Chapter-9

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

This final chapter will synthesize previous analysis by drawing together the different themes developed in the earlier chapters.

9.1 Strategic Planning: The implementation of the strategic plans was generally low (46%). The NGOs studied implemented 'transactional' or 'resource transfer and provision' activities more than 'transformational' activities. Transformational activities would build the capacity of the beneficiaries to hold the local NGOs accountable and build the capacity of the local NGOs to improve the level of implementation of strategic plans among the local NGOs.

Project activities were implemented more (60%) than organizational capacity building activities (40%) because there was less enthusiasm by both donors and organizational leaders to invest in organizational capacity building. There was also generally less knowledge on how to effectively build the capacity of the organizations. Organizations cannot deliver beyond their level of capacity. Inadequate knowledge of effective capacity building undermines the effectiveness of strategic planning and leads to the bias of project implementation over organizational capacity building.

High Performing NGOs had High levels of implementation (60%) as compared to Low performing NGOs (40%). All the strategic planning processes however were not consciously aimed at achieving strategic fit or relevance, legitimacy and sustainability.

The NGOs that were proactive in starting their strategic planning processes were relatively more effective than those that were reactive or were told by a donor to go through the strategic planning process. This shows the importance of ownership for strategic planning processes.

In all the NGOs studied, there was a conspicuous lack of 'process consciousness' as the strategic planning process was mostly limited to the formulation stage. The specific factors that hindered the strategic planning processes at preparation stage included: the need to have an agreed and shared purpose of the strategic planning process among all the key players, ensuring adequate awareness and understanding of the strategic planning process to help clarify expectations; ensuring ownership of the process especially by the local NGO; not having a task force to manage the process; and not conducting organizational assessments to identify issues to guide the strategic planning process.

Local NGOs generally pay less attention to the preparation stage of the strategic planning process. Less attention at the preparation stage undermines the whole process as preparation forms the foundation stage for the whole process.

Factors at the formulation stage included: the need for competent consultants, the capacity of the participants and adequacy of time given to the formulation stage. Factors at the implementation stage included the organization's knowledge and capacity to implement the strategic plans; and the influence of donors on the organization's priorities. Lastly, at the monitoring and evaluation stage, the factors included: misunderstanding the purpose of monitoring and evaluation or over emphasizing accountability at the expense of learning; the culture of busyness; the culture of not valuing accountability; and the inability to differentiate between the monitoring and evaluation of strategic plans from monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities. There is usually an assumption that local NGOs are able to formulate, implement; and monitor and evaluate the strategic plans. The foregoing observations show that this assumption is usually not true.

Generally in all the players: the board, management, donors, consultants and the communities did not play their roles effectively. The key challenges faced by the board were low commitment, inadequate capacity and failure to provide strategic leadership. For the management the factors included lack of knowledge and capacity to effectively implement the strategic plans. For the donors the factors included stringent, inflexible conditions attached to their money, project rather than organizational based funding; short-termism and failure to establish genuine partnerships with the local NGOs they supported. The consultants too failed to establish partnership relationships with the local NGOs they served.They limited the scope of strategic planning by excluding it from a wider Organizational Development (OD) framework and they promoted a 'service rather than developmental' approach to their work. The communities failed to participate at a 'strategic level' in the strategic planning process and failed to hold the NGOs accountable for the performance of the strategic plans.

There is still low awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the players in the strategic planning process. There is need for more knowledge, capacity and commitment among the players.

9.2 Service Delivery Process: The findings from empirical study established that the declining of sustainability of service delivery of NGOs was caused by the inequitable

distribution of capable human and material resources, employee resources, poor management, poor financing strategies and the general lackof resources in the NGOs.

9.2.1 The study assessed service delivery process of the selected NGOs with the help of ARCHSECRET model (As given below).Beneficiaries' ratings exposed the service delivery quality of the studied NGOs.

  i. In case of <u>Access dimension</u>, beneficiary rating is highest for DBC and lowest for TDMS.

 ii. CRD got highest rating and SDCCC scored lowest for <u>Responsiveness dimension</u>.

iii. In <u>Communication dimension</u> beneficiary rated highest for BRO and lowest for TDMS.

 iv. RGVN rated highest by beneficiaries for <u>Humaneness</u> and SDCCC rated lowest.

  v. In <u>Security dimension</u> BRO topped the list and TDMS rated lowest.

 vi. BRO topped the list and rating for SSA is lowest for <u>Enabling/Empowerment</u>.

vii. In <u>Competence</u>, RGVN rated highest and TDMS rated lowest.

viii. Where as in <u>Reliability</u>, RGVN rated highest and SSA rated lowest.

 ix. In <u>Equity</u> dimension, RGVN rated highest and SDCCC rated lowest respectively by their beneficiaries.

  x. In Tangibility beneficiary rating for NEADS is highest and TDMS scored lowest.

On the other hand, overall mean rating across the dimensions for BRO is highest, followed by RGVN, NEADS, DBC, CRD, SKD, SSA, SDCCC and lowest for TDMS.

This shows the quality of service delivery process of studied NGOs. This result also reinforces the relevancy of the 10 service quality dimensions of the ARCHSECRET multi-attribute scale. For the studied High performing NGOs, it is critical to ensure that there are no major shortfalls in service delivery across the dimensions and a shortfall in service delivery to High extent across the dimensions for Low performing NGOs (Refer table 6.29).

9.2.2 This research has found out that projects implemented by NGOs are a replica of the donors'policy objectives and programs. More often than not, these projects do not involve the primarybeneficiaries in their design but tend to seek the involvement of the primary target including the local leadership at the time of implementing the project.

i. This research further found out that because of power imbalance caused by the financial muscleof the donor, the local NGO is unlikely to implement the agenda of the target beneficiaries.

ii. More than90% of the studied NGO projects are donor funded, and nearly all these funds are inclined to projects that will meet the donor's policy objectives.

iii. The impact of donor-aided projects onto their primary beneficiaries is mixed and appears minimal.Although this research found out that there were some social and economic effects at the primary level these effects hardly went beyond the group members that were often targeted by donor aided projects.Even then, among the group members, it was quite challenging to identify model households with allround impact as a result of project support

iv. Generally, project impact on their primary target is very minimal, and most it is isolated and mixed and could only be found among a few members of beneficiary groups with progressive leadership andplanning capabilities.

v. Project impact on primary beneficiaries of donor aided projects is affected by the messo level structures, the groups, that because of conflict, resources get disintegrated and lost, living only verylittle for community action.

vi. The research found out that, groups/community based organizations were strategically created to attract donations that are defrauded by the very individuals who started them.

vii. The choice by the donors and NGO to work through groups seems failed as it widened the gap and further disenfranchised the poor to retreat to the periphery.

viii. Project impact was feasible in NGOs wherethe case study organization directly targeted the very poor, who were not in groups.Overall, project impact was difficult to trace among the primary targets, the poor, but more wasseen at the level of NGO workers, including Community Process Facilitators, business owners, and service provides like Hotels, restaurants and breeder farms.

ix. Another important aspect the study reveals that NGOs are politically motivated. Even though they do not directly make it public but it could be seen in beneficiary selection process, project area selection and appointing board members.

x. Finally, this research found out that, most of the donor-aided projects have no future withoutdonor support and many of the project handouts had promoted dependency among communitymembers.

9.3 Knowledge Management and Organizational Performance: With reference to this the following can be stated:

i. The results showed that nonprofit organizations which have a Hierarchy culture have a stronger IT support than nonprofit organizations which have an Adhocracy culture.

This result also supports the research of Cooper and Quinn (99-102) that IT systems are used for different purposes and with a different focus by different organizational cultures.

ii. The study also found that nonprofit organizations with a centralized organizational structure have a stronger IT support than nonprofit organizations which have a decentralizedorganizational structure. Furthermore, the results supports the research of Schroeder and Pauleen (20-27) who argue that IT governance is easier in centralized organizations where organizational activities are organized by top management.

iii. The study could not find a clear result on the nonprofit organizations which have a stronger IT support have a High level of human capital than nonprofit organizations which have a less strong IT support.

iv. The results showed that nonprofit organizations with stronger IT support have a High level of structural capital than nonprofit organizations with less strong IT support. The result that organizations with a strong level of IT support prefer a codified approach for knowledge sharing together with the result that organizations with a Hierarchy culture type have a stronger IT support, supports the results of Roman-Velasquez (104-05) who found through his research that organizations with a Hierarchy culture type prefer the codification approach for knowledge sharing, while organizations with an Adhocracy culture type prefer a personalization approach.

v. The study found that nonprofit organizations which have a stronger IT support have a High level of relational capital than nonprofit organizations which have a less strong IT support. This supports the statement of Alavian d Leidner (46-51) that IT can further support knowledge haring by extending the individual's reach beyond the formal communication lines. Shared databases or computer networks can facilitate the communication between different groups.

vi. The results of this study stress the importance of IT support in order to manage knowledge and with this to increase IC (human capital, structural capital and relational capital). A study of Hackler and Saxton (71-79) shows that due to financial constraints IT priorities amongst nonprofit organization are often dwarfed by other concerns.

9.4 Suggestions:

On the basis of the above findings the study offers following suggestions:

i. NGOs need to implement transformational activities more. Because transformational activities empower the beneficiaries to lead their life independently. Moreover they have to emphasize on implementing organizational capacity building activities. This has to be kept in mind that board, management, staff and beneficiaries have to be empowered to make strategy formulation successful.

ii. Need to restructure "family board" and "invisible board". NGOs should exclude family members and should not use board only for maintaining formalities.

iii. Boards of NGOs should have a fixed tenure. While appointing board members it has to be kept in mind that they should have genuine interest in the matters related to the NGOs they are involved. Moreover, they have to be involved in decision making processes more.

iv. Need to minimize excessive dominance of founding leaders and mid-level managers should be empowered.

v. Need to pay attention to enhancing motivation, encouraging voluntarism spirit and promoting community service values in the NGO staff.

vi. Donor dependence has to be reduced. They have to be self-sufficient and should look for other sources of funding.

vii. Need to select beneficiaries in a forum which represented by local government servants, Panchayati Raj Institutions (local Self-Government Institution) Members and communities.

viii. Need to analyze strengths and comparative advantages in terms of staff, space and capacity to delivery of services. Otherwise there would be higher chance of activity indolence.

ix. NGOs have to be more transparent on funding sources.

x. Infrastructure availability and required database is one of the most important requirements for NGOs. Stakeholders should have information on the latest development in NGOs.

9.4.1: Suggestive Framework

NGO AS SERVICE PROVIDER: INTERVENTIONS REQUIRED

Need to select beneficiaries in a forum which represented by local government servants, Panchayati Raj Institutions (local Self- Government Institution) Members and communities.

Need to implement transformational activities.

Need to carry out the right projects in the right area rather than carrying out any project in any area.

Equitable services for all beneficiaries.

INTERVENTIONS REQUIRED FOR BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY

Staff competency must be ensured.

Need to disseminate information and knowledge needed to fulfill their job among all the Stakeholders.

Must use IT and should be made available for all stakeholders.

Need to analyze strengths and comparative advantages in terms of staff, space and capacity to delivery of services.

Need to pay attention to enhancing motivation, encouraging voluntarism spirit and promoting community service values in the NGO staff.

Need to invest more in capacity development of staff.

Dependence mentality has to be reduced.

Need to keep space to allow participation of the beneficiaries in the chain of service delivery.

9.5 Conclusion: It can be concluded from the study that most of the NGOs activities are donor dependent. Starting with strategic planning, its relevancy, formulation and legitimacy; activities taken up are all dependent on donors. The goal of strategic planning in studied NGOs must be for more financially independent and less dependent on project based funding. This will give them the freedom to listen to the communities or beneficiaries more than the donors. Also, this study made the attempt to clarify the role of the KM infrastructure and its impact on KM processes and IC . As a result, it supports some of the existing findings within the knowledge management literature with regards to the relationship between KM infrastructure, KM processes and IC. In addition, the study extends the existing literature in suggesting interdependence between the main factors of the KM infrastructure (organizational culture, organizational structure and IT support) and stresses the importance of IT support as the main instrument for managing KM processes (creating, storing, sharing and applying knowledge).

The study identified the gaps in service delivery of studied NGOs and suggested the need for reengineering to fill the gaps in strategy, service provision, organizational structure, organizational culture and IT in service delivery process of the studied NGOs.

Contribution to the body of knowledge: The specific need for reengineering proposed by thestudy from findings can be a contribution towards the body of knowledge. Suggestionsbased on strategic planning, employees' perception on service delivery, existing service delivery process, and measuring organizational performance with the help of intellectual capital can help NGOs inascertaining the gaps in their service delivery process. Suggestionsput forward by the researcher can be accepted by other voluntary and civil society organizations for better service delivery.

Scope for further research: The study has explored the service delivery process of nine NGOs based in Assam with the help of qualitative research method. More so study is conducted in the state of Assam. Research can be extended by adding quantitative research method and other parts of the country. The study opens up further research on reengineering service delivery process and stakeholders' cultures as they relate to NGOs they represent. This study also would feed into the need for another study related to Organizational Development.