mobilize sufficient political resources to change the relevant power structures. It has become evident to many such NGOs that local power structures are maintained by protective national and international systems against which even the strongest village organizations are relatively powerless. The empowerment-oriented organizing efforts of most NGOs are too limited and fragmented to make any consequential or lasting impact on these larger structures.

### **Generation Three: Sustainable Systems Development**

Third generation strategies look beyond the individual community and seek changes in specific policies and institutions at local, national and global levels. The decision to pursue a third generation strategy often grows out of frustration with the limitations of second generation strategies based on a growing realization that: 1) the benefits generated by its village interventions depend on a continued NGO presence and the availability of donor subsidies; and 2) acting on its own, the NGO can never hope to benefit more than a few favored localities. Self-reliant village development initiatives are likely to be sustained only so long as they are linked into a supportive national development system. Since existing systems tend to be hostile to, rather than supportive of, such initiative, it is essential that such systems be changed. Because NGOs are often the only consistent advocates of such change, they must accept a substantial leadership role in catalyzing them.

Third generation strategies may involve the NGO in working with major national agencies to help them reorient their policies and work modes in ways that strengthen broadly-based local control over resources. These strategies may also involve the creation of new institutions of significant size to provide essential local services on a sustained, self-financing basis. Examples include the following.

- In India, Samakhya and the Multi-Coops Association carried out an extensive state and national campaign involving use of the courts, media, lobbying and public demonstrations to force the Govern-



ment of Andhra Pradesh State to restore free elections to cooperatives throughout the state.

- In Indonesia the Institute for Social and Economic Research, Education & Information (LP3ES) has assisted the Ministry of Public Works in the development and implementation of a policy to convert government managed irrigation systems into independent, farmer owned and operated systems.
- In Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee is establishing a bank as a self-managing, self-financing institution to provide credit on a sustained basis to landless associations.<sup>20</sup>
- In Sri Lanka, Helen Keller International assisted the government in introducing to the national public health system a primary eye care and cataract surgery program with a rural outreach capability.
- In the Philippines the Ford Foundation assisted the National Irrigation Agency in developing a national capacity to strengthen and support local irrigator groups.<sup>21</sup>
- In Bangladesh, Savar Gonoshasthaya Kendra established its own drug company to break the price fixing cartels maintained by the pharmaceutical industry through undercutting their prices in the market. It also provided leadership in helping government write a new policy for pharmaceuticals that eliminated useless and harmful drugs from the market and focused production on essential drug products.<sup>22</sup>

Third generation strategies focus on creating a policy and institutional setting that facilitates, rather than constraining, just, sustainable and inclusive local development action. The underlying theory of third generation strategies is grounded in an assumption that local inertia is sustained by structures that centralize control of resources, keep essential services from reaching the poor, and maintain systems of corruption and exploitation. Creating the necessary changes often depends on working simultaneously to build the capacity of the people to make demands on the system and working to build alliances with enlightened power holders in support of action that makes the system more responsive to the people. The third generation strategies of Southern NGOs often benefit from financial and technical assistance, and political pressures provided by partner NGOs from the North.

The more fully the NGO embraces third generation program strategies, the more it finds itself working in a catalytic, foundation-like role, rather as an operational service provider. It may find that it intervenes in complex national-scale institutional systems comprised of many different organizations from both the public and private sectors.<sup>23</sup> It will need to develop in-depth knowledge of the system. It will also need to develop relations with the system's key players and the necessary technical competence to establish its credibility with them. It must learn to manage strategically, positioning and repositioning its own limited resources where they have the best prospect of shifting system dynamics in the desired direction. If the NGO engages in

development education appropriate to its strategy, it will seek to build public awareness of the need and potential for the transformation of critical institutions.

### **Which NGOs?**

The generational framework deals with NGOs in the aggregate, without addressing the question of whether it applies equally to each of the four different NGO types identified in chapter 9. The generational framework does not apply equally to all types of NGOs. Its underlying logic assumes that the NGO will be led by the lessons of its own experience to focus its resources increasingly on more fundamental determinants of the problem it seeks to address. The extent to which this movement does occur is likely to depend on the extent to which the NGO:

- Is clearly focused on trying to make a sustainable difference in the lives of the people it is assisting;
- Has attempted to make explicit the theory underlying its intervention aimed at improving their lives; and
- Engages in the regular and critical assessment of its own performance.

These are essentially the preconditions for social learning: a focus on a problem or goal, an intervention theory, and a critical ongoing self-assessment.

It cannot be assumed that an individual VO or people's organization (PO) will have an explicit theory of action that guides its interventions toward underlying problem causes. However, VOs and POs are more likely to have such a theory than either the public service contractor (PSC) or the governmental nongovernmental organization (GONGO)—because they have a need for it. In any event, they are much more likely to be focused on the problems experienced by the people—the VO because of its value commitment to the people and their cause, and the PO because the people themselves are making the decisions. This is likely to lead them into an assessment of problem causes.

The PSC and the GONGO are less likely to perceive such a need. For the PSC it is up to the donor to define the need. The stronger its market orientation, the more it will be focused on what is popular with donors and the less need it will have for its own theory of poverty. Its strategic orientation will change with changes in donor preferences. The GONGO, being a creature of government, will likely define the problem in whatever terms the government uses. Its strategic orientation will therefore change in response to changes in government policy.

As a general rule, donors and governments are more interested in supporting NGOs in relief and welfare interventions to relieve immediate suffering than in efforts aimed at fundamental structural change. Thus it is rare to find either the PSC or the GONGO moving beyond

the relatively noncontroversial human resource development type of second generation strategy. Both will tend to shy away from controversy and to concentrate on activities that avoid challenges to existing structures.

VOs do not necessarily start out with a commitment to structural change. Nor do they necessarily seek controversy. However, if their value commitment is genuine, they will feel more keenly the contradictions that they encounter between their commitment and the reality of what their experience tells them to be true. The more the VO is focused on the assisted people and their problems, rather than on the preferences of donors, the more likely it will be in the first instance to move toward politically oriented empowerment interventions and to seek to build community capacity to stand up against local injustice. This same commitment will tend to lead it increasingly toward third generation—and ultimately to fourth generation—strategies.

### THE FOURTH GENERATION

Third generation strategies seek changes in specific policies and institutions. The achievement of just, sustainable, and inclusive development outcomes depends on accomplishing such changes across nearly every sector in every nation. It is an essential, but tedious process that must be replicated hundreds of thousands, even millions, of times to achieve the needed transformation of the institutions of global society. Furthermore, each individual step toward transforming a policy or institution is subject to reversal by the still larger forces generated by backward looking national and international institutions and an invalid development vision.

The critical deficiency of the third generation strategy parallels at the macro-level the deficiency that the second generation strategy displays at a more micro-level. The second generation strategy's critical flaw is that it requires countless replications in millions of communities, all within a basically hostile political and institutional context. It is much the same with third generation strategies, only at a more macro-level.

Thus it is not surprising that almost since the first workshop in which I articulated the concept of the third generation strategy, thoughtful colleagues have suggested that something is missing. There had to be a further step, a fourth generation.

Isagani R. Serrano of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) is among those who have struggled with this issue. Arguing that the unequal distribution of power and wealth at national and international levels carries major responsibility for the multiple crises gripping Southern countries, he wrote a paper suggesting that third generation strategies are only a partial answer.

Where do NGOs go from here? (from the third generation)....

Development theorists and practitioners must think beyond "repair work" addressed to the components of interdependent systems although they can build up from there. Their efforts at re-examination should help enable the whole international NGO community to effectively promote what the watershed NGO conference in London called the Alternative Development Paradigm.<sup>24</sup>

Serrano suggests that this should be the central concern of a fourth generation NGO development strategy.<sup>25</sup>

### **Social Movements and Global Change**

There is a need to energize decentralized action toward a people-centered development vision on a much broader scale than is possible with the more focused interventions of either second or third generation strategies. This is the challenge that currently faces those VOs that are committed to achieving people-centered development on a global scale. They must become facilitators of a global people's development movement.

Within the past three decades people's movements have reshaped thought and action on the environment, human rights, women, peace and population. Though these are all wars yet to be won, the progress—from an historical perspective—has been rapid and pervasive. These experiences demonstrate the power of people's movements in driving social change.

Social movements have a special quality. They are driven not by budgets or organizational structures, but rather by ideas, by a vision of a better world. They move on social energy more than on money. The vision mobilizes independent action by countless individuals and organizations across national boundaries, all supporting a shared ideal. Participants in successful movements collaborate in continuously shifting networks and coalitions.<sup>26</sup> They may quarrel over ideological issues and tactics. But where they have been successful, their efforts have generated a reinforcing synergy.

The power of people's movements has largely been ignored in the field of development. Attention has been focused on money rather than social energy as the engine of development. The irony is that the surest way to kill a movement is to smother it with money.

### **A Legendary Development Movement**

One of the most durable of development legends concerns an intervention built on the energy of a people's movement. This is the legend of Dr. Y. C. James Yen and the literacy movement he energized in China in the 1920s and 1930s. It involved some hundred thousand volunteers teaching an estimated five million illiterate workers. The effort engaged scholars, statesmen, shopkeepers, military officers, students and others in a national commitment to eradicate illiteracy. The effort started with an idea—that every person has a right and an

obligation to be literate, an appropriate technology, a simplified set of a thousand basic Chinese characters that covered the minimum vocabulary required by a literate person, and a budget of \$1,000.

The Mass Education Movement was launched with massive parades and large banners bearing slogans such as "An Illiterate Man is a Blind Man." Classes were arranged wherever space could be found: in Buddhist temples, Christian churches, private residences, police stations, storefronts and wherever else space was available. Groups such as the YMCA were mobilized to recruit students, and the teachers received only a small transportation allowance. There were songs and chants. A general steering committee of some seventy leading businessmen, college presidents, editors, officials and labor leaders was formed. Mass meetings of shopkeepers, teachers and students were held. Funds came entirely from voluntary contributions.

Copies of the texts were used and reused. Unauthorized printings appeared in provinces and towns throughout the country, and not even James Yen knew how many classes were in fact being taught or how many schools were operating. In a more conventional project or program these conditions would have been a sign of poor management. In a true movement it is a sign of the vitality of an idea with the power to spread by its own momentum, wholly beyond any central control or monitoring.<sup>27</sup>

### **Population as a People's Movement**

One of the most dramatic global policy reversals in human history was achieved by a small group of dedicated individuals who mobilized a world population movement under the banner of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). IPPF was founded in 1952 by eight national family planning associations (FPAs) to stimulate development of FPAs in other countries and to promote family planning policies and programs worldwide.

At its inception IPPF functioned as a dynamic network of dedicated volunteers who traveled around the world, often at their own expense or with funds raised from friends, to help other committed individuals form local FPAs. This network included most of the early leaders of the global family planning movement. A tiny staff receiving token remuneration worked round the clock out of a small office in London to provide support.

The network offered mutual inspiration, political support, and exchange of experience and technology. Many FPAs engaged in family planning service delivery, but often primarily as a tactical measure aimed at influencing governments to take up the service delivery task by demonstrating its technical and political feasibility. The more dynamic FPAs defined their roles as catalysts and policy advocates. The effort was a major contributor to one of human history's most extraordinary public policy reversals, as family planning was moved from a forbidden topic to a global public policy priority.<sup>28</sup>

### **To Kill a Movement**

True movements are the purest of voluntary phenomena. Perhaps the surest way to kill them is push them toward bureaucratization by drowning them in money. The problem is demonstrated by both the Chinese Mass Education Movement and the IPPF experiences.

James Yen's movement attracted increasing public financial support, culminating in the creation of the Chinese-American Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR). The JCRR had a budget of US\$27.5 million, funded by the American and Chinese governments for projects in agriculture, irrigation, cooperative organization, public health, literacy and land-tenure reform.

As a result of this good fortune, the qualities of a truly voluntary movement gave way to the features of a publicly funded and centrally administered program with a large budget, formalized organization, accounting systems and a professional staff. The final implications will never be known because only about \$4 million of the new JCRR's budget had been spent when the Communists took over Mainland China.<sup>29</sup>

In 1966 Sweden made the first government grant to IPPF, quickly followed by others, including AID—which rapidly assumed a dominant funding role.<sup>30</sup> The budget climbed from \$11,600 in 1953/54 to \$48 million in 1978, with 353 persons on the central IPPF payroll. By 1987 the budget had risen to over \$55 million, almost entirely from government sources. As public donor funding grew, so too did the administrative and auditing requirements. More and more energy was directed to bureaucratic procedures.

As funding increased, paid staff took over functions from the volunteers. Given the increasing complexity of the organization and the need for advanced technical capabilities some shift from volunteers to paid staff was probably inevitable. But attention increasingly focused on the management of financial allocations to the affiliates, with less emphasis on advocacy and pioneering innovation. The pioneers died or drifted away. The dynamism was gone. IPPF had become an expensive and lethargic international bureaucracy.

A few affiliates have retained their activist, catalytic roles. But most FPAs have become dependent on paid staff engaged primarily in the routine delivery of IPPF funded services. With IPPF effectively neutralized as catalyst and advocate at the international level global priorities have since shifted dramatically away from family planning, even as the population problem becomes more ominous by the day.<sup>31</sup>

There is no necessary reason that success should lead a movement to lose its vitality. I cite these examples as a cautionary note both to social activists, and to the donors who share their cause.

**Facilitating People's Movements**

Fourth generation strategies look beyond focused initiatives aimed at changing specific policies and institutional sub-systems. Their goal is to energize a critical mass of independent, decentralized initiative in support of a social vision. Here we speak purely of VOs and POs. The entry of PSCs and GONGOs into a people's movement is a strong indication that the movement has spent its force and become an establishment institution concerned with the protection of its own interests.

Active social movements may be supported by individual VOs with paid staff, but the role of such personnel is to support the volunteers who provide the real energy in any social movement. The staff must share the spirit and commitment of the volunteers, even though they may depend on the organization for their livelihood.<sup>32</sup>

The theory of action that informs the fourth generation strategy points to an inadequate mobilizing vision as the root cause of our development failure. It calls for imbuing the public consciousness with an alternative vision adequate to mobilize voluntary action on a national or global scale. The focus is on the communication of ideas and information through the mass media, newsletters, recorded media, school curricula, major media events, study groups and social networks of all types to energize voluntary action by people both within and outside their formal organizations in support of social transformation.

The VO with a fourth generation strategy is essentially a service organization to the people's movement it supports. While it must be a master at the strategic positioning of its resources, the management skills required go well beyond those normally associated with strategic management. The job of the fourth generation VO is to coalesce and energize self-managing networks over which it has no control whatever. This must be achieved primarily through the power of ideas, values and communication links. To the extent the VO is truly successful in these efforts, most of the resulting action will be beyond its range of vision. Thus it must learn to deal with partial data, while becoming highly sophisticated in gathering appropriate types of feedback where they are available.

VOs pursuing fourth generation strategies require a strong sense of the nature of self-directing and motivating volunteer activated social systems: What makes them coalesce? What activates them? How can integrative power be used to sustain and focus their commitment? These VOs involve themselves in the broader movement of which they are a part as social and political activists. Their effectiveness depends on working from a well articulated philosophy or vision.

It is difficult to identify VOs in the development field that have specific experience with fourth generation strategies. Development has generally not been viewed as a movement. VOs with this orientation are more commonly found working in support of women's, peace, human rights, consumer affairs or environmental movements. It is,



however, becoming clear that there is a need to mobilize a people's movement around a people-centered development vision, and there is evidence that such a movement is emerging.

Nurturing this movement will call for a new kind of voluntary action by a type of development-oriented VO that bears little resemblance to the more conventional NGOs that have traditionally concerned themselves with the problems of the poor.<sup>33</sup> The VOs that accept this challenge will be well advised to move rapidly in building alliances with other people's movements that deal with related elements of the global crisis.

## NOTES

1. From *Generating Power: A Guide to Consumer Organizing* (Penang, Malaysia: International Organization of Consumers Unions, 1984), p. 38.

2. Tim Brodhead is President of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, the Canadian consortium of development NGOs. This observation was made at a seminar for NGO leaders held in Boston by the Institute for Development Research. This same point is underlined by Robert L. Ayers, *Banking on the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1983), p. 75.

3. Take, for example, the case of the organization that is concerned with the deplorable conditions of street children. Seeing that the children are often forced onto the street to earn income for their families, the most obvious response is to provide them with more pleasant and remunerative ways of earning a living. This, of course, makes it more attractive for desperately poor families to send their children onto the street to contribute to the family's income rather than sending them to school. It may also result in an increase in the numbers of street children. If the opportunities are adequate, the family may even decide to have more children in order to increase its income earning potential. These problems are avoided if the focus is on helping the adult members of the household increase their income so they can provide adequate support for their children.

4. For further discussion, see the report on a seminar with David Korten titled "Practical Problems of Project Design and Implementation" in *Institutional Development: Improving Management in Developing Countries*, A Report on a Series of Seminars Conducted by the American Consortium for International Public Administration (ACIPA) under a Grant from the United States Agency for International Development, 1986, pp. 7-17, available from ACIPA, 1120 G Street N.W., Suite 225, Washington, D.C. 20005; and David C. Korten, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centered Development," *World Development*, Vol. 15, Supplement, Autumn 1987, pp. 153-4.

5. The diversity of NGO experience seems to defy precise classification. The scheme gained substantial currency, however, even before it was formally published. It was evident that a consequential number of people related to the world of NGOs found it meaningful and useful. The first statement of this framework was in a brief informal paper I prepared for PACT on August 1, 1985, titled "Private Voluntary Development: Toward the Third Generation." Several subsequent versions of the paper were distributed informally through various NGO networks, using what I call the Xerox Press. The first "published" version was a working paper titled, "Micro-Policy Reform: The

Role of Private Voluntary Development Agencies," released by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration on January 14, 1986. An abstracted version titled "Private Aid Enters Third Phase," was published in *Development Forum*, in June 1986. The full paper, "Micro-Policy Reform: The Role of Private Voluntary Agencies" was published as a chapter in David C. Korten, *Community Management: Asian Experience and Perspectives* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1986), pp. 309-18. By the time an expanded and updated version was published as "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-centered Development," *World Development*, Vol. 15, Supplement, 1987, pp. 145-59, the "three generations" terminology had come into common usage by NGOs in many parts of the world. An NGO in Thailand even named itself Third.

Some critics have noted, quite correctly in my view, that few NGOs fit purely in one generation or another. Many have a variety of programs, some of which may be first generation, others second generation, and still others third generation. It is generally more useful to classify an individual program strategy according to the scheme than to attempt to classify an entire NGO as having a generation specific strategy.

Another criticism has been of the use of the term "generation" on the grounds that it implies that some strategic orientations are better or more advanced than others. Critics argue that there is a need for all three types of program, and that a scheme for classifying alternative program strategies should not carry an implicit value judgment. I have responded by stressing that each generation meets an important need and has its place within the NGO family, much as the generations in a human family. I have not, however, given up using the generational terminology. In truth I *am* partial. I do believe that the future of development, perhaps of global society, depends on many more NGOs engaging boldly and effectively in the third and fourth generation type strategies discussed in this chapter than is currently the case. The reasons will be further elaborated in subsequent chapters.

6. John G. Sommer, *Beyond Charity: U.S. Voluntary Aid for a Changing Third World* (Washington, DC: Overseas Development Council, 1977), p. 17.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

8. OECD, *Voluntary Aid for Development: The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations* (Paris: OECD, 1988), p. 18.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Leilah Landim, "Non-Governmental Organizations in Latin America," *World Development*, Vol. 15, Supplement, Autumn 1987, pp. 31-2.

12. Michael Bratton, "The Politics of Government — N.G.O. Relations in Africa," *World Development*, Vol. 17, No. 4, April 1988, pp. 569-87.

13. This realization notwithstanding, Brian H. Smith, "U.S. and Canadian PVOs as Transnational Development Institutions," in Robert F. Gorman (ed.), *Private Voluntary Organizations as Agents of Development* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 118-22, observes that the bulk of the resources of U.S. PVOs is still devoted to delivery of food, clothing and medicine to alleviate immediate suffering.

14. In India, much of the NGO movement was born out of the call by Mahatma

Gandhi in the 1920s and 1930s to young Indian men and women to work among the rural poor and scheduled castes (untouchables and tribals). These efforts emphasized constructive self-help action. Rajesh Tandon, "The State and Voluntary Agencies in Asia," in Richard Holloway (ed.), *Doing Development: Government, NGOs and the Rural Poor in Asia* (London: Earthscan Publications, Ltd., 1989), pp. 12-29.

15. For a case study of how one NGO, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), moved from a first to a second generation strategy through its own learning process see David C. Korten, "Community Organization and Rural Development: A Learning Process Approach," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 40, No. 5, September-October 1980, pp. 488-90.

16. See Sommer, *Beyond Charity*.

17. The pernicious consequences for village development projects of donor insistence on projectizing their funding are described at length by Bernard J. Lecomte, *Project Aid: Limitations and Alternatives* (Paris: Development Centre of the OECD, 1986).

18. World Vision USA has reported that it tested this widespread assumption by presenting a TV special featuring a more developmental theme than did its usual presentations. It reportedly drew more contributions than any of their previous TV specials. Hopefully the public is becoming ready to respond to more sophisticated appeals. It makes sense. You give each year and the result seems to be there are more hungry people than the year before. What's the point? The public needs to hear that there is hope for people to actually overcome their problem.

19. OECD, *Voluntary Aid*, pp. 20-21.

20. David C. Korten, "Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee: Strategy for the 1990s," (Boston: Institute for Development Research, July 19, 1989). Publication by Private Agencies Collaborating Together, New York is forthcoming.

21. A breakthrough in my own thinking about NGO's serving as institutional change catalysts in third generation roles came when I realized that the Ford Foundation, which is often thought of as a development donor, has more in common with VOs than it does with the large public development assistance agencies. For further discussion of this point see Korten, "Third Generation NGO Strategies," pp. 152-54. I then realized that VOs can and do assume roles similar to that undertaken by the Ford Foundation in its work with the Philippine National Irrigation Administration (NIA). The Ford/NIA experience represents a classic, but unfortunately all too rare, case in the development field of a successful effort to transform a national bureaucracy into a strategic development organization. This experience and the methods involved are documented in detail in Frances F. Korten and Robert Y. Siy, Jr. (eds.), *Transforming a Bureaucracy: The Experience of the Philippine National Irrigation Administration* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1988).

22. Juan Miguel Luz and Ernesto D. Garilao, "The NGO as Advocate: Savar Gonoshasthaya Kendra, Bangladesh." A case written for the APPROTECH V, Organizational Strategy Planning Workshop, Manila, October 20-21, 1985.

23. One of the most serious barriers to expanding the development roles of NGOs may be the difficulties they face in working with one another. Jealousies among them are often intense, and efforts at collaboration too often break down into internecine warfare that paralyzes efforts to work together toward the achievement of shared pur-

poses. Ironically, it at times seems easier for some NGOs to work with government than with other NGOs.

24. Isagani R. Serrano, "Developing a Fourth Generation NGO Strategy." Informal working paper (undated *circa* 1989) available from the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Manila, Philippines.

25. While many people have contributed to the definition of the fourth generation, I also owe a particular debt to F. Stephen, the Director of SEARCH, an important NGO support organization located in Bangalore, India, and to the staff of SEARCH. Much of the fourth generation part of the strategies' matrix was first worked out during a most stimulating strategic assessment workshop with this group as part of their effort to define a strategy relevant to SEARCH. Serrano's definition of the fourth generation strategy ties it to the promotion of "the Alternative Development Paradigm." As Alicia M. Korten called to my attention in reviewing an earlier draft, to be consistent with the larger generational framework it should be clear that any NGO that engages in movement facilitation as a major program strategy is appropriately classified as engaged in a fourth generation strategy irrespective of whether the alternative development paradigm defines the central idea of the movement. Since Serrano and I are both interested primarily in the alternative paradigm, my discussion of fourth generation strategies and their implementation is focused specifically on fourth generation strategies in support of the alternative paradigm.

26. See Jessica Lipnack and Jeffrey Stamps, *The Networking Book: People Connecting with People* (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986); and Jessica Lipnack and Jeffrey Stamps, *Networking: People Connecting with People, Linking Ideas and Resources* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1982).

27. For the story of this remarkable visionary and his work see James B. Mayfield, *Go to the People: Releasing the Rural Poor Through the People's School System* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1985).

28. Based on Dolores Foley, *Non-Governmental Organizations as Catalysts of Policy Reform and Social Change: A Case Study of The International Planned Parenthood Federation*, University of Southern California Ph.D. Dissertation, May 1989.

29. From Mayfield, *Go to the People*.

30. Some years later, under pressure from anti-abortion forces in the U.S., AID demanded that IPPF withhold financial support from any organization that provided abortion assistance. IPPF refused to comply, and all AID funding was stopped. Other donors quickly filled the gap and IPPF continued to grow.

31. Volunteers retain a titular role in IPPF's governance and policy direction, but few have the day-to-day involvement in family planning as a cause that characterized the early activists. Twenty-one percent of the Secretariat budget continues to be allocated for volunteer "support," mainly for travel to international meetings, as an "incentive" to maintain volunteer interest. Foley, *Non-Governmental Organizations as Catalysts*.

32. The addition of the fourth generation to the three generation scheme raises some serious conceptual issues. The description of the first three generations was arrived at inductively through the observation of experience. While there is nothing that says an organization must begin with first generation program strategies and move to more sophisticated strategies, there does seem to be such a tendency. The fourth generation,

as it relates to development agencies, represents more of an emerging concept or goal than a description of reality. While I could name some organizations that are developing incipient fourth generation strategies, I could not at the moment name any *development* VOs that are engaged in a predominantly fourth generation strategy. Also there is no empirical basis as yet for assuming that the emergence of fourth generation strategies will involve a movement from third to fourth generation strategies by the NGOs in question. To the contrary, the examples of fourth generation strategies that have been cited here all involve organizations or initiatives that began as fourth generation. In fact the weight of the evidence seems to suggest that the more common pattern is for a group of volunteers to engage in a movement-oriented fourth generation strategy and then move almost directly into a bureaucratized first generation type of program, as in the cases of James Yen and the IPPF. These issues will need considerably more examination as experience is gained.

33. One of the most interesting of the U.S. VOs concerned with development is a relatively new organization called Results, a volunteer development movement with chapters throughout the United States and in a number of other Northern countries. Its sole concern is with volunteer-led advocacy and education. It has done what other U.S. groups have said is impossible—it has engaged Americans in development issues. I spoke to the annual membership meeting of Results in June 1989. At that meeting I learned about the potency of voluntary energy in mobilizing political action through meeting hundreds of volunteers who were far more deeply engaged in the intelligent examination of basic development issues than are many of the paid development workers I know. They were also highly committed to making a difference in the world through their educational and lobbying efforts. It was truly inspiring.