

NGOs in Cities

An Annotated Bibliography

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1. Why the interest in Urban NGOs?

The work of NGOs in urban areas is demanding an increasing amount of attention from the development community. It would be presumptuous to say that this attention is, at this stage, sufficiently critical or informed but it is certainly desirable. A cursory reading of policy and programme documents from almost any official agency or northern NGO is sufficient to convince any doubters that city-based NGOs are, at the very least, regarded as legitimate channels of funding for urban development initiatives.

1.1 Urbanisation

There are two broad trends in the development community fuelling this interest in NGOs working in urban areas. The first trend is the growing acceptance by donor organisations that the South is experiencing rapid urbanisation and that there appears to be a growing impoverishment of urban populations (Biljmer et al 1994, Arrossi et al 1994, Thomas 1994). There has been a five-fold increase in the urban population over the last 40 years. Flawed policies based on the need to impede rural to urban migration have given way to realisation that it is natural population increase within cities themselves that is the major contributor to urbanisation (excepting Africa). This has implied drastic policy reforms. Furthermore, research in many countries that have disaggregated national data of poverty measures have shown the severe and varying nature of poverty within cities. Indeed, others have argued that many measures of poverty have a harsher implication in the context of urban life (Moser 1993a, Boyden 1991). Poverty has urbanised.

1.2 The Glory of NGOs

The second trend underlying the interest in urban NGOs is a more general interest in NGOs over the past five years. The state is no longer viewed as having a natural monopoly of development initiatives and NGOs among other organisational entities are regarded as viable actors in development practice. The work of NGOs in mobilising communities, policy advocacy, innovation in programming, in developing work and income generating activities has received admiration from both development academics and official agencies (Paul 1994, World Development 1987). However, to date, the majority of NGO analysis has focused on NGOs working in rural settings with the rural poor. There remains to be a body of enquiry regarding the roles, organisational capacities and performance of urban NGOs (Thomas 1994, Werna 1993, Harris 1992). What does come across in the literature is a realisation that urban NGOs are working in a myriad of interventions with a range of other development entities.

2. The Scope of the Bibliography

2.1 Published works

This annotated bibliography has been produced to give interested readers a starting point for further enquiry regarding urban NGOs. The bibliography is restricted to published works as most readers will have great difficulty in obtaining unpublished articles on the subject. Few of the publications are concerned exclusively with urban NGOs in and of themselves but most have chapters and sections focusing on urban NGOs as actors in urban development co-operation. In other publications urban NGOs are a thread of continuity running through the entire publication.

The foci of the notes to each publication are the roles, organisational capacities and programme performance of urban NGOs. The bibliography is not concerned with giving detailed information about key-words, countries examined or specialised subject areas. Neither do the bibliographic notes focus analysis on such items as the conceptual rigour, theory construction or research methodology underpinning the publications' analyses. Urban NGOs as they are and as they are being envisaged is the exclusive focus of the bibliography.

2.2 Urban NGOs as Intermediary Organisations

The NGOs considered are intermediary organisation which are facilitating grassroots development by providing services or implementing a programme of activities to support urban households and individuals. The urban NGO may forge links between beneficiaries and levels of government, donors and local financial institutions. A central purpose of the urban NGO may be to provide services directly to other organisations that support the poor or perform co-ordinating or networking services. They should not be confused with community-based organisations where the individuals in the organisation are direct beneficiaries of the organisation's work. Many urban NGOs in fact see CBOs as their main clients/beneficiaries and hope to build their capacity to undertake self-sustaining development interventions. Neither should urban NGOs be equated with membership-based groups, such as trade unions or workers co-operatives. The urban NGOs that this bibliography deals with are promotional and service organisations whose beneficiaries are not members, although some beneficiaries may function as board members or advisers to the NGO.

2.3 Sectoral Foci

To make the bibliography manageable, it considers primarily urban NGOs who sectoral foci are children in especially difficult circumstances, small enterprise development and those NGOs using innovative social targeting methodologies. Women, shelter and urban health are large fields in their own right, so the bibliography only considers those publications that are of outstanding relevance and critical analysis as they relate to urban NGOs in these urban intervention areas.

3. Analyses of Urban NGOs

The bibliography is concerned with urban NGOs as organisations within the development community and civil society. As such, the bibliography pays no attention to the minutiae of their

micro-interventions. The analysis guiding the notes looks at urban NGOs from three perspectives, namely:

- their internal organisation
- their institutional roles and relationships
- their programme performance

These three components of the urban NGO are undoubtedly closely interlinked and determine, according to some, the organisation's capacities to be an effective development entity and actor in civil society.

3.1 The Internal Organisation and Key Capacities of Urban NGOs

In looking at the state of the organisation, the notes highlight issues of urban NGOs' identity, structure, community intervention process, support systems, policy development process, culture, resources, leadership and general accountability and legitimacy. The publications thankfully do not see urban NGOs as being merely a set of systems and structures but recognise the importance of the organisations identity (including mission, values and theory), leadership, context, and resources among other things.

3.2 Institutional Roles and Relationships

Urban NGOs are organisational entities within the institutional environment of the city. They are not atomistic, independent elements but are connected with a range of qualitatively different organisations and often play varying roles in development co-operation in urban areas. There are four basic sets of institutional relationships that an urban NGO would typically have: with central government and municipal authorities; with other NGOs in the city; with beneficiaries or community-based organisations; and with NGO funders, be they indigenous funders, official agencies or Northern NGO donors. The bibliographic notes will draw out the pertinent points regard the state of these relationships and what particular tensions, changes and impacts are being experienced within them.

3.3 Urban NGO Programme Performance

It is far too easy and tempting for those committed to alternative and non-state forms of development interventions to argue that urban NGOs are viable and legitimate development actors.

Whilst it is true that the presence of NGOs potentially contributes to the strength of civil society, we cannot make any a priori assumption about their performance in furthering social or economic development among poor groups or communities. The notes will highlight urban NGO performance as it relates to improvements in the lives of the target group (poverty reach, change in livelihood status, process ownership by beneficiaries, cost-effectiveness of delivery, etc), development in the targeted community's capacity (new effective groups formed, autonomous decision-making, maintenance of resource mobilisation, etc), interest articulation and empowerment and the public policy impact.

4. A Perspective on the Publications

The literature search undertaken to compile this bibliography revealed a number of dominant concerns and issues:

4.1 The Dominance of Shelter and Spatial Concerns

The majority of publications concerned with urban NGOs focus on the issue of shelter. Many titles consider NGO experience in supporting slum and squatter settlement initiatives, developing appropriate building technologies, opening up alternative sources of credit for shelter construction and advocacy of planning law changes. After this concern for shelter there are a plethora of publications addressing health care, income-generation and children in especially difficult circumstances. Many of these papers treat a particular slum or spatial location as the context for NGO-intervention along any one of these programming lines. This raises serious concerns about NGO working methodologies and their understanding of the constructions of life among the urban poor. Within the same spatial area or slum there is often great diversity in peoples experience of poverty and lifestyle. For example, a slum-based school programme may not consider the fact that the many children accompany their mothers who work as day-time servants in rich suburbs. The programme is at odds with the women's inter-spatial household organising. Programmes focused on spatial/shelter concerns that do not recognise the fundamental issues of poor people's social and economic activity patterns often end up excluding whole groups of intended beneficiaries. The large number of publications concerned with shelter and spatially focused concerns is reflective of the facts that physical concerns dominate the urban development discourse and many authors have professional background in planning and architecture.

4.2 NGOs as service providers: innovators, additional or contracted

The roles of NGOs in urban development co-operation feature highly in most works, although the tendency is to consider the question from a prescriptive position. As such, writers explore the possible role that NGOs could play in urban management and in alleviating poverty and appear relatively unconcerned with their actual present roles. Much stress continues to be placed particularly on the role that NGOs can play in the provision of basic urban services. In this, they are conceived as alternatives to the state; as channels of additional sources of funding; as having greater poverty reach in their provision; as developing alternative models that are more cost-effective and sustainable; as demonstrating 'alternative' programming frameworks that can impact on the institutional framework of the state's service provision. There is a danger that actual roles of development catalysts, policy critics, development practice innovators and advocates for the urban poor that NGOs play is being overshadowed by the weighty tasks and relational implications of basic services provision.

4.3 Partnership with Local government

Numerous papers refer to potential partnerships between NGOs and 'local government'. Few probe deeply the questions that this goal brings. Firstly, with the exception of Werna (1993) few papers specify the complexity of the institutional map of government at the municipal level -a complexity that can lead to conflict between 'local state' and local government' offices, unclear lines of accountability and responsibility. The NGO seeking to establish partnerships for development faces a myriad of government organisations often with high-staff turnover. Secondly, the indigenous

political perception and expectation of the roles and meaning of NGOs may be a crucial factor in determining the nature and scope of partnership arrangements. Thirdly, the wide-spread weakness of municipal administrations in many developing countries can make the building of effective partnerships a demanding and arduous task which urban NGOs may see as being ultimately frustrating and self-defeating (Harris 1991).

4.4 Facilitating Community-based Organisations

The vital links between CBO and NGOs is stressed in many articles. NGOs are characterised as facilitating the inception and development of CBOs, opening up channels of financing to CBO-initiatives, compiling and disseminating the learning experiences of CBOs to senior policy-makers in municipal and central government; as supporting fora of CBO. The depth of analysis of NGO-CBO relationship is far from rigorous and certain articles border on romanticisation of the relationship. Furthermore, there is a need for more extensive, comparative and thorough investigation of NGO-CBO relations in order to build up some methodological understanding of the nature and impact of the evolving relationship.

4.5 The urban NGO sector: competition, co-operation or confusion

There are numerous references to either the competition between NGOs or their co-operation. Competition is seen as being reflected in unnecessary duplication of projects, competition for service contracts/funds and the collapse of inter-agency initiatives due to suspicion or deliberate undermining. Co-operation is highlighted in the number of proactive NGO fora, the success of NGO sector partnerships in multi-sectoral projects, the success of NGO sector policy reform initiatives, and more recently a number of NGO consortia taking lead roles in city-wide action planning as part of urban management initiatives. What is certain is that the number of urban NGOs has grown dramatically in many cities.

4.6 Urban NGO programming methodologies and programme performance

There is a dearth of published materials concerned with the programming methods of urban NGOs. One of the reasons for this lack is that seemingly effective methodologies themselves are just being developed and disseminated. Much conventional NGO wisdom on project planning and implementations has proved ineffective in urban areas. A number of articles argue the need for the thorough adaptation of rurally-developed PRA and community mobilisation methods. Of those publications treating programming issues in urban areas, the majority are focused primarily on health care in low-income areas or work with children in especially difficult circumstances.

Published evaluations of urban NGO programme performance and impact are scarce. Part of the reason is that few NGOs can reliably assess the impact of their programmes as few of them have undertaken thorough baseline research as part of programme/project planning. Another reason for the paucity of published literature on NGO performance is that until the last six years there has not been a great emphasis or pressure to assess NGO performance.

CONCLUSION

There is a need to consolidate disparate areas of learning concerning the work of NGOs in cities. Development literature has tended to over-emphasise the importance of the sectoral nature of the intervention. The NGO as an organisation and the NGO sector as a significant entity in the institutional environment of the city need to receive much more attention.

Major assessments are required of the capacity of urban NGOs to perform effectively the roles being increasingly advocated for them. It may be that many urban NGOs do not have the spare absorptive capacity. As been argued elsewhere:

There is a growing concern that organisational weaknesses have inhibited many urban NGOs from performing well in the past, in part because donors incorrectly assumed that the organisational capacity existed to meet the challenges of the programmes. There is a need to consider how strong and effective urban NGOs are as institutions and how any constraints may be confronted constructively (Thomas 1994).

We cannot shy away from the fact that much more extensive and thorough investigation needs to be made of the urban NGOs before we can speak with firm credibility about them or their work. As generalisations about their roles and performance are replaced with empirical insights, a stronger base for supporting and possibly mainstreaming them in urban development co-operation may be established. To throw blind praise, easy money and weighty responsibilities at their feet is a recipe for disaster.

INTRAC is commencing a major research programme to analyse the NGO in the environment of the city as part of its commitment to strengthening the development NGO sector. The programme will address the current roles, performance and internal organisation of urban NGOs in a number of southern cities.

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Myers, W.E. (1991), Protecting Working Children, UNICEF/Zed Books, London, New jersey

This is a book of selected readings concerning strategies that can be taken to protect working children against exploitation and other dangers to their physical, mental and social well-being. As a consequence, the implicit foci of attention are predominately urban children and development agencies who share a concern for them. The book intends to provide policy makers, programme administrators, community advocates and the interested public with current and innovative perspectives on the ways through which the problems of working children are being identified and confronted in certain countries.

The major readings are organised into three sections corresponding to the major steps of taking action: 1) Defining and understanding the problem, 2) Planning and implementing effective action, and 3) evaluating programme impact.

Effective programming is seen as being dependent on the ability to comprehend the problem from a variety of perspectives and that a realistic way for NGOs to think their way through the complexities is to conduct a thorough systematic diagnosis of the situation. It is argued that such systematic diagnosis of working children situations by NGOs is scarce, but provides three different innovative approaches (from Nigeria, Peru and India) already conducted in the field at the micro, city and national levels.

The two remarkable features that emerge from the review of programmes with CEDCs are 1) that the overwhelming majority are carried out by NGOs and 2) the wide diversity in terms of activities carried out, the target group served and the various levels at which action is conceived and implemented. This section is particularly useful for NGO policy makers and programme directors. Myers highlights and then discusses the major unresolved issues about the planning and implementation of actions to protect CEDC. He argues that:

...there are questions first of all about the kinds and levels of intervention that are most effective. Are the right kinds of intervention being undertaken with the right target groups? A second type of concern is about the most viable channel for delivering services and other forms of protection. Basically, what should be done by government, and what done by NGOs?

The book concludes with well written papers. Myers argues that evaluation of NGO programmes with CEDC has been piecemeal at best, non-existent and therefore dangerous, at worst. To quote "There has been virtually no systematic evaluation of the impact that policies and programmes serving working children have had on the children, families and communities they touch." He goes on to show how the field of evaluation has progressed enabling it to address issues surrounding these programmes. The subsequent paper by a team of Brazilian professional outline an interesting approach to developing locally applicable indicators in a way applicable to local programme personnel. The final paper presents a conceptual framework for planning comprehensive action to protect and help CEDC and reflects an assessment of the past and current experience.

Sheldon Annis (1988), 'What is not the same about the urban poor: the case of Mexico City', in Strengthening the Poor edited by J.P.Lewis, New Brunswick Press.

In this article Annis makes a number of arguments concerning development co-operation in large cities. Firstly he argues that aid has had an enduring rural bias despite the growing urbanisation and urban impoverishment of developing nations. He suggests four historical reasons for this but suggests that the more fundamental reason concerns the fact that:

the best urban ideas from the populist era have not worked very well. Quite honestly, no one who knows the turf well knows what to do, leading to a kind of intellectual agnosticism that weighs heavily against boldness. Today's urban technicians are generally to be found pondering a set of project options that - they believe - range from those that flatly make matters worse, to those that merely do not work very well, to those that work under restricted conditions but cannot be realistically financed or implemented on a wide scale.

His second and most central argument is that while focus has shifted away from questions of projects to questions of policy and programmes the most important factor on the horizon has been the rapid development and activity of civil society organisations working with the urban poor. "The urban poor are becoming increasingly effective and aggressive interlocutors in their own behalf."

He notes that an intricate web of NGOs, community-based groups and activists has evolved that corresponds to the new physical web of the city. He argues this institutional space is thick, centreless and has no simple point of origin in most cities. The descriptive term known to some is the urban popular/social movement. Federations of urban popular organisations are seen as increasingly taking action on large city-wide issues and being the medium through which organisation, initiatives and advocacy for development takes place within cities.

Out of the involvement of civil society organisations in the urban development discussion with official donors, national and municipal governments new development models and institutional arrangements are arising. Annis stresses the importance of organisation itself not organisations per se as being the new crucial determinant in the urban equation. Individual NGOs and CBOs will rise and die but the "social energy" of failed efforts are changed and mutated into new organisations and broader collective actions.

He questions the "expanded role" being advocated for NGOs by development donors, querying what the role is and whom is giving it to NGOs:

Development donors could take a giant conceptual step forward if they troubled themselves less about what that role could and should be and starting paying more attention to what that role actually is. Even though donors do not yet find themselves in forehead-to-forehead negotiation...they are nonetheless indirectly confronting new configurations of political forces and significant social reorganisations. Largely through politics, the poor are entering the policy dialogue uninvited and as a result, the character of poverty lending is sure to change as the 1990s unfold. In part they need practical skills to act upon what is learned; and in part they need to prepare themselves to be pushed far harder than they have been in the past.

Werna, E. (1993), Healthy Institutions for Healthy Cities: Trends in Local Management and Service Delivery in Developing Countries, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

This paper addresses the often oversimplified but current fashionable notions of decentralisation, local government strengthening and urban management. It draws attention to the need to disaggregate key concepts, integrate different systems of urban service delivery as well as politics and management, and to document successful cases of local government strengthening. For example the term decentralisation is shown to have four basic meanings and the author argues that only deregulation (as opposed to deconcentration, delegation or devolution) directly implies a transfer of power from central government to the formal private sector and NGOs. He counters the view that decentralisation can be implicitly equated with participation and social development.

The paper moves on to discuss the question of strengthening local government, looking at propounded benefits and costs. In particular, it considers the delivery of basic urban services contrasting a range of different approaches, drawing attention to the questions of organisational capacities within the NGO and informal sectors and the institutional links between central government, local government and the NGO and CBO sectors. In the light of the author's arguments it seems clear that the admiration and critical attention with which NGOs are received needs to be further defined and placed into a realistic context.

The author argues strongly that there are many options regarding the arrangements for the delivery of urban services and that no one arrangement should be seen as universal and exclusive. He highlights the fact that a pluralistic system implies complexity but that advantages of co-operation between different arrangement can offset the disadvantages of the exclusive adoption of one system. He goes on to argue that the role played by different development entities will vary even when the same system of service delivery is employed in a number of different urban areas, given the different typologies of local government and different ways societies and indigenous economies organise themselves. The author goes on to argue that it is important to investigate processes used to bring about change in urban development co-operation, to illuminate the knowledge about what has been achieved, with an understanding of why such policies have been successes or failures. In one of the final sections he puts forward a range of possible solutions to problems encountered in urban development administration.

The paper ends by highlighting integration between local government and the informal sector, and initiatives which foster co-operation between different localities.

The paper stresses that attention devoted to the 'health' of local institutions (be they government, parastatal, private or NGO) will undoubtedly influence that well-being of urban communities.

Stephens, C. and Harpham, T. (1991), Slum Improvement, Health Improvement?, PHP Departmental Publication No. 1, London School of Tropical Hygiene and Medicine

This publication is a brief review of emerging thinking in the field of urban planning with particular reference to health planning for the urban poor. The objectives of the publication are:

- to update those interested in relevant literature on urban health
- to flag critical issues in slum improvement of which planners should be aware
- to provide detailed annotations and selected references for readers seeking new information on urban planning
- to highlight the theoretical discussion with two case studies of large and small scale slum initiatives
- to raise the understanding concerning constraints and possibilities for urban primary health care

Chapter one traces the origin and development of both slum improvement and urban primary health care, stressing the organisational arrangements for action. The chapters highlights in particular sectoral and integrated approaches to the urban health action, pointing to the fact that integrated approaches may be more successful in terms of impact and financial sustainability but are more problematic to implement and co-ordinate.

Chapter two raises key issues in slum improvement regarding the coverage of the poor, relocation and land tenure, the effectiveness and side effects of slum improvements, and evaluation of the human impact of slum improvements. Throughout the chapter emphasis is given to practical concerns and dilemmas to be faced by development agencies.

Chapter three describes the strategies and problems faced by two urban health initiatives: one large scale and bi-laterally sponsored from British to Indian governments; the other small scale, NGO sponsored and planned and orchestrated by a slum community. These cases studies demonstrate that planning successful slum improvement in developing countries is a complex issue of balancing the successful methods of the small scale with the possibilities of coverage offered by large-scale implementation of a slum improvement approach

Chapter four concludes with an examination of unanswered questions regarding slum improvement projects and existing constraints and possible solutions to projects. In particular, the difficulties involved in co-ordinating the various sectors involved in the integrated project, of organising the NGO sector, differing agenda between organisations and communities.

The final section is a selected annotated bibliography of 25 recent publications on urban planning as it relates to urban health care issues.

Arrossi, S., Bombardo, F., Hardoy, J., Mitlin, D., Coscio, L. and Satterthwaite, D. (1994), Funding Community Initiatives: the role of NGOs and other intermediary institutions in supporting low income groups and their community organisations in improving housing and living conditions in the Third World, Earthscan Publications, London.

This book is based on varied case-studies of intermediary NGOs involved in the improvement in housing conditions and related services in cities in the South. The organisations are chosen because they are examples of innovative schemes and initiatives involving low-income groups and their community organisations in reducing poverty and meeting basic needs. The central focus of the publication is on funding and supporting the improvement of housing conditions and related infrastructure services by NGOs and community based groups.

Chapter one considers the scale of the need for investment in shelter, infrastructure and services. It argues that the fundamental problem lies in the mismatch between the demands for provision and the institutional capability to meet it, whilst stressing the impact of different country/continental context on developing appropriate responses. It reviews respectively the need for housing, water, sanitation and garbage services. A section looks at the role of research ('rethinking public and private roles within the city') in which the authors argue the need for more longer term, less policy-oriented research at the community and city levels which is focused on understanding processes and change affecting the urban poor.

Chapter two looks at the failure of the conventional model of urban development, reflected in the large divergence between investment needs and current investment flows into housing, infrastructure and services. In particular it considers and attempts to explain specifically the failure of four different types of institutions to contribute more to the shelter and services investment: central/provincial government; local/urban and municipal government; the private sector; and the official development assistance agencies. The chapter concludes by arguing that a principal priority in most nations is for "official policies and programmes actually to respond to the needs and priorities of the individuals and community organisations who are currently responsible for most investment in shelter and infrastructure in urban areas and who generate the demand for most services". It outlines a new strategy which focuses around better use of resources, increasing representation and accountability and the formation of new development partnerships.

Chapter three looks at the roles of NGOs in community development, initially by providing a historical review of how NGO initiatives to urban poverty have gained increasing attention and credibility in the development community. The growth in numbers of NGOs is examined as is varying definitions of them and their work. The question of NGO-state relations is examined as is the distinction between CBOs and NGOs.

The book intends to explore the emerging new ways and means of working with poor households and their community-based groups to improve their housing and living conditions.

Burgess, R., Carmona, M. and Kolstee, Th. (1994), Contemporary Urban Strategies and Urban Design in Developing Countries, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands

The purpose of this highly informative and critical position paper was to structure the activities associated with International Seminar around the theme Urban Strategies and Urban Design which was held in the Netherlands in October 1994. The basic objectives of the seminar were: to encourage an analysis and evaluation of recent and contemporary urban shelter policies in the context of changing macro-economics strategies; to compare and contrast through cases studies from the South different policy and planning approaches to the urban development and shelter problem; to discuss the way in which contemporary urban policies and practices have changed the roles and practices of urban development professionals.

The bulk of this publication is structured around three themes which are current preoccupations to those concerned with development in cities, namely:

a. the macro-economics context - how changes in the global economy demand a new role for urban development and how urban productivity can be increased according to social objectives; b) the environmental and spatial strategies emerging from this new macro-economic context: and c) how this new macro-economic context influences urban design practice, the role of professionals, community participation and partnership.

The exploration of theme 1 starts with a description of the historical evolution of urban development policies and programming responses by multi-lateral, bi-lateral and national government agencies culminating in the current emphasis on the need to harmonise urban policy with national development policy. The two principal strategies for achieving this harmonisation are the enhancement of urban productivity and the alleviation of poverty.

The paper review the policy implications of these two strategies and then proceeds to critique many of their key assumptions, components and possible outcomes. The paper raises such questions as who captures the benefits of urban productivity improvements, will the policies lead to greater inequalities, are the goals of urban productivity improvement compatible with the goals of poverty alleviation, does spatial decentralisation enhance productivity, what evidence exists for software changes benefiting the urban poor.

Theme 2 looks at the significance of urban environmental issues and the current environmental polices being espoused for effective urban development. It examines specifically the link between environmental degradation and socio-economic development and also the link between environmental degradation and urban productivity policies. An historical overview of the urban environmental programming question is then provided with an extended explanation of the current dominant neo-liberal approaches. The paper then proceeds as in the previous theme to critique the current approaches by providing a range of evidence, argument and questions of great insight. Spatial strategies are considered in sub-theme B and the authors employ the same structure of exposition and criticism.

Theme 3 considers enablement, participation and the role of the professional, highlighting questions regarding local government reform, the role of NGOs, the employment impact of market enablement, the nature and consequences of community enablement, the power, accountability and performance of a range of civil society organisation with development concerns. The paper concludes with a useful bibliography.

Blanc, C.S. (1994), Urban Children in Distress: Global Predicaments and Innovative Strategies, Unicef/Gordon and Breach Publishers.

This publication by UNICEF represents one of the significant written outcomes of its urban child project which involved a five-nation study. The purpose of the project was to gain a greater understanding of urban children in especially difficult circumstances and develop ways to better diagnose their problems; to approach children as whole people and recognise child and family resourcefulness and coping strategies; and to analyse innovative NGO and municipal programmes, policies and arrangements for urban children. It argues from the outset that " a significant reorientation of our thinking about urban development in relation to children's well-being is one of the chief institutional challenges of the 1990s and beyond. Meeting this challenge will require major institutional development and reform. Many countries and cities which are too poor, or too small, to have adequate managerial capacity will need financial and technical assistance and training."

The book begins by presenting a background to the project, stressing the specific and changing dimensions of the Urban Child problem and the innovative approach of the 5 countries research teams. It raises issues concerning childhood, family coping mechanisms, definitions of community and children in especially difficult circumstances. It then sets the parameters of the country studies in terms of the situation analyses of urban children and assessment of policies, programmes and processes of intervention to assist disadvantaged urban children.

The first case study is that of Brazil. The authors examine the situation of marginalised children there and the policies and programmes that have affected the over the past 18 years. Section 2 of the chapter review the social and economic context of Brazil and the trends affecting children and young people. Section three considers the plethora of research undertaken with regard to disadvantaged urban children in Brazil. Policies and programmes for the protection and well-being of children at risk are discussed in section 4 and this provides some fascinating insights to the evolution of social policies for children and the roles and strategies of NGOs in the urban context. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the dynamics of change as it applies to the Brazilian case.

In the Philippines case as well as presenting a range of findings and arguments regarding CEDC, the third chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the introduction of the Urban Basic services programme and the National Programme for Street Children. It highlights the critical roles that can be played by NGOs and governments working in partnership in advancing creative, sustainable and cost-effective solutions. The India case study argues that urban NGOs are now regarded as indispensable partners in urban poverty alleviation. However, the authors question the governments ability to identify sufficient numbers of urban NGOs with the capacity and experience to reach poor communities and cite research that suggest that only a few urban NGOs in each city are mature and developed enough for a city-wide role. Interesting case-studies from Kenya and Italy follow.

Comparative trend in work, homelessness, schooling and survival strategies are analysed. The final chapter of the book explores in great depth the lessons learned from the innovative policies and programmes and raises guidelines and questions for development agencies.

Hurley, D. (1990) Income Generation for the Urban Poor, Oxfam, Oxford

This book is the result of research undertaken by Oxfam to examine a number of issues concerning income-generating interventions in urban areas of the South and is targeted specifically at people who design and implement income generation interventions (IG) in NGOs, CBOs and larger development agencies. The focus of the book is explicitly urban as it is attempting to redress the lack of experience amongst development agencies of working with the urban poor.

The book is in four sections. The first section deals with the two parties to the intervention -the urban poor and the 'interveners'. The nature and causes of urban poverty are examined highlighting the fact that the identification of the poorest is a complex task and raising the need to consider careful women's triple roles and household and intra-household issues. The rest of the section examines the varying views concerning the poor and economic organising held by intervening NGOs and their process of intervention. The author argues the importance of establishing and prioritising objectives from the very outset in the context of an open and equal dialogue with the intended beneficiaries.

Section two discusses various issues which are relevant to income generation, including clarity about the aims of an intervention. It argues, in particular, that the agency must avoid the tendency to see the intervention in isolation, and must always be aware of the social and political context in which they are working. It explores the implications both for the community and the targeted beneficiaries of the programmes, looking at the differentiated nature of IG programmes. It stresses the importance of commitment to the objective of generating income within the concern for balancing broader social and economic objectives. It goes on to consider the organisational and institutional requirements to support IG, the importance of developing participant responsibility and initiative, and additional factors in undertaking IG with poor women.

A critical examination of the organisation of IG is presented in section three. The chapter focuses on some of the essential elements of good economic practice and discusses some basic business and organisational principles relevant to all activities aiming for IG, whatever their size. It stresses the importance of careful economic appraisals, highlighting the appropriateness of a market orientation in helping this analysis. In the remaining two subsections several principles of management and book-keeping and financial accounting skills are presented.

The final section presents guidelines for intervening agencies. It tackles the question of group initiatives particularly issues around group dynamics and the implications of growth. Consideration is given to the support of small enterprise development as an alternative to IG. The final subsection considers ways of agencies to facilitate IG without actually becoming involved in initiating and managing productive enterprises, such as providing advisory direct services, training, credit. It stresses the need to consider a package of support to help IG initiatives.

Bijlmer, J., Kolstee, Th. and van Oosterhout, F. (1994), Urban Poverty Alleviation, Sectoral Policy Document of Development Co-operation, No.5, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands.

This special policy document of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs consists of an analysis of the social, economic and political dimensions of urban poverty and outlines of a programme of priorities, principles and guidelines for addressing the urban poverty alleviation challenge.

In the first section of the book, there is a critical review of the problem of urbanisation in the Southern continents and a historical review of the different urban policies and poverty alleviation strategies pursued by national governments to date. The section briefly examines the Dutch ODA's understanding and response to urban poverty.

The dimension of work and income generating activities by the poor is examined in section two. The analysis concentrates on attempts by the poor to improve their income in terms of consumption (keeping down living costs by using their own organisations) and production of goods and services. There is then an examination of the methods used by urban NGOs in work and income generating activities. The authors highlight the emergence of new types of NGO in this sector and the capacity-building questions that they need to address. The final subsections consider the roles and impact of private organisations, municipal governments and central government.

Section three analyses the main problem areas in relation to basic physical amenities and considers slum areas, access to housing and land markets, and water, sanitation and disposal services. It concludes with a special look at gender in the context of improvement in physical habitat. The problems and dilemmas regarding basic social facilities (education, nutrition, health, safety from crime) are explored in section four. The activities of NGOs are stressed as are the weaknesses of primary health care strategies.

Institutional development (ID) is considered in section five as strengthening the national capacity for good administration and management. The authors outline a broad range of measures to promote ID, with interventions taking place at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels. The authors in fact argue that government has to be strengthened in order to enable it to play a lesser but important role of co-ordinating NGOs and other private institutions in the development of society. 'Urban managers', argue the authors, 'will have to regulate less and manage better. The practice or absence of urban management and the nature of urban NGO roles is examined in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Relaying the experience of Asia, the volume argues that NGOs are still the most appropriate forum for tackling urban questions but that there are questions regarding their institutional linkages and funding security. That said, the growing number of NGOs and their participation in urban management has to be accompanied by decentralisation and democratisation of the NGOs themselves and of public administration. The section then reviews movements towards decentralisation, privatisation, urban management as an organisational problem, participation as management strategy before considering the possibilities and limitations of NGOs (and CBOs) and the conditions for their successful operation in urban poverty alleviation programmes.

Section six examines international official donor policies. The key elements of sustainability and enabling policy are analysed in the final section.

Mitlin, D. and Satterthwaite, D.(1992), 'Scaling up in Urban Areas', in Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World, pp 169-179, edited by Edwards and Hulme, SCF/Earthscan Publications

This paper offers an analysis of the mechanisms and processes that NGOs working in the urban shelter and infrastructure sector have undertaken. In the main the NGOs considered are those which provide technical, legal and financial services to low-income households for shelter construction and improvement or which work with community organisations in basic service or infrastructure provision. It also considers the ways in which such NGOs effectively multiply the impact of community initiatives.

It considers firstly the scale of urbanisation in the South and the attendant infrastructural demands. It argues that southern governments for a range of reasons are not fulfilling what some see as their investment role and that it is poor individuals and households who are making the requisite investment in shelter and services. It then proceeds to consider the specific natures of housing, basic services and infrastructure investment and the role of community based organisations.

Section two of the paper looks at the work of NGOs with community organisations. First of all it tackles the question of working with communities in which there is no established community organisation and considers three such routes in such a situation, namely: a long-term programme of integrated work with a single community; the establishment of potential independent housing co-ops, and the formation of small groups from individuals for a programme of activity with the NGO. It presents case-studies from Argentina and Pakistan which highlight the different processes and components involved in alternative strategies. The authors argue that NGO work in establishing community organisations requires considerable amounts of time and sensitivity

The latter half of section 2 concerns itself with supporting existing community organisations, and argues that most NGO programme with community initiatives entail a package of measures considered appropriate to the specific context in which the NGO is working. It then focuses on a number of aspects of the successful operation of credit schemes in relation to housing, basic services and infrastructure investment drawing on a Costa Rican NGO as an example.

In conclusion the article posits that NGOs have important roles as multipliers, providing support and guidance to hundreds of community-led initiatives, and increasing the effectiveness/capacity of community organisations. The authors explore three areas of importance in NGOs' work in supporting community organisations: the better use of existing, under-utilised resources; increasing representation and accountability; new institutional partnerships in the development of low-income communities. With respect to the third point the authors highlight the need for wider networks among support NGOs, the need for donors to provide longer-term funding arrangements and the task of creating arrangements which balance CBOs capacities and priorities with NGO operational working modes.

The special issue of the Asian Development Journal considers urban poverty in India, Indonesia, Korea, The Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It looks at measurements and trends of urban poverty from an economic perspective in the main. All the individual articles consider urban labour markets and earning difference, with a number of the country articles looking at the characteristics of the urban poor. Access to basic urban services and other traditional components of urban poverty alleviation programmes are then examined. The special issue attempts to provide some general overview of critical issues and policy measures as they related to understanding and tackling poverty in the context of urban areas.

In the Bangladesh analysis, it is argued that NGO involvement in the urban sector is comparatively recent, with the most experienced NGOs operating in rural communities. A number of NGOs are now active in providing health services, training, promoting local-level initiatives and monitoring services. It is argued that now extending NGO activities to urban areas will call for a redesigning of methods and institutions within which NGOs can operate. Participatory working methodologies and tools have to be adapted.

It argues that a significant limitations of NGOs is that they remain largely foreign-funded, with donors exerting considerable control over the design and scope of projects and thus are not self-sustaining. It also argues that there is much duplication of projects and lack of co-ordination in the sector. It argues for a well-integrated inter-agency approach to poverty alleviation which avoids the arbitrary 'Christmas Tree' approach of many multi-pronged strategies. It stresses the need for NGOs and governments to improve the provision of basic urban services by better targeting and pricing of services.

In the case study of India the success of a few city-wide programmes run by NGOs in conjunction with CBOs and municipal governments are highlighted. The authors of the case study on Indonesia agree that more urban services should be provided by NGOs, CBOs and private companies which are purported to be nearer the beneficiaries. Government departments are seen as lacking the capacity to interpret regulations or to encourage enabling arrangements.

Within the various articles it is argued that NGOs can play important roles in drawing up policy initiatives towards the urban poor and providing support to community based initiatives, particularly with regard to employment and income generating initiatives. There is a shared understanding evident in the papers that programmes built on bi-lateral and multi-lateral funding often fail to reach the poor because of donors controlling design and planning too closely or due to mismanagement.

The papers see the roles of NGOs, the government, the private sector, the local community, interest groups, aid agencies and the urban poor themselves as critical in shaping institutional arrangements toward the mitigation of urban poverty.

Bubba, N. and Lamba, D., 'Urban Management in Kenya', in Environment and Development, vol.3, No. 1, pp.37-59

This paper examines the changing roles and responsibilities of municipal government in Kenya and to what extent these responsibilities are executed. It begins with a description of how local government developed during colonial times and since independence. Later sections describe the structure of local government in Kenya and look in some detail at the urban services and the particular problems experienced in Nairobi city administration in recent years. The final section summarises four main new perspectives on urban management which are required if local government is to become more effective. These perspectives are : the role of NGOs; the roles and problem of women; the informal sector; and urban productivity and urban-rural linkages.

It is argued that over the last fifteen years there has been a growing contribution from urban NGOs in the provision of basic urban services. In the time of colonial administration, NGOs were seen mainly as charitable or religious organisations working with destitute individuals in cities. However, in the 1980s, NGOs started to tackle development related issues and have since become involved in major social and economic programmes, particularly through the provision and support of services. Urban NGOs are participating in a wide-range of activities including: environment, energy, recreation, health, street food, water and sanitation, shelter, population and family, and work with women. Different types of NGOs in Nairobi are then outlined.

The authors argue that although NGOs have been under special attack in some circles, their role in development is now acknowledged. However, the authors criticise NGOs for allowing themselves to be to accountable to project donors and not to beneficiaries.

The authors also argue that the urban NGO sector is not structured to provide certain services that are spatially diffuse or require central planning. Furthermore, they are often hampered in the provision of services by public regulatory policies, planning laws and regulations. The authors make a plea for policies to be re-examined and restructured to encourage urban service provision by the NGO sector.

Douglas, M. (1992), 'The Political Economy of Urban Poverty and Environment Management in Asia: Access, Empowerment and Community-based Alternatives', Environment and Urbanisation, 1992, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp.9-32

This paper addresses the major environmental problems facing the urban poor in Asia and is directed towards a search for alternative avenues for their alleviation. The focus of the discussion is on community-level initiatives, including constraints on and pre-conditions for empowering and mobilising the poor to manage the environment. The central proposition guiding the discussion is that improving the capacity to manage the environment rests, first, in improving people's access to key economic and environmental resources and second, on empowering households and communities to participate as active decision-makers in the use and management of these resources. In most instances, a strategy based on this proposition will call for a significant departure from current practices and institutional arrangements underlying government-community relations in planning and decision-making.

NGOs have come to play a critical role in citizen and community mobilisation. The author refers to Eckstein's argument that support of 'better situated' individuals and NGOs is a pre-condition for such mobilisation in tackling environmental problems. The argument of UK-based community work theorists Craig, Mayo and Taylor is then posited that the principal role NGOs can perform is coalition-building to create linkages between community and wider political processes. As such they walk the thin line between facilitating community efforts and engaging overtly in the political process.

The Asian experience of NGOs playing key roles in supporting slum dwellers resistance to eviction and in negotiating land-sharing agreements is highlighted. However, the analysis suggests that NGOs have been unable to translate political struggles into concrete programmes to improve squatter areas. They have also exhibit much conflict and competition among themselves.

The author then moves to criticising the argument of Hardoy and Satterthwaite that technical assistance from outside is a pre-condition for capacity-building interventions with CBOs to improve and manage the environment. Technical assistance often determines the direction of project efforts and thus promotes genuine decision-making from inside the community. The ideal that the community decides and the NGO assists is not empirically correct. Having made this observation, the conclusion is not to reject external assistance but rather to make more explicit the institutional and decision-making implications of, for example, the formation of a community credit union or the setting-up of a garbage composting system, both of which will call for new management structures, resources and commitments by community households.

Section two begins by presenting a case for enhancing community-based environmental management in cities in Asia. Section 3 then identifies major constraints and the elements of successful experiences in the planning and management of their habitats. Section 4 concludes by briefly setting forth a framework and agenda for action-orientated research on community-based environment management.

Stren, R. (1992), An Urban Probematique; The Challenge of Urbanisation for Development Assistance, University of Toronto Press.

This book takes the view that urbanisation in the developing world needs to be better understood in relation to development assistance. The volume examines the major issues involved in the urban development process relating them to important questions on the international development agenda.

Chapters include discussion on the background and context to the urbanisation process and city growth; macro-economic issues in urban development; the impact of urban policies on women, children and the disabled; urban systems and the environment; empowerment; variations with and between the developing world region; the development and role of Canadian institutions, goods and services; and the implications of Canadian experience for developing countries.

The volume concludes that addressing urban development issues comprehensively, in the context of a wider assistance process, provides a crucial link in efforts to achieve sustainable development. "In the end " writes Stren, "to deal or not deal with the urbanisation of the developing world is not a choice. The real choice is how to deal equitably and coherently with the facts of urbanisation, in a manner that reflects the complexity of the development process itself."

Stren calls for a holistic approach in solving the urbanisation phenomenon, one that takes account of spatial systems, land-use changes, cities' biogeochemical cycles, the importance of factors such as water, energy and transport, and the informal sector. Governance and centralisation; the advocacy of self-help groups; improved public services and shelter; the role of NGOs, CBOs and international donor agencies are also examined.

Harris, N. (1992), Cities in the 1990s: The Challenge of Development Assistance, UCL Press, London.

In November 1991, the British ODA and the Development Planning Unit of UCL sponsored a workshop to discuss new thinking and approaches to urban development. This volume is a record of the proceedings of the workshop, which was attended by senior representatives of donor agencies as well as by experts from cities and countries in the developing world.

The proceedings are broken down into two parts. The first focuses on a discussion of the new policy agenda of the major multilateral agencies, country experiences, urban development strategies and issues of urban management. Part two discusses policy experiences, including a review of country experiences and a discussion of productivity and poverty in developing world cities.

In his introduction, Harris points to the growing urbanisation of the developing world and the acceptance that cities are becoming countries' most dynamic sources of economic development and national savings. He quotes World Bank figures showing that 60% of the volume of output of developing countries comes from urban areas. He writes "Urban productivity was thus concrete to national development - including the development of rural areas - and to improving the condition of the poor."

A number of difficult questions are raised. Participants comment on the inability of policy agenda to help generate city-specific plans of action. The link between productivity improvements and poverty alleviation is questioned throughout. The persistence of large projects and the politicisation of aid programming is discussed. Different models of urban management were put forward in which NGOs were feeding into policy development, communications with the community, provision of services, and municipal planning.

In his concluding chapter, he addresses policies affecting the 'underlying' urban economy which determines productivity and poverty among city-dwellers. He admonishes international funding agencies for not placing more emphasis on this real economy, which city managers are too often preoccupied to address. He urges the international community to aid city managers in understanding the role of the real economy and in identifying city-specific agendas and mechanisms for monitoring it.

Swaminathan, M.(1985) Who cares: A study of Child-Care Facilities for Low Income Working Women in India, Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi.

With the increasing recognition of the roles of women in development, the provision of appropriate facilities for the child-care of working women gains importance. Any clear recommendations for policy must therefore be based on a description of the extent and nature of arrangements currently prevailing, followed by an analysis of their implications and identification of gaps in information. It is with this in mind that the study, an evaluative review of the situation with respect to child care facilities for low-income working women in India has been prepared.

The study begins with a brief demographic review to assess the magnitude of the problem and indicate the perspective for interpretation. Next, each of the main sectors, Government and NGO are considered in depth. For each sector, a general overview is followed by an intensive case-studies of two contrasting examples within the sector to enable sharper and more insightful conclusions to be drawn. The last chapter attempts to a final evaluative picture, drawing comparisons with other countries and goes on to discuss the implications and theoretical issues, placing the discussion within the broader social perspective. Programme prescriptions and proposals for alternatives are also made, followed by suggestions for research and documentations in the future. Here the most important point is the need for utmost diversity in design to suit varying needs, aspirations, circumstances and conditions. The principles of flexibility and diversity have to be applied across all areas. The author examines how the two principles would affect programming, training, legislation and funding mechanisms.

Getibug, I.P. and Shans, M.K. (1991), Reaching out Effectively: Improving the Design and Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programmes, Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur

This volume looks at poverty alleviation programmes in the Asia region and highlights critical elements for success by providing case-studies from several countries.

Looking across the region, the editors stress that continued poverty in parts of Asia proves that the poorest of the poor are still not being reached effectively (despite concerted poverty relief during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s). Some key shortcomings include:

The absence of clear criteria for identifying the poor;

- the failure to treat the mobilisation and empowerment of the poor as a political process;
- the failure to devolve responsibility and control to the local level
- the continued emphasis on free hand-outs or heavy subsidies for services, with the poor as passive beneficiaries rather than active participants

Several of the ten case-studies demonstrate successful approaches, such as The Self Employed Women's Association Bank of Ahmedabad (providing low-income people with credit for trading and small enterprise activities) and the Philippines Business for Social Progress effort that mobilises and channels resources for social development at the provincial level.

UNICEF (1992), Strategies to Promote Girls' Education: Policies and Programmes That Work, UNICEF, New York.

This book looks at what action programmes need to be adopted to reduce gender gaps in education. Existing research documents were reviewed to identify workable strategies and interventions. Several important parameters were used to select appropriate actions, namely the outcome of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All and the World Summit for Children. These were taken in combination with a number of new priorities including: a focus on sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Middle East where girls' enrolment and achievement are significantly lower than boys; increasing the efficiency of existing resources so that more girls can benefit from existing programmes; action to enable informed decisions to be made on the effective allocation of limited resources; and addressing differing needs and situations by modifying what has already been learned.

The book explores why girls education is important and describes nine strategies 'which work', namely:

location of schools closer to communities

hiring of female teachers

lower costs of education to parents

development of relevant curricula

increase in community participation

promotion of localisation and decentralisation

promotion of advocacy and social mobilisation

the design of systems which accommodate the needs of female students

support for multiple delivery system, including use of NGO/CBO alternative schools.

The book examines the policy implications of each of the above strategies.

Menendez, A.(1991), 'Access to Basic Infrastructure by the Urban Poor', EDI Policy Seminar Report, No..28, World Bank, Washington D.C.

This volume documents the discussions during a workshop concerning urban poverty issues in the south, particularly concerns related to the urban poor's access to basic infrastructural services. There were 21 reps from official agencies and 17 from NGOs.

Four specific issues are the foci of discussion, namely:

- financial issues - relating government budgets to the scale of urban poverty. Questions of the effective and efficient use of resources are considered, as are strategies for bolstering the sustainability and replicability of interventions.
- role of NGOs - NGO advantages and limitations vis-à-vis government. Strategies to improve their performance and to scaling-up.
- the role of government - as regulators and facilitators, their strengths and weaknesses, what elements of government strategies create an environment that facilitates the initiative of NGOs
- the relationship between NGOs and governments - in the light of their comparative strengths and weaknesses, what aspects of their work should be considered to combine their efforts to improve the abatement of poverty.

Existing approaches to urban poverty alleviation are considered in chapter two. Macro-level interventions and government priorities are considered firstly. Various micro level approaches are then considered, such as reducing resource waste, institutional development, upgrading and resettlement, use of appropriate technology. The chapter concludes with an examination of the major constraints on the effectiveness of these approaches. In chapter three financial issues are tackled under the headings of: cost recovery and subsidisation; technology, the land issue, improving poor people's access to credit.

The role of urban NGOs are explored in chapter four. NGO strategies for identifying and advocating the needs of the poor are analysed. The success of NGOs in innovating and in raising resources from outside the state is then examined. The rapporteur argues that NGOs' multiplicity, ubiquity and triggering of initiative is a significant contribution to institutional development of the development community. The limitations of urban NGOs are identified with respect to sustainability, scale of action, government constraints, replicability and managerial capacity and co-ordination.

Whilst chapter five considers the roles, strengths and weaknesses of government, chapter six attempts an analysis of NGO-government relations. It is argued that there is a basic mismatch between the administrative structures of government and the dynamism and grassroots orientation of NGO interventions. Whilst seeing that NGOs function as supporters to community-based organisations and initiatives and as advocates of CBOs, the participants argue that NGOs need to learn how to collaborate practically with official agencies more, especially in programming and policy development. There is a description of the regional differences in NGO approaches to urban poverty alleviation and work with government agencies.

The volume concludes with an assessment of how the two sectors can work more effectively together, recognising their relative strengths and roles. Particular attention is given to 'bottom-up participation' and developing an enabling environment for poverty alleviation.

World Bank, Poverty Alleviation and Social Investment Funds; the Latin American Experience, World Bank, Washington D.C.

This paper considers the operation and programme performance of social investment funds (SIFs) in Latin America, set up primarily to alleviate the worst aspects of structural adjustment programmes. Whilst the general focus of the paper is the SIFs, a particularly insightful section focuses on the role of NGOs. The following note summarises the paper's arguments.

The paper states that NGOs play a significant role in the operations of SIFs throughout the region, arguing that their participation in programmes and projects sponsored or financed by governments and external agencies is unprecedented. The Bolivian SIF pioneered NGO involvement and was able to develop positive working relationships with them by overcoming their initial lack of trust and scepticism which was based in part on NGOs' experience and ideological opposition to the government's economic adjustment package. The SIF accomplished this by: establishing transparent and efficient operating methods; engaging in active and continuous dialogue with the NGOs; demonstrating 'political neutrality' by financing projects on technical merit, irrespective of the leaders' political orientation. The SIFs in El Salvador and Honduras were able to secure collaboration of both national and international NGOs once they had established their credibility and demonstrated that their decisions were non-partisan or neo-classical in premise.

The SIFs have sought the involvement of NGOs as a link between funds and community-based organisations or initiatives. NGOs help communities plan, prepare, implement and operate projects and also sponsor innovative projects in such areas as nutrition, training, support for women's groups, credit and micro-enterprise.

NGOs have generally been most effective in sponsoring or helping to carry out social assistance or small credit projects. However, many smaller NGOs are not well administered, have a high turnover of their relatively poorly paid staff, and are weak in long-term planning. The SIFs have consequently had to evaluate carefully the experiences and capacity of NGOs that are to be sponsors or beneficiaries of projects financed by them. The Honduran SIF requires participating NGOs to be: legally registered; have at least three years experience; and have sufficient qualified staff and equipment to engage in appraisal and supervision.

The paper argues that NGOs do reach the poor, but not the poorest groups of the population. Moreover, except for some international NGOs, their capacity to prepare and implement projects has been limited. This situation is now beginning to change. The SIFs have not only enlarged the scope of NGO operations by financing some of their projects, but have provided them with training and technical assistance and have contracted them to carry out research and to monitor various programmes financed by the SIFs.

Lamba, D. and Lee-Smith, D. (1987), The Roles of NGOs in the Provision of Shelter and Services for the Homeless in Africa, African Urban Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 3, August 1987, pp.213-216

This paper discusses the efforts of CBOs and NGOs in providing shelter for the poor. It categorises NGOs as supporters of community-based organisations' efforts in providing technical assistance, information and advice, as well as engaging in advocacy to influence government policy.

The paper commences with a description of evolving self-help efforts in the shelter and services field in Africa. It outlines numerous examples of successful CBO initiatives highlighting the role of government in either enabling or constraining efforts. "What is clear from all of them is that CBOs do well when they get consistent help and encouragement and that they may falter when they do not. And while such help may sometimes come from support NGOs, this in itself is not enough. Political support and encouragement from government is the very least that is required from that quarter."

The paper argues that NGOs are most beneficial when they can offer the right kind of services to community initiatives including financial support, employment and income generation, training and information services. The paper considers in turn the role of NGOs vis-à-vis CBOs in employment, finance and training and information.

Yahya, S.S. (1988), NGOs and Land for the Homeless, African Urban Quarterly, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2, pp12-14

This paper carves out a role for NGOs in the quest for methods that will make land more accessible to the urban poor. It analyses specific areas in which NGOs acting either individually or together can engage the urbanisation of Africa, such areas including: advocacy for equity; policy input to legal frameworks; land reclamation efforts; information gathering and dissemination and research; facilitating communities participation in planning and land use control; infrastructure provision; and innovative financial schemes.

The analyses are concluded with a warning against undue faith in the potential power of NGOs and unwarranted expectations of what they could achieve. The diversity of urban NGOs and their range of interest could often be the cause of friction between the NGOs themselves. They should be seen as purposeful entities working in competition with other private as well as public agencies. They are seen by the author as being prone to misuse by the elite and the financiers of their activities.

Hardoy, J., Mitlin, D. and Satterthwaite, D. (1992), Environmental Problems in Third World Cities, Earthscan Publications, London.

This book describes the environmental problems of cities in the Third World and how they affect human health, local ecosystems and global cycles. It analyses the causes of the problems and reveals the political roots of many. The authors argue that practical solutions to these problems can be found and argue the need for cities to have competent, representative local government, enabling those whose health or livelihood may be threatened to take steps. It sets out a range of wide and specific priorities for action.

Chapter one presents an overview of environmental problems in cities, the scale of urbanisation and the number and nature of urban centres where action is needed. Chapter two describes environment problems and their consequences on different levels (household, workplace and neighbourhood). Chapter three discusses the general environmental problems of cities.

Chapter four considers the environmental impacts of cities on their wider regions and the global environmental matrix. Consideration is given to the impact of cities' resource, waste, production and consumption flows on regions, climatic change and general environmental degradation.

The institutional structures and processes which can address these environmental problems is considered in chapter five. The authors argue that "what is needed is the means by which groups of people in each neighbourhood, municipality and city can reach a consensus on environmental problems and address them." It discusses the roles of private and public suppliers of infrastructure and services and identifies some of the political and institutional constraints inhibiting actions. The role of local and Northern NGOs are considered highlighting their contribution to innovation, mobilising communities and bringing environmental change. What is lacking, argues the authors, is any realistic idea of how to multiply significantly the number of communities and neighbourhoods in which participatory action programmes are receiving support. Questions regarding the nature of donor involvement in urban projects are considered as a consequence in which it is argued that longer-term process-orientated funding is needed.

In chapter six the implications of cities achieving the sustainable development goals outlined by the world Commission on Environment and Development are considered. The authors highlight the contradictions which need to be resolved and the national and international frameworks which will address contradictions and encourage the pursuit of global and local sustainability and development goals within each city and municipal government.

Conclusions are presented in chapter seven along with a new environmental agenda. The authors agenda stresses that any new environment agenda must become driven by the specific needs and priorities of cities, with sufficient power to ensure their resolution. Another priority is to ensure the better use of resources which includes increasing the capacity of city and local governments to tackle both short- and long-term environmental problems, and channelling more funds directly to CBOs and the NGOs with whom they choose to work. The authors reiterate that there is tremendous potential in new partnerships between local government, CBOs and NGOs.

Davidson, F. and Peltenburg, M. (1993), 'Government and NGOs/CBOs Working Together for Better Cities', IHS Working Paper Series No. 6, Institute of Housing and Urban Development Studies, Rotterdam.

The focus of this paper is on the role and relationships between NGOs, Government and CBOs in human settlements development in cities, and how they can be strengthened so as to make them more effective. In particular the concern is that the scale of impact of co-operation should become much more significant.

The paper first reviews the context of the discussion, including development areas where increased co-operation is important. Section two looks in more detail at the main actors, especially their attitudes and capabilities. The authors argue that NGOs must move in the direction of Korten's third generation NGOs if they are to make a significant impact in cities. They observe that NGOs vary greatly in terms of both their organisational capacity and political support. They highlight the fact that many NGOs have limited non-project related reserves and technical capacities.

Section three reviews the experience of implementing a number of broad strategies to improve the relationships. From this, the main factors influencing the relationships are analysed, in particular constraints which operate and hamper co-operation at a larger scale. The most important constraints are seen as relating to attitudes, institutional framework and capability, especially in terms of management. The relationships between NGOs and different levels of governments are analysed in more depth in section four. The section reviews best possibilities of effective co-operation and goes on to examine what conditions are necessary for co-operation, based on the constraints highlighted in previous sections.

The main areas of recommendations provided in section five are:

- Much more effort is required to derive effective actions from enabling policy frameworks.
- A major effort is required to change attitudes of different levels of government and NGOs towards each other, and such efforts will take considerable resources and should be integrated with capacity-building work.
- Effective decentralisation of government needs to take place to enable it to work with NGOs
- Programmes should be critically reviewed to ensure appropriate roles for NGOs.
- Capacity-building for both government and NGOs is necessary, and a particular focus of attention should be intermediary NGOs.

Thomas, L. (1994), 'Urban Poverty and Development Interventions', INTRAC Occasional Paper, No. 4, INTRAC, Oxford.

This occasional paper provides a critical review of the major shifts in the policies and practices of development organisations involved in urban poverty alleviation. It is intended as a thorough introduction to those interested in development work in urban areas. Throughout the entire paper there is an emphasis on urban NGOs.

Part one provides an overview of what is termed the urban challenge. It examines the tremendous urbanisation of the past thirty years and the corresponding lack of institutional capacity to deal with the new development demands of urban growth. The general impact of structural adjustment programmes on the urban poor is highlighted and the paper outlines the nature of complexity in cities. Part one proceeds to consider the three main approaches that have categorised urban poverty alleviation programming, namely: growth and modernisation; basic needs provision (including sites and services) and: urban management and productivity improvement. The section concludes with two broad arguments: firstly, despite current rhetoric being concerned with institutional and policy environments there is still a very strong focus on large projects and sectoral programmes which are often not reaching the poor, not sustainable nor improving the socio-economic environment; and secondly, that the current discussion regarding urban NGO roles in development co-operation needs to be put into a realistic context of what they are actually doing and what they have the capacity to engage.

Part two entitled 'Understanding urban poverty' addresses the fact that there has been little concerted and high-quality analysis concerning the nature and extent of poverty in cities. The first section examines four causes of this neglect of analysis and failure of analysis when it has taken place. The paper then proceeds to offer a conceptualisation of urban poverty from a programming perspective, giving specific guidelines for development agencies seeking to analyse urban poverty and well-being.

The currently evolving views and roles of key actor in urban development interventions is discussed in part three. The macro-paradigms of urban management adopted by the larger multi-laterals are outlined and criticised by the author. It examines the emergent organic paradigm of planners and urban administrators which lays an emphasis on both management and productivity enhancement. The paper then moves to consider the approach of Northern NGOs towards urban interventions and outlines a number of critical observations and questions concerning urban NGOs that address their institutional roles, organisational capacities and their programme performance.

The paper then proceeds to consider the 'received practice' with regard to poverty alleviation (noting government and NGO approaches), service delivery (paying particular attention to integrated projects and community-based organisations), promoting participation (in research, planning and programme implementation) and social targeting methods

The paper concludes by posing a number of important research questions concerning effective urban poverty alleviation and urban NGOs. The paper has a good bibliography for those wanting to further their knowledge of the subject.

Rakodi, C. (1989), After the Project has Ended: The role of a Non-governmental Organisation in Improving the Conditions of the Urban poor in Lusaka, Community Development Journal 25(1), pp.9-20

This paper gives attention to the issue of an appropriate allocation of responsibility for the tasks of urban management between the public and private sectors and between different forms of organisation and to the needs of post project operation and maintenance of services and infrastructure. The paper takes as a case-study the World Bank funded project in Lusaka between 1974-1981. The author does not argue uncritically that urban NGOs' roles should be expanded or that they are a panacea for the shortcomings of government. Rather, she suggests that it is organisational differentiation that gives rise to greater flexibility and responsiveness, rather than confusion and a lack of co-ordination. As such, urban NGOs, in principle, are seen as playing a vital role in urban management.

The author examines in turn the evolution, aims, programmes and modes of operation of one urban NGO (the Human Settlements of Zambia) to assess in detail whether it could provide the basis for an alternative local administrative system, or could relieve local government of the some of the tasks already overstressing the administrative and financial resources available to it.

The question of the NGO's relationship is placed centrally. The success of the relationship is seen to depend among other things on the NGOs ability to respond quickly and affect action and to maintain a sensitive balancing act between politicians, civil servants and communities.

The credibility of the organisation is seen to depend on the quality of its staff which is turn is portrayed as depending on their commitment to working with people and on their training, orientation and ability to take responsibility. Additionally, staff are given considerable responsibility to take initiatives and decisions, meet with leaders and disburse funds in areas where they are responsible. This individual responsibility is seen as crucial to development of relationships with communities. The author notes the organisation's participative and self-critical management style and methods for promoting accountability.

The urban NGOs growing influence is noted particularly the training and consultancy role that is playing with respect to community programmes and policy development. The NGO is seen as not having the administrative systems to perceive, permit and promote diversity and as such cannot take responsibility for service delivery with varying groups of the urban poor. Rather, its role appear to be those of intermediary and innovator, demonstrating alternative methods of organising for action that may have long-term implications for service providers (government). The author sees the NGO as currently consolidating its programme, and developing the prerequisites for long-term survival, including a stable resource base and appropriate alliances.

The author argues that the NGO is adopting some of the roles of a 'third generation' NGO but will not be able to engage in macro-policy reform. Yet in demonstrating alternative ways of doing things and working in new ways with local government many urban NGOs can be viewed as catalytic organisations in the sense that they achieve an influence far out of proportion to their resources.

Vergara, R. (1994), NGOs: Help or Hinderance for Community Development in Latin America, Community Development Journal, 29(4), pp.322-328.

The author argues that the practice and profession of development has led to the privatisation of local political territory and that inhabitants in the South, instead of becoming citizens have become 'beneficiaries'. The article is concerned with the nature of NGO roles and the impacts of their project performance.

The author argues that whilst many NGOs pretend to be institutions that create awareness among the population and contribute to the formation of local political democracies, a large percentage of them in reality do the opposite. In this sense, the author sees NGOs as depoliticising communities.

Vergara rejects the idea that the best allocation of resources is made by managers in NGOs, who are seen as "just and good" individuals who do not have private interests. He argues that even if communities were directly given resources and chose less profitable alternatives this would be more valuable.

The author explores the way NGOs construct beneficiaries. There is no mutuality in the relationship between NGOs and poor individuals or CBOs. The intending beneficiaries have to display weakness, hopelessness without NGO help and gratitude. The fact that the NGO benefits from this construction of dependency is seldom examined. Vergara argues that the result of this process is that " everyone appears as poor and destitute, and the richer, who are the better informed, appear as the poorest of the poor and in this way obtain the resources which other members compete for. The final result is the same: the rich get preferential treatment in the assigning of resources because, contrary to the situation in the community where private interests are transparent and the rules of play are formalised, here the assigner of resources has established an outside and discretionary power that morally judges the economic rights of poor people.

The author proceeds to a section addressing the success of income generating initiative to shelter projects highlighting the critical (and often detrimental) roles that NGOs have played in the former. The section argues that NGOs need to drop their traditional prejudices against private enterprises and start to see its consolidation as of more concern than so-called alternative programmes.

In the final section entitled 'Some things which must change in NGOs' the author argues that firstly that NGOs need to change their perception of their roles. They should be seen as promoter of particular interests and not as entities that go beyond good and evil. Secondly, NGOs should move away from being non-accountable institutions that do not present accounts to communities but yet act as private local governors. Thirdly, NGOs should stop creating community businesses that substitute the legitimate economic actors. Fourthly, the author argues that NGOs must admit that things work much better when they are run as a private industry and not on the basis of local government substitutes. In this their clients should be the communities and not the financiers.

Paul, S. and Israel, A. (1991), Non-Governmental Organisations and the World Bank: Co-operation for Development, the World Bank, Washington D.C.

This book is a collection of papers on the role, potential and limits of NGOs in development. It combines a global review of what NGOs are and what they can do in the development process with an analysis of the experience of one international development agency, the World Bank, in working with NGOs in its operations.

Samuel Paul provides an overview of the increasing interest in NGOs, the rationales for their existence and a history of their involvement in Bank projects. He continues by summarising the papers comprising the volume and discussing emerging issues and policy implication. He argues:

- there is considerable optimism about the potential roles NGOs can now play and consensus about their strengths and competencies. There is, however, little hard evidence on their impact, costs and other measures of performance.
- it is agreed that the NGO role should not be limited to project implementation, though that seems to be the mode most often used by governments and donors.
- the creation of an enabling environment for NGOs is a priority need
- those who wish to collaborate with NGOs need to have a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. He argues the need for more systematic studies of NGOs, for measures to counteract the dilution of the mission of NGOs, to find alternative to 'scaling-up'.

David Korten in chapter two focuses on the historical evolution of NGOs, an empirical analysis of NGO-government and NGO-donor relations, and concerns germane to the future role of NGOs. The author shows that there has been a substantial growth in their number, size and sophistication. He highlights the likely future pressure on NGOs for delivery of large scale programmes, the increase in the pace and intensity of NGO interactions with government, and NGOs emerging role as catalysts of people-to-people co-operation. In chapter three David Brown and Korten analyse the rationale of NGOs from a number of perspectives, reveal issues concerning their competencies and ways that donors can effectively collaborate with them. The central message of chapter is that no responsible donor should undertake to 'assist' or 'use' NGOs as part of its development programming unless it is prepared to make a substantial investment in understanding their nature, limits, and distinctive roles. Chapter four focuses on the interactions between NGOs and the World Bank, arguing that in general NGOs have contributed positively to the success of Bank projects - by facilitating the participation of beneficiaries, highlighting environment issues and assisting in the delivery of services to low-income groups. However the authors highlight the low involvement of NGOs in the design stage of Bank projects, the volatility of NGO-government relations, the competition among NGOs and NGOs lack of critique regarding the macro-economic issues and enabling environment policies.

In the concluding chapter David Beckman considers recent experiences and emerging trends in relation to bank-NGO relations. He argues for: (i) a focus on the quality of NGO involvement in projects and policy issue, (ii) strengthening of NGO-government relations, studies of NGO sectors being helpful in this process, (iii) realistic assessment of the pace and level at which NGOs can be involved in large

This volume assesses the evolution and implications of the increasing role for NGOs in development. It presents 25 papers concerning NGOs, all but one being presented at the London Symposium on Development Alternatives: the Challenge for NGOs in march 1987.

In her overview paper Drabek covers the issues of: the changing role of NGOs and scaling-up; relationships between Northern NGOs and their southern partners and; the varying nature of NGO-government relations in different continents. In her conclusion she outlines a list that constitutes both a summary of the focal points of the discussions and a potential dialogue for future dialogue and action. The other 24 papers in the volume each address one or more of these points:

- * southern NGOs have basic responsibility for leading development process
- * transparency, mutual accountability and risk-sharing about Northern and Southern NGOs
- * critical links between micro and macro policies need to be developed
- * heterogeneity of NGOs
- * diversification of NGO sources of funding
- * Funders need to recognise the need for long-term funding for institutional development of NGOs
- * Need for research dissemination and training to be integral to NGO programmes
- importance of networks and NGO support organisations as valuable tools to strengthen NGO sector

The volume contains some of the following papers:

- * NGOs: In one year, out the next (T.Brodhead)
- * Third Generation NGO strategies: A Key to people-centred development (D.Korten)
- * NGO self-evaluation: Issues of Concern (B.Sen)
- * NGDOs: From Development Aid to Development Co-operation (M.Padron)
- * NGO co-ordinating bodies in Africa, Asia and Latin America (C.Stremlan)
- * Can small-scale development be large scale policy (S.Anniss)
- * The Reconciliation of NGO Autonomy, Program Integrity and Operational Effectiveness with accountability to Donors (H van der Heijden)

There are also five papers dealing with NGOs in particular regions, namely Europe, South Asia, Latin America, USA and Canada. These are all critical papers worthy of review. Annis's paper, for example, begins "NGOs are so frequently lost in self-admiration that they fail to see that the strengths for which they are acclaimed can also be serious weaknesses". He then proceeds to show that terms like small scale, politically independent, low cost and innovative may easily be reinterpreted respectively as irrelevance, poor quality, de-politicisation and unsustainability. His paper then proceeds to address the question of whether a species of development can flourish that maintains the virtues of smallness but at the same time reaches large numbers of people, transfer genuine political power to the poor, and provide high-quality social services that are delivered by permanent, adequately funded institutions. Overall, it should be said, that the scanning of these papers highlight the paucity of reliable data and of analytical work. Of the papers in this special issue and the nearly 420 references in the bibliography, hardly any provided a systematic analysis of the growth and patterns of NGO development.

Devas, N. and Rakodi, C. (1993), Managing Fast Growing Cities: New Approaches to Urban Planning and Management in the Developing World, Longman scientific and Technical

This book examines attempts which have been made to plan and manage the cities of the South and seeks to draw lessons from that experience as a basis for identifying new approaches to the planning and management of these fast growing cities. The first chapter outlines the extent and pace of urbanisation in the South and raises consequent concerns regarding the provision of urban services, the growing number the urban poor, the impact on the urban environment and the role of government in city management.

Chapter two considers the meaning of urban management, its requisite tasks and how the performance of these activities can be measured. The writer sees the urban management landscape as permeated by choices and conflicts of interest. NGOs can be involved in conflict at many levels - over ideological differences, practical policies, issues about boundaries of responsibilities and over vested interests. Chapter three reviews the evolution of ideas about urban planning and management and the state of knowledge available to city managers. It notes the renewed interest in urban decentralisation towards secondary and intermediate cities. There is a growing debate around this strategy, one to which NGOs are coming very late and tangentially. The existence of NGOs in urban institutional environment is also considered. After highlighting the supposed strengths and weaknesses of NGOs, the writer argues that NGOs cannot be a substitute for democratic local government, but within an overall system, there should be a significant role for a variety of NGOs as 'competitors' to government agencies and as 'goads' to those agencies.

Chapter four to six examine the role of urban labour markets, the provision of urban services, and the new roles for local government. Chapter seven looks at the political context in which urban management takes place noting that the ability to control NGO activities is very limited. However, the writer notes that the NGOs successes at building capacity in communities or community-based organisation may in various cities and contexts lead to hostile reaction by government. In the subsequent chapter the issue of participation in the planning process is considered, the writer arguing that the very factors which can make urban NGO projects participatory (vis-à-vis other agencies) are all characteristics which inhibit the replicability and implementation of such projects on a larger scale.

NGOs it is argued are increasingly being seen by governments as partners in urban development. Some examples, options and threats are alluded to in this respect. The writers argue that segments of the NGO community are moving beyond the small scale interventions to consider strategic issues related to sustainability, breadth of impact and recurrent cost recovery, and as such will have to consider much deeper involvement with public and private organisations that many NGOs are traditionally accustomed to.

Chapter nine examines issues regarding the application of law to urban planning and management. The concluding chapter draws conclusions about the current state of the debate, lessons learnt, and about which approaches offer the most potential for managing the South's fast growing cities.

The editors argue that urban NGOs have roles to play in fostering community organisations, acting as catalyst for action and change, and as intermediary between households, communities and local government. They also see a role for NGOs in direct service provision or project implementation in certain contexts. They do not see NGOs as a third sector in society and argue that NGOs as alternative relatively untried organisations should be seen as complementary to the public sector rather than a substitute for it.

Atkinson, S. (1995) 'NGOs: At the Interface between Municipalities and Communities' in Urban Health in Developing Countries edited by T. Harpham and M. Tanner, Earthscan.

This paper focuses on the role of international NGOs in urban health by presenting case examples of work, approaches, advantages and constraints from two comparable international organisations. The insights and issues raised by the case studies are refreshingly illuminating and pertinent to NGO work across most sectors.

The author begins by noting positive contributions of NGOs but arguing that their impact has been limited and has not addressed the structures and processes which determine resource distribution international, nationally or regionally. Furthermore, with the growing strength of national and southern counterpart NGOs, international NGOs have to find new roles - possibly in increased advocacy work. She raises questions of how NGOs could work with government, to what extent should they accept contracts to deliver development programmes from international official agencies and how to maintain their legitimacy to speak for the poor to the international community when their activities at local levels have decreased.

The bulk of the paper explores through case studies three themes related to the role of NGOs in urban health:

- working with urban communities to establish participatory urban primary health care
- reviewing the appropriateness of rural experiences for urban areas
- strategies for scaling-up and increasing impact of NGO projects in urban areas

It is argued that NGOs have a strength in reaching and working with urban communities, and that they are more aware of and adaptable to the heterogeneity of communities than government. The importance of NGO working from a programme as opposed to a project perspective is noted.

The issue of scaling-up is addressed, the editor highlighting the fact that different contexts require different strategies. In one case the NGO went to scale by running a very focused programme within larger government service provision; another NGO approached scaling-up on an additive basis; while the third NGO from the outset developed a local model which could in theory be expanded indefinitely if funds were forthcoming, following a building block approach.

Like a growing number of writers Atkinson emphasises the need for a better understanding of the way people are living their lives in cities and the implications of this for programming. She concludes by arguing that:

NGOs, with a local level focus and the flexibility to be innovative, should be major actors in exploring, initiating and evaluating new models.

Arellano-Lopez, S. and Petras, J. (1994) NGOs and Poverty Alleviation In Bolivia, *Development and Change*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp.555-568.

This article outlines the roles NGOs in Bolivia played in alleviating poverty associated with structural adjustment, consolidating neo-liberal economic policies and the resulting reorganisation of the state. It notes the increasing enthusiasm of international donors for working through NGOs particularly in the area of poverty alleviation. However, the paper questions whether NGOs are more successful in overcoming poverty than state agencies. It argues that there is evidence that the combination of state reorganisation and the emergence of NGOs as implementers of development assistance has contributed to undermining grassroots organisations (GROs) representing the interests of poor people.

The authors outline a history of how the organisational and social mobilisation roles of Bolivian NGOs came to be overshadowed by the greater importance given to implementing development projects. They also argue that the increased funding for NGO activities led to a proliferation of NGOs addressing social problems which were abandoned by the state. NGOs were increasingly seen as agents to fill gaps or gulfs in service provision through their involvement in the Emergency Social Fund. A further consequence of this has been that the diversity of views that NGOs represented has largely been lost as they have competed with one another to become the favoured clients of international donors.

Another consequence is that NGOs have usurped political space that once belonged to grassroots organisations (GROs). These GROs arose through political struggles on behalf of marginalised groups and were the principal vehicle for political expression of these groups before national government. Due to the historical linkages of some NGOs with GROs and the mythology that these linkages generated about NGOs being aligned with grassroots interests, NGOs have facilitated the co-optation of GROs. NGOs placed themselves between GROs and the state agencies and international donors and act as development brokers. The authors argue that:

this increases the political and economic isolation of GROs by allowing states and donor agencies too avoid dealing directly with them. In addition, by virtue of their position as brokers, NGOs are often able to tempt or pressure GROs into forsaking political struggle, in favour of seeking to establish clientistic relations by ingratiating themselves with institutions controlling access to development resources. Indeed, GROs find themselves competing with one another for favour and funds, instead of building alliances with one another to struggle for power.

The paper is an interesting analysis of the pressures on NGO to reorient themselves and how these ultimately can transform their roles and relationships with GROs, governments and international donors.