Global Perspectives on Non-Governmental Organizations

Edited by Vito Bobek and Tatjana Horvat

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Contents

Preface

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operate at the international, national, and regional levels and are indispensable at the local level. At these levels, they realize or satisfy the interests and needs of the residents, unite, draw attention to irregularities, and in other different ways, improve the quality of life in the environment where they operate. Thus, throughout their existence, NGOs have proven to be essential providers of (public) services in social, cultural, sports, environmental, health, youth, and other areas of life.

Cooperation between NGOs and the local community is mutually beneficial. Above all, it is valuable and vital for citizens who satisfy their needs and interests through the activities that NGOs carry out and that municipalities co-finance or otherwise support. Only cooperation between NGOs and the municipality can make the local environment and community stronger and better.

Of course, this is not or should not be a closed partnership. The economy, the public institution, and the media can be equal partners in building the quality of the local environment. That is why broader integration and cooperation are even more critical.

Globally, there is currently no uniform definition of what an NGO is. An NGO can mean an association, institute, or institution. An NGO is an organization with a certain degree of formality (as a difference from other interest-based, informal associations of residents), founded on the initiative of natural or legal persons. The foundation's purpose is to pursue beneficial goals and improve the quality of life of its members, users, and all residents. NGOs are considered non-profit and independent organizations (from the public sector).

Modern international trends in the development of the non-governmental sector show that its importance and role are recognized by practically all developed countries, which is why in the last two decades of the 20th century we have recorded a genuine flourishing of NGOs and an accelerated strengthening of the partnership between them and the state. This is reflected in the involvement of NGOs in decision-making processes and their ever-widening involvement in the network of service providers operating in the public interest (public networks). In EU countries, NGOs are strongly involved in the functioning of the state, especially in the fields of education (Belgium, Ireland), health (Netherlands), social welfare (Austria, France, Germany, Spain), and culture and sports (Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia). As a result, they employ on average as much as 5.42% of the active population. Their close cooperation with the state is also reflected in the share of revenues from public sources. In EU countries this amounts to as much as 58% of all NGO revenues on average. The state, for its programs, which are carried out for the public benefit, allocates 2.20% of the national GDP on average. In the field of volunteering, trends are reflected in social responsibility and the development of corporate volunteering and other innovative forms of volunteering that follow rapid societal changes.

NGOs address social problems, and to do this work, the government grants them special rights and privileges and financial support, while citizens contribute their time and money. Therefore, these organizations have an even greater duty and responsibility to realize their mission and achieve their goals responsibly and ethically. The work of managers in NGOs and other organizations is similar. Their fundamental task is to manage the organization, which includes planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling activities. It is essential to plan goals following the mission and to set strategies for achieving goals. Differences between the activities of NGOs are generally more significant between NGOs than between non-profit and for-profit organizations.

However, even NGOs must deal with competition to achieve their goals and acquire enough resources to fulfill them. They must determine their goals, have an overview of the competition and the market, and monitor consumer habits and trends in the environment. Non-profit organizations already use business techniques common to the for-profit sector. They are increasingly exposed to pressures typical of for-profit organizations, such as competition for resources and the need to make money to fulfill the mission. The task of the non-profit manager is to turn the mission into specific tasks.

NGO strategies must connect users with the organization's mission. In NGOs, the final product is often a service that has some effect on users. This effect is conditioned by a particular social relationship between the performer and the user. In this way, we evaluate the service mainly by the effects of its activity on the user. Users in the public eye often receive the services of NGOs due to their hardships and position in society. NGOs provide funds from stakeholders who expect economic, efficient, and purposeful use of donated goods. Therefore, the operation of these organizations and their users have constantly affected the critical view of the public.

The challenge of managing NGOs is always that it is harder to sell the mission than the product. The target group is often addressed to change their outlook and behavior completely. In the for-profit sector, the marketing department tries to get the consumer to use their product over a competitor's product or to use it more often. It rarely has the task of converting the user. How to convince the elderly population to finally admit that they need assistance and overweight people to adopt a healthy lifestyle? NGOs are constantly faced with these types of challenges.

This book provides a comprehensive overview of NGOs. It is organized into two sections.

In the first section, "Management Aspects of NGOs in the Area of Development, Marketing and Sourcing," chapters examine the changing roles of NGOs in development. Chapter 1 presents a case study of South Africa, suggesting some avenues to explore for enhancing the role of NGOs in development in this country. Chapter 2 investigates the extent to which healthcare sector NGOs employ marketing strategies to achieve sustainability, thus benefiting NGOs, donors, and stakeholders who support the operations of NGOs. Chapter 3 discusses the knock-on effect the COVID-19 outbreak has had on the humanitarian supply chain. The findings are instrumental for decision-makers to develop potential interventions based on the identified priorities.

The second section, "Case Studies of NGOs," examines NGOs in different countries. Chapter 4 deals with the rise and fall of NGOs in Bangladesh. Recently, NGOs have faced challenges that tend to diminish their role due to donors' declining funds and growing government restrictions. This, this chapter suggests that NGOs, in their engagement with a leadership position, can survive the present economic and political challenges and continue to help the people left behind and exploited through social enterprises and more commitment. Chapter 5 assesses the early intervention practices of Ethiopia's vision community-based rehabilitation association. Chapter 6 examines the role of NGOs in protecting and preserving cultural heritage in the European Union in the Slovenia–Austria Cross-Border Program. Cultural heritage plays a vital role as an identity factor as well as a tourism factor. The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage illustrate this on a high policy level. Rural regions facing territorial challenges like unemployment and depopulation can especially benefit from cultural heritage. These regions are often also the last resort for endangered traditional handicrafts and their related artifacts. The core part of this chapter is an analysis of the cultural heritage present in the EU Policies and the Slovenia–Austria Interreg V Program in the previous and present multi-annual financial framework (2014-2020 and 2021-2027). Finally, Chapter 7 traces the roots of anti-Chinese sentiments in US history. To understand and confront the ongoing Asian/Chinese hate in the United States as another pandemic virus, this chapter delves into the root cause in history, as anti-Chinese sentiments are nothing new but are now appearing in a new context and with a new trigger.

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Section 1

Management Aspects of NGOs in the Area of Development, Marketing and Sourcing

Chapter 1

The Changing Roles of Non-Governmental Organizations in Development in South Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

Michel Tshiyoyo

Abstract

Given the changing environment of public administration, the roles played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will continuously evolve. NGOs are considered to be major role players in this era of governance as; in some instances, they fill the vacuum created by governments' inability to honor the social contract, particularly in developing countries. However, the role of NGOs in the development process does not come easily, as they are faced with a number of challenges and opportunities. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the changing roles of NGOs in development, focusing on the case of a country like South Africa. Using a qualitative method, the chapter relies on a review of the available literature on the roles of NGOs in developing countries with a specific reference to South Africa. Explanatory case studies are considered to ascertain the role NGOs play in development. Specific cases of NGOs operating in local government in South Africa are examined with the aim of highlighting their contribution to the development and also identifying some of the challenges and opportunities available to them. The chapter concludes by suggesting some avenues that could be explored to enhance the role of NGOs in development in South Africa.

Keywords: non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations, development, governance era

1. Introduction

Governance has different means for different people. Broadly, governance refers to the conscious management regimes, which intend to enhance political authority's effectiveness [1]. Governance can also refer to the establishment of a new process of governing or a transformed condition of the well-ordered rule. Further, governance may also be about the new way of governing a society. From public administration and public policy perspectives, one can rely on definitions of governance as provided by [2, 3]. These authors view governance as:

1. Interdependence between organizations. In this context, governance is considered to be broader than government, as it includes non-state actors. Therefore,

altering the borders of the state referred to shifting the boundaries between public, private, and voluntary sectors, which were becoming opaque.

2. Continuing interactions between network members. These interactions are triggered by the necessity for members to exchange resources and negotiate the attainment of collective purposes.

3. Game-like interactions. This is entrenched in mutual trust and steered by rules of engagement agreed upon by members within the network.

4. A significant degree of autonomy from the state. It is important to note that networks are self-organized and they are not accountable to the state. While the state is not playing a leading role, it intervenes indirectly by trying in the best way it can to steer networks.

In light of the above, one can conclude that governance can broadly mean governing with and through networks [4].

In recent years, the discourse on the roles played by public and private institutions in the provision of public services, commonly known as collective goods, has shifted tremendously. In the past, the delivery of public services was the result of interactions between governmental functions and markets, but now, the debate goes beyond to also look at a third component represented by the non-profit sector (NPS). There are numerous factors that account for the shift that has taken place. The limits of the state capabilities coupled with the market failure are among the key factors that triggered the shift. As a result, governments started considering the NPS as an alternative to the provision of public services. Important to note is the fact in many countries due to the pressure they faced to adjust that faced declining public treasuries were declining resulting in public sectors being required to reduce their span of activity as they faced demands from their electorates to preserve established benefits and entitlement. In this context, the NPS is considered to be a sector that could alleviate the governments burden to deliver social services and above all, a sector that could reduce or avoid the risk of the complete termination of certain programs that were meant to benefit communities [5, 6]. To this end, it becomes clear that the provision of public services is now dependent on two tasks that are complementary in nature. Firstly, non-state actors are increasingly involved in global governance. This is because governments are increasingly facing challenges as the sole role-player in the design and implementation of public policies. Secondly, governments are required to ensure that the involvement of non-state actors is well structured and coordinated in order to avoid the dangers of special-interest politics. If provisions are not made to ensure the participation of non-state actors occurs in a well-structured manner, there is a possibility that chaos might erupt since decisions made may become favorable to one group over another leading to a persistence of a holdup in the system [7]. Given the negative effects of the existence of gridlock in the system, it is in the government's best interest that a smooth collaboration between the public sector, the private sector, and the non-profit sector should be maintained for the effective provision of collective goods.

The chapter uses the term "non-governmental organizations" in its title, but it should be noted that the concept falls under the umbrella of the NPS and non-profit organizations (NPOs). Throughout this chapter, those concepts will be used

interchangeably. NGOs exist as a result of two important paradigm shift. Firstly, the dawn of the New Public Management has made it possible for governments across the globe to no longer be considered as the only providers of collective goods. Secondly, the advent of globalization has altered the extent to which governments are able to meet the expectations of their respective citizens and it is becoming quite difficult for governments to provide citizens with public services that meet the required standards, particularly in the context of developing countries. Therefore, NGOs play and will continue to play roles that are of significance to the attainment of the social contract. These roles can be categorized into two groups. On the one hand, the era of governance has made NGOs to be major role players alongside governments. On the other hand, NGOs are filling the vacuum created by governments' inability to honor the social contract, particularly in the context of developing countries. Ref. [6] argues that depending on circumstances, NPOs can play three different roles: complementary, supplementary, and adversarial roles. Firstly, NPOs play a complementary role when they contribute to the creation of an environment that establishes the reign of legitimacy, accountability, and transparency. Secondly, NPOs play a supplementary role when they fill the gap that exists in government operations when they, for instance, militate for the consolidation of democracy, assist in checking and exposing the abuses of state power, avert instances, whereby authoritarian governments resume power, and encourage broader citizen participation and promote public scrutiny of the state. Finally, NPOs do also play an adversarial role. This happens in countries that are plugged by authoritarian rules or those that are going through democratic transitions. In this instance, NPOs play an interesting role in becoming the voice of the people since they are able to rally efforts for the much-needed pressure seeking political change or renewal. Besides the traditional environment in which NPOs operate, one must acknowledge that the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has called for a rethink of the roles NGOs should play or continue to play in the development process in developing countries. The ever-changing environment of public administration conditions NPOs to face numerous challenges, but it also offers them a number of opportunities as well. The question that remains is, how could NGOs maximize opportunities that are available in order to overcome the challenges that cripple their operations and contributions.

This chapter examines the changing roles that NGOs play in the process of development focusing particularly on the challenges that confront these organizations. The chapter also highlights some of the opportunities that could be tapped into in order to improve NGOs contribution to development. A qualitative methodology is used and it is supplemented by secondary data. A review of available literature was conducted based on keywords that include governance, NGOs, development, and developing countries. After searching and selecting the relevant sources, the literature review was divided into two categories, namely, normative and empirical research. The review was guided by the following research questions:

- What roles do NGOs play in the process of development in developing countries?

- How well do NGOs adapt to the changing environment of public administration?

- Is there any empirical evidence that supports the assumption that NGOs play an effective role in development in developing countries?

- What can be done to improve the contributions of NGOs to development in developing countries?

To answer the above questions, explanatory case studies were used to ascertain the role NGOs play in development. Specific cases of NGOs operating in local government in South Africa were examined with the aim of highlighting their contributions, identifying some of the challenges they are faced with, and outlining opportunities that are available to them.

The argument made in this chapter is supported by two theoretical underpinnings, namely, global public goods theory and the principal-agency theory. Firstly, the theory of global public goods contributed to both the evolution of various development theories and to the role of played by NGOs at advanced levels. These comprise, for instance, debt relief, anticorruption movements, human rights, gender equality, and climate change issues [8]. Elinor Ostrom pioneered a work that proved communities' capacity to be self-organized and able to share common-pool resources (CPRs). This was done beyond the commonly known pathways of solely public or exclusively private management solutions. In today's times, one can stress that the commons do, on the one hand, refer to small-scale institutions for the management of shared resources at the local level. On the other hand, the commons do also designate a broader variety of struggles that occur as a result of self-government thus against the existing upsurge of enclosures [9–11]. Secondly, the principal–agent theory is considered as it deals with circumstances in which one person, the principal, would like to persuade another, the agent, to achieve some duty that is aligned to the principal's interest, but this is not necessarily in the interest of the agent. Mostly, the principal accomplishes this by either using moral persuasion (in effect, the principal will try to influence the agent's calculated states in order to make the agent to be more predisposed to perform the task at hand). The principal can also rely on dishing out some incentives in order to motivate the agent to attain a task that is in the best interest of the principal. Though most literature relating to economics have a tendency of focusing on the provision of incentives, one should note that this is not a feature that is inherent to the model [12, 13]. These two theories do provide the basis that motivates the consideration of the various roles played by NGOs to play in the process of development globally and particularly in developing countries.

The main contributions that this chapter intends to make are as follows. Section one explores the imperatives of the governance era. Section two discusses the relevance of the roles of non-governmental organizations in development. Section three analyzes the changing roles of NGOs in development. Section four highlights the cases of the contributions of NGOs to development in South Africa. Section five outlines the challenges facing NGOs before identifying the opportunities at their disposal. Section six suggests ways that could be explored to improve NGOs contribution to development before the chapter concludes.

2. Imperatives of the governance era

In the twentieth century, the hierarchical government bureaucracy was considered to be the major organizational model, which was used for the delivery of public

services and also to achieve the agenda of public policy. This made it easy for public managers to win approval by instructing their subordinates to follow and complete highly monotonous–albeit professional–tasks with uniformity but without discretion. In the twenty-first century, things are different as societies are increasingly becoming complex and they require public officials to come up with governance models that are new and adapted [14]. For instance, during the period of managerialism and rationalization (between 1980s and 1990s), governments were expected to exclusively use competition and initiate collaboration with market players to carry out their essential business operations and activities [15]. As a result, governments became interested in engaging in higher levels of collaboration. This practice became common particularly in vertical and horizontal collaboration, in whole-of-government amalgamation, shared solutions as well as in numerous dynamic partnerships. This paved a way for governments to consider themselves more like facilitators engaged in value chains just to allow other actors to thrive and they also considered themselves as working through markets, rather than autarkic "doers" who owned, operated, and produced things themselves. Governments ended up realizing and accepting that they should rely on other sectors (private and non-profit) represented by role players who contribute to the delivery of effective outcomes. The two actors outside the confine of the public sector have the means to provide improved services as they have at their disposal the necessary knowledge and skills, they have access to the market or are specialized or they concentrate their efforts on crucial aspects of public services delivery networks. There are four apparent types of collaborative relations that should exist between actors, namely [16], collaboration within government, which involves the participation of various agencies and players; collaboration between governments, which includes agencies that fall under different jurisdictions; collaboration between governments and external third-party actors that are involved in the provision of goods and services; and collaboration that exists between diverse government institutions and citizens or clients considered individually.

Ref. [6] cites the works of some prominent writers, such as [17–20] who argue that the disadvantages of bureaucracy as an apparatus of rational action, such as rigidity, red tape, and logrolling, contributed to the development of western states into a new stage characterized by the post-bureaucratic stage. This stage consisted of a delegation or dissemination of authority as well as the reduction of control. In this stage, policies' implementation was no longer the sole mandate of core government agencies. This is to say that the governance era opened up the restrictions on the value-chains of the delivery of public services to accommodate other role players to collaborate with governments and be part of providers of collective goods. This is, for instance, evidenced by the various roles NPOs play in developed and developing countries. Relying on a poll organized by GlobeScan experts [21], it is reported that business plays a leading role in the attainment of sustainability (35%). Interestingly, NGOs follow (30%) and governments come in the last position (24%). Given the results of this poll, it becomes clear that governments are now forced to engage in partnerships with businesses and the non-profit sectors.

3. Relevance of the roles of non-governmental organizations in development

According to ref. [22] NGOs are described as organizations that are designed from within civil society by allowing individuals who share some common purpose

to come together. Ref. [23] notes that NGOs' existence stems from both internal and external factors. Internally, the governments steady withdrawal in the process of public service delivery has created a vacuum that can be filled by NGOs. Today, governments are becoming unable to provide high-quality public services to citizens. Externally, the formation and growth of the civic space are influenced by the political and socio-economic milieu within which actors operate. The third wave of democratization has primarily defined this milieu in a way that it so dramatically culminated in the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. While it is evidently impossible to come up with an accurate timeline of developments that took place in the aftermath of historical events that constituted the drivers of the third wave of democracies, the main effect of these was the combination of democracy with neo-liberal economic prescriptions. This vision was supported by Western powers and international financial institutions, and it was also promoted by the mainstream academy in both the developed and developing world [24, 25]. However, a significant element that characterizes civil society's new responsibilities consists of the move made to step into the domain that delivers social services, partly abandoned by the state in terms of the standard brought by neo-liberal budgetary and fiscal directives. The logic maintained by neo-liberals started mainly with the efficiency argument as they insisted that NGOs could provide better, more efficient, and cost-effective services than government departments, thus because of their proximity with communities that are beneficiaries of collective goods. In order to do this, government departments partner with NGOs to deliver public services or foreign donors directly collaborate with NGOs and fund them to rollout certain programs on behalf of the state [25].

The wave of globalization has challenged the effectiveness of the state and its bureaucratic systems, especially centralized political, administrative, economic, and fiscal systems. NGOs in developing countries play an important development role. They advocate for policy change and are often the vehicle for community participation in policy and political processes. NGOs have played a critical role, including providing social services, advocacy, and institutional capacity building and development work. NGOs were celebrated for their critical role in serving the poor and providing services in areas where the government could not serve. In the era of new public management, NGOs hold increasing responsibility for social, political, and economic development. To succeed, southern NGOs must help the community implement its own vision. They must become responsible agents of change. And northern NGOs must help them succeed. **Table 1** gives a synopsis of the phases NGOs have gone through up-t0-date.

In light of the above table, Era 5 clearly depicts the phase under which NGOs are currently operating. In this context, the performance of NGOs will mainly depend on the stage of development recorded in various countries. For instance, in developed countries' governments were able to move with time as they followed the sequence of the above-mentioned eras. In developing countries, there are mixed results since some countries made considerable progress, whereas other lagged behind. As a result, the contributions made by NGOs were tremendously affected by the weaknesses of government structures and social changes. In this context, the effectiveness of NGOs was hampered as they had to catch up with the shortfalls and exigences of previous eras while the global governance is acting as per Era 5 expectations. It is for this reason that this chapter examines the changing roles NGOs should play in the process of development, particularly in developing countries.

	Era 1 (1945–1963)	Era 2 (1963–1980)	Era 3 (1980–2000)	Era 4 (2000–2015)	Era 5 (2015–present)
	Relief/basics	**Community development**	**Technology/ fall of iron curtain**	**Overreach/ Push Back**	**Social impact/ Balanced systems**
Focus	Specific	Local/specific	Regional/ national	National/ global	Ecosystem/ mega-cities
Time frame	Immediate	Project life	10–20 years	Open-ended	Variable
Scope	Individual	Neighborhood/ village	Region/ nation	Nation	Ecosystems (natural/ constructed)
Participants	NGO members	NGO/ communities	"Everyone"	Networks	Super networks
NGO role	Primary/ central	Mobilize/direct	Catalyze/ innovate	Active/direct involved	Educational/ tech support

Source: [8].

Table 1.
Eras of NGOs emphases.

4. The changing roles of NGOs in development

NGOs have played and will continue to play a vital role in the shaping and implementation of participatory democracy. Their reliability lies in the significant role they play in society. For instance, NGOs are known to serve a host of functions that can include, among other things the provision of basic services and enhancing access by using local accountability mechanisms, and they usually play advocacy functions for the poor and marginalized [26, 27]. For NGOs to attain their full potential in terms of the contribution they bring to the table, there is a need to promote effective communication and cooperation between all the actors involved in the networks of public services delivery, namely, international organizations, national and local governments, and NGOs. However, given the change in public administration and the outbreak of the pandemic of Covid-19, NGOs will be required to devise new ways that would allow them to collaborate and cooperate with other actors in a meaningful way. Above all, NGOs should adapt and come up with a communication strategy that can assist them in communicating well among themselves and initiate fruitful collaboration with other actors. The following roles were identified as critical for NGOs to remain relevant despite of the changing environment in which they operate [28]:

- *Institutional scale (multi-layer)*: NGOs must play a significant role alongside national, regional, and local institutions as well as international organizations.

- *Cooperative management*: NGOs must incorporate the management (planning, implementation, evaluation, and adaptation) of the knowledge, skills, resources, and perspectives based on a diverse and inclusive representation of participants. This is characterized by deliberation and accountability among actors.

- *Collective action*: NGOs must be involved in representation and participation with local, regional, national, and, in some cases international institutions.

- *Information sharing*: NGOs must share information both vertically (higher and lower levels), as well as horizontally (between regions, communities, or institutions that are at the same level).

- *Co-production of knowledge and services*: NGOs can contribute to the multitude of knowledge, sources, and types. They need to create a community of practice (COP) that, if it is well designed and applied, can assist in advancing systems-oriented understanding of problems faced by the sector.

- *Social learning*: NGOs must initiate a collective process of learning-by-doing as it may result in new knowledge and skills development.

- *Institutional interplay*: NGOs must promote multi-level linkages. A linkage is considered to be a formal rule, strategy, or regularized action that establishes interdependencies between two distinct actors regarding different tasks.

5. Cases of the contributions of NGOs to development in South Africa

According to ref. [6] NPOs play an indispensable role in bridging the gap between governments and citizens, particularly in the provision of basic services, such as health, water, sanitation, and education, to name but a few. For instance, Radebe and Nkonyeni interviewed by the *Mail & Guardian* on 5 March 2020, explained that currently in South Africa, there are close to 200,000 NGOs, whereas they were about 140,000 registered NGOs in 2015. Kagiso Trust reports that the rising number of NGOs represents an increase of over 200% over the past 10 years. Nazeema Mohamed, the executive director of Inyathelo, explains that this increase is influenced by many factors, such as the economic recession, unemployment, and failed service delivery. The persistence of a poor economic outlook in South Africa accounts for a decline in public expenditure across critical sectors. This means that NGOs play and will be required to play an important role in closing the gap created by governments' inability services to fully attain their social contract [29]. The following cases are selected in order to highlight the various roles played by different NGOs in South Africa.

5.1 AIDS foundation of South Africa

The AIDS Foundation of South Africa (AFSA) was established in 1988 with a mandate to combat the spread of AIDS in South Africa. This NGO's mission is to support regional, local, and national efforts that aimed to reduce the expansion of HIV, STIs, and TB infections. Throughout its operations, AFSA aims to contribute to addressing some of the structural and social drivers of the spread of HIV. The organization works toward educating citizens and raising consciousness about sexually transmitted diseases and helping communities to be resilient. AFSA is of the view that, in South Africa, the HIV epidemic is mainly entrenched in environmental, cultural, socio-economic, and political conditions that prevail in the country. AFSA is cognizant of the fact various communities are affected differently, therefore, it uses a variety of strategies in its quest for solutions. It integrates interventions into a larger sexual and reproductive health framework. Through its programs and strategies, AFSA has helped people suffering from HIV and AIDS all throughout South Africa.

5.2 World vision South Africa

World Vision South Africa is a branch of an international organization operating on a global scale. This NGO strives to build an environment that provides children with protection, health, education and/or employment (once they are of age). This organization starts first by identifying communities that are fragile and impoverished due to a lack of access to basic services. After the identification, the NGO proceeds with the assessment before it can design a program that is specific and suited to the circumstances faced by that region. Then it puts all the resources together in order to implement that program and address the challenges facing the children and the community. To date, the actions of the South African branch of World Vision have benefited close to 320,000 lives in the country.

5.3 The viva foundation of South Africa

Viva endeavors to play a significant role in transforming the realities of certain areas that are crippled by high-priority poverty. The NGO aims to intervene in informal settlements and work toward transforming these areas into viable, stable, and economically sustainable communities by providing residents with education, employment, business, and recreation opportunities. The foundation is committed to providing services to these areas and above all, it strives to address the community's needs by creating a hub for its services [30].

6. Challenges and opportunities

In the global south, the existence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has been a result of two important factors. Firstly, the government is no longer a sole provider of public service delivery, and secondly, governments have proved to be incapable to meet citizens' expectations and provide public services that are of high quality to their citizens. This specific situation has paved a way for NGOs to play a significant role in terms of service delivery. But the role of NGOs in the development process in developing countries is confronted by challenges and opportunities.

6.1 Challenges facing NGOs

Here are some of the challenges confronting NGOs:

6.1.1 Social impact

With a decrease in funding, NGOs are placed under significant pressure to deliver high social impact whilst dealing with expectations from funders, work within the confines of restricted funding grants, and illustrate positive outcomes. Part of the challenge is that NGOs are operating in a starvation-cycle context; NGOs with limited funding are forced to underinvest in critical organizational operations, such as financial systems, human resources, and fundraising. Some funding grants explicitly only cover programmatic costs and not the indirect costs associated with delivering an intervention or program. This often means NGOs are not capacitated to deliver high social impact and this can, in some instances, lead to the mismanagement of organizations. In addition, the unequal power dynamic between NGOs and funders

also means that NGOs are not positioned to challenge the rationale for underfunding indirect costs, which would allow NGOs to invest in the organization and be sustainable. A consequence and contradiction presented to NGOs are that the pressure to illustrate the impact, in order to secure funding, sometimes undermines the core mission of the organization.

6.2 Focus

NGOs will be required to devote a substantial part of their resources to the collection of data on selected indicators and targets as opposed to what most of them are currently doing. The results of such studies will assist NGOs in identifying the critical needs of various communities and come up with timely interventions. This will lead to most NGOs discovering areas or sectors they should be focusing on rather than duplicating activities that might not benefit communities [29].

6.2.1 Funding model

The current funding model used should be revisited. There is a need to develop a system that assists NGOs to be supported adequately so that they can have well-designed outcomes because impact measurements could help funders, government, and communities to identify where change is needed and how they could assist NGOs to do what they are supposed to do [29].

6.2.2. Unpredictable landscape

The environment in which NGOs operate plays a significant role in the extent to which they will achieve their mandates. It is therefore essential for NGOs to enhance their capacity to innovate and reinvent themselves. In this context, NGOs should tap into the opportunity they have to collaborate among themselves and with other actors that are part of the networks. NGOs must avoid working in silos and competing with one another [29].

6.3 Opportunities at NGOs disposal

Despite numerous challenges NGOs are facing, there are opportunities that could be considered to overcome those challenges. Here are some of the opportunities:

6.3.1 Collaboration

Collaboration can be considered to be an opportunity that could offer pool of resources to NGOs and allow them to invest in greater mission-led initiatives that could ultimately reinforce the societal impact that NGOs have on communities. This is critical, as funding and social impact are key components within the sector [29].

6.3.2 Increased responsibilities

Due to the changing nature of public service in modern days, governments across the globe have embarked on a journey to decentralize their functions and operations. This is particularly visible in developing countries where, because of a lack of capacities or weaknesses in delivering public services, governments endeavor to empower

other actors to deliver on their mandates. As a result, NGOs are presented with numerous opportunities and they are granted considerable space by governments in order for them to fill the gaps.

6.3.3 Promotion of transparency and accountability

Maximizing accountability tools, such as social audits could improve municipal accountability and it will improve communities' knowledge about government policies and programs. It can also provide a platform for residents to articulate their needs. NGOs could play an important role in the coproduction of knowledge as this is a critical intervention that would help communities to become more active participants in local government and this will provide a compelling basis for residents to adequately engage with municipalities [31].

It is important to note that the demand for transparency requires local authorities to account for the running of programs and delivery of basic services to their communities. This will not happen in a vacuum. Municipal officials should therefore partner with communities through NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) in order to positively affect the lives of citizens. As a result, NGOs can play a significant role in strengthening local communities capacity to monitor the implementation of programs intended to better the lives of the people. In most cases, politicians do give empty promises to communities, hence, the involvement of NGOs would be critical in empowering communities to closely follow up on the rollout of programs and service delivery projects.

7. Ways to improve NGOs contribution to development

Based on the description of challenges and opportunities, one would like to suggest the following as avenues that could be considered in the process of enhancing the contributions of NGOs to development:

7.1 Extraordinary leadership is needed

The success or failure of collaboration does not lie in the emergence of governance network structures or in the growing systems by which influence is exerted. The collaboration will surely require new forms of leadership behavior, particularly on the part of the public servants. Despite the changes that have occurred in the way the public sector operates; the role of public officials remains central to most deliberations of public policy and administration. Effective administrative leadership is required as it will assist public servants to negotiate and not imposing public policy agendas. In this context, the need to collaborate with other actors requires public servants to understand their partners and build trust. Collaboration can also be boosted by a clear indication that public servants will steer the collective decisions of the group using their disproportionate power on behalf of the collaborative venture [32].

7.2 Partnership and collaboration

Society, governments and international bodies should develop mechanisms to allow non-governmental organizations to play their partnership role responsibly and effectively in the process of environmentally sound and sustainable development.

With a view to strengthening the role of non-governmental organizations as social partners, the United Nations system and governments should initiate a process, in consultation with non-governmental organizations, to review formal procedures and mechanisms for the involvement of these organizations at all levels from policy-making and decision-making to implementation.

7.3 Sustainable funding

True collaboration and partnerships NGOs should find sustainable ways of raising funds and delivering on their mandates. Instead of heavily relying on external funding, they will be required to also explore internal or local means of funding their operations and projects.

7.4 Refocus

Given the competition that prevails because of so many NGOs that are registered, it is essential that NGOs strive for the same goals and decide to unite and consist of a united and strong front. This will assist in having strengthened NGOs that focus on key socio-economic issues that communities face.

7.5 Co-create/−production

Closely linked to collaboration, coproduction processes move from jointly implementing action to generating new knowledge from numerous knowledge sources. These latter offer ways to link local, indigenous and technical knowledge sitting at different scales and contexts in ways that expand the range of possibilities of what individual tools or approaches may offer [33].

8. Conclusion

This work examined the changing roles of NGOs in development, focusing on the case of a country like South Africa. Given the changing environment of public administration, the roles played by NGOs will continuously change given the circumstances at hand. From public administration and public policy perspectives, governance was defined as interdependence between organizations; continuing interactions between network members, caused by the need to exchange resources and negotiate shared purposes; game-like interactions, rooted in trust and regulated by rules of the game negotiated and agreed by network participants; and a significant degree of autonomy from the state. Governance was therefore referred to as governing with and through networks. Throughout the chapter, it was made clear that the successful provision of global public goods in the twenty-first century rests on two complementary tasks. Firstly, increasing the involvement of non-state actors in global governance secondly, ensuring that non-state involvement is structured to avoid the dangers of special-interest politics, because otherwise decisions may favor one group over another or lead to gridlock in the system. In this context, NGOs are expected to smoothly navigate throughout the network constituting organizations that serve the public interest. However, the contributions of NGOs to the development process do not occur easily, as they are faced with a number of challenges and opportunities. Despite the challenges NGOs are faced with, one acknowledges that there are a number of

opportunities available to assist these organizations in adding value to modern public administration. In this context, NGOs will be required to re-engineer themselves by working toward fostering collaboration and partnerships that would assist them to share responsibilities and lean on other strengths. Reinventing themselves and adapting to the changing environment will be critical to NGOs survival and effectiveness in the attainment of their mandates in the development process.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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Chapter 2

Marketing for Improved Sustainability in Nonprofit Organizations

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Abstract

Competition for funding has prompted nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) to adopt marketing and other business-oriented practices to survive. Although certain NPOs have begun to implement marketing strategies, long-term sustainability continues to be a problem. This paper explores the degree to which NPOs in the healthcare industry use marketing strategies to attain sustainability. The data collection and analysis were carried out qualitatively. Data gathering methods included a literature study, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. Thematic and content analysis were used to analyze the data. According to the findings, nonprofits cannot successfully implement marketing strategies and business methods due to a lack of marketing know-how, expertise, and donor funding. This paper may benefit NPOs, donors, and stakeholders who support the operations of NPOs. Nonprofit organizations will, for instance, have a better understanding of the significant and positive impact marketing strategies have on their organizations' growth and sustainability. Furthermore, the paper recommends measures that NPOs can take to address the limiting factors and improve sustainability. The article ends by outlining further research options that will assist other academics engaged in this field.

Keywords: nonprofit organization, sustainability, marketing, strategies, South Africa

1. Introduction

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) are continuously competing for funding in order to fulfill their obligations [1]. As a result, nonprofit organizations must devise long-term solutions [2–4]. More crucially, the 2008 global financial crisis forced many nonprofit organizations to reconsider their social responsibility programs since traditional charity revenue sources have become very unreliable [5–9]. To Weerawardena et al. [1], the climate in which nongovernmental organizations operate has worsened, exacerbated by fierce competition for funds. Therefore, sustainability has become significant for NPOs [10].

The growing demand for sustainability has compelled NPOs to develop novel approaches to sustaining their programs while maintaining viability [1]. According

to Omura and Forster [10], the major shortcoming of sustainability for most NPOs is providing noncommercial products. Among other things, marketing and management strategies to attract and retain donors are required to maintain survival and continuity in a changing environment. The increasing size and complexity of the nonprofit sector have led many scholars to conclude that the nonprofit sector is becoming more business-oriented, incorporating tools, strategies, and best practices for the organization [11–14]. In support of this view, Chad et al. [15] and Collins [16] assert that marketing or specific brand management is the most crucial approach that NPOs should adopt to promote their mission. Many researchers recommend transferring marketing expertise from the profit-making industry to the nonprofit sector ([17, 18] in [19]).

Though various businesses may approach marketing differently, it is becoming more important to its success. Applying marketing to NPOs enables them to know the demands of their beneficiaries and funders completely. According to Gainer and Padanyi [20], although understanding and satisfying consumers' needs increases their happiness, meeting donors' expectations, and adhering to them increases the donor's resource commitment [21, 22]. However, the full advantages of successful marketing adoption are not realized by NPOs [23] due to a lack of understanding, significance, and application of the marketing concept [19]. For our primary inquiry, we looked into whether or not nonprofits working in the healthcare industry use marketing strategies to increase their long-term sustainability.

In reality, many NPOs view marketing as only sporadic promotion and advertising [24, 25]. Authors, such as Álvarez-González et al. [26] argue that the utilization of marketing in NPOs is favorably related to the volume of funding, the scope of operation, and the success of the organization's purpose. Hence, marketing improves an NPO's financial and operational success.

The importance of an NPO in any economy is invaluable. They are agencies that extend crucial support to communities that cannot access most government services and products [1, 27]. In South Africa, NPOs play a vital role in the national economy, enhancing economic data and assisting policymakers, corporations, and civic leaders in making decisions [28].

The healthcare sector, for instance, has a substantial economic influence. It promotes wellness, offers health services, and creates jobs, training, and capacity development opportunities [29]. They offer free or reduced-cost healthcare and education to their communities, therefore, decreasing illness burdens and contributing to community empowerment and economic growth. Neither the government nor the health care institutions in South Africa can treat everyone who needs them because most people cannot afford private health care. Therefore, nonprofit organizations are necessary to serve a population that continues to be underserved by both the public and private healthcare systems. Nonprofit organizations offer free or cheap services to people who are not being served, have low incomes, are sick, or do not have health insurance [30].

For these reasons, it is necessary to ensure that NPOs in general, specifically health sector NPOs continue to carry out these noble roles. Therefore, research into how marketing and management strategies are currently being adopted in NPOs to improve the survival and sustainability of these organizations become necessary. After all, the continued survival of these nonprofits ensures the continuation of their services to impoverished and vulnerable areas.

Several research papers on NPOs have addressed various elements of NPOs. Weerawardena et al. [1] investigated the relationship between NPO sustainability

and NPO strategy emphasis. Iwu et al. [31] assessed the factors that influence sustainability and organizational effectiveness. Omura and Forster [10] investigated the nature of private contribution rivalry in NPOs, considering that they offer non-commercially viable products. Morrison [32] examined the governance and performance of nonprofit organizations. In 2014, Helmig, Ingerfurth, and Pinz reported on the success and failure of nonprofit organizations, while in 2013, Hendrickse reported on the governance and financial sustainability of nonprofit organizations. Bezuidenhout [33] examined various important marketing concepts for NPOs, including the absence of marketing competence and management abilities in NPOs, and further suggested a more innovative business model for NPOs to improve sustainability. Even though these studies emphasize the importance of marketing, there is a lack of consensus on how nonprofit organizations (NPOs) should handle marketing [34]. This study, therefore, aims to establish the extent to which NPOs employ marketing strategies to achieve sustainability. This is to assist NPOs to remain in operation for longer.

In the remainder of the chapter, a literature review will be used to identify the research gap. Following this section will be the research methodology, findings, discussion, recommendations, and future directions for research.

2. Literature review

2.1 What is sustainability?

The term "sustainability" has a wide range of meanings depending on the context in which it is used [35]. An understanding of concepts is best achieved by looking at their relationship to a more extensive system or hierarchy, according to Constanza and Patten [36]. Sustainability may pertain to an organization's financial strength and uniqueness (economic well-being), environmental protection (environmental integrity), and processes that guarantee social health and well-being (social sustainability) [37–40]. The term "sustainability" refers to the ability to withstand or persevere [36].

From an economic perspective, this research examines an organization's financial expansion and competitiveness due to numerous strategies (for example, quality products, price, and services). Consequently, it facilitates the development of several economic conceptions of sustainability. A company's long-term viability is ensured by its ability to maintain its current state of well-being [41] and by its leadership's ability to keep the organization going in the long run [42, 43]. Sustainability is defined by Boudreau and Ramstad [44] as a company's ability to thrive without compromising future needs. Dyllick and Hockerts [45] define sustainability as an organization's ability to meet its primary and secondary stakeholders' needs without compromising its ability to meet the needs of prospective stakeholders. In Chigwedere [46], sustainability is defined as the ongoing evaluation of the need to continue a cause, the determination of whether it is still viable, and the exploration of financial options for supporting such a cause. Naido [47] reckons that sustainably run NPOs will be able to raise enough money to continue their programs if their donors fund them.

The above definitions suggest that an organization is sustainable when it remains in operation for a more extended period. Hence, this paper adopts the World Commission on Environment and Development [48], definition of sustainability,

which is an organization's capacity to fulfill its current and future demands over an extended period without jeopardizing its ability to meet future needs.

2.2 What is marketing

According to Kotler and Keller [49], marketing is identifying and economically addressing societal and human needs. According to Drucker [50], the goal of marketing is to understand people such that the product or service provided satisfies their desires. As a result, it is the activity made to elicit desired responses from a specific population [51]. According to The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) [52], marketing is more than just selling and promoting; it is a critical management function that assists an organization in interpreting customers' requirements and matching them with service and product offers.

Marketing, according to Drucker [50] can be viewed in terms of social and managerial roles. According to the social definition, marketing is a societal process in which people fulfill their needs and desires by freely creating, giving, and exchanging valued goods and services [50]. Marketers, according to the American Marketing Association [53], create, communicate, deliver, and exchange value-adding offers for partners, customers, and society as a whole through a variety of marketing-related activities.

Based on the definitions provided above, many researchers concur that marketing entails selling, exchanging products and services, generating a desire for services, and developing long-term connections, all of which contribute to achieving organizational goals.

2.3 Importance of marketing

Whether a company is for-profit or nonprofit, marketing is critical to its growth. However, different companies may place different values on marketing. Some people may believe that NPOs do not need to spend money on marketing. However, it is advantageous since it promotes growth, attracts funding, and ensures the NPO's sustainability. The NPO's ultimate purpose will suffer if the factors are not there [54]. According to Spector [55], nonprofit marketing helps clarify and support an organization's position and brings it closer to realizing its purpose. According to Tabaku and Mersini [56], embracing marketing in NPOs guarantees that the NPO gets adequate finances to deliver services per their purpose. According to Mahea [57], marketing is essential for organizations to survive intense competition and lure target customers to their products and services. Adapting marketing in nonprofits also provides for a better understanding of the requirements of the NPO's consumer interests, beneficiaries, and funders. According to Gainer and Padanyi [20], recognizing and addressing consumers' requirements in order to enhance their experience is a key purpose of marketing. Meeting donors' expectations and staying responsible to them, on the other hand, attracts the donor's commitment to resources [21, 22]. Marketing, according to Sargeant [58], attracts resources, enhances the experience of both customers and donors, helps an organization define its capabilities, and advises the NPO on the structure of market analysis. Marketing effectively encourages funders to donate and volunteers to participate [56]. According to Mahea [57], a company's success is not solely determined by the resources it has at its disposal but also by the relationships it builds with its customers through marketing. However, the potential benefits that

NPOs may receive from successful marketing implementation are not being realized as they should be [23].

2.4 NPO marketing

As with any other company, NPOs compete in a highly competitive market, exacerbated by the sector's growing number of participants and dwindling financing [59]. Bezuidenhout [33] feels that marketing is critical for an organization's success and sustainability, whether nonprofit or for-profit. Salamon [60] asserts that the nonprofit sector's marketing philosophy has become more robust as some organizations have embraced commercial management techniques of administration. Mirabella and Wish [61], Andreason et al. [17], Smith et al. [62], and Shani [14] stated that this change toward business-oriented approaches is a result of the huge increase in the number of nongovernmental organizations (NPOs) and the increasingly competitive environment in which they operate.

As in the rest of the world, nonprofit organizations in South Africa face funding difficulties and are attempting to adapt to the decline in financial resources and the increase in competition [33]. The number of NPOs in South Africa has increased rapidly [63, 64]. There has been a steady rise in the number of nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in recent years, which has led to an increase in competition for funds. This is why nonprofits, according to Wymer and Mottner [65], must stand out from the competition, raise public awareness of their brand and mission, and utilize institutional public relations to accomplish these goals.

Sabo [66], Sagawa [67], Burnett [68], and concur that in order to thrive, nonprofit organizations must prioritize cultivating and sustaining relationships with current donors. To do so, MacMillan et al. [69] argue that nonprofit organizations should utilize relationship marketing. According to Sargeant [59] and Burnett [68], relationship marketing activities are best suited for the nonprofit sector. According to Gainer and Moyer [70], NPO managers should identify potential donors and manage sponsor relations (also known as "target marketing" or "relationship marketing") in order to maximize donations. Unlike traditional marketing, relationship marketing emphasizes developing long-term supportive relationships with current supporters and suggests that an organization will benefit more from focusing resources on these specific relationships than on emerging ones [69]. The success or failure of a company competing in a market is primarily determined by the strategy it develops and implements.

This study examines how nonprofit organizations can adopt effective marketing and management strategies to ensure continued viability. According to the literature, marketing is essential for nonprofits to remain competitive and draw in their target audience. Additionally, adapting marketing in nonprofits can help the NPO better understand its customers, donors, and beneficiaries.

2.5 Marketing strategies for NPOs

Rust et al. [71] argue that marketing strategies should focus on adding value to an organization via the management and measurement of marketing performance, including service quality and client satisfaction. Hassay and Peloza [72] noted that Nonprofit organizations have begun to use marketing ideas such as market orientation, customer relationship marketing, market segmentation, loyalty, and branding.

Several scholars (such as [32, 73, 74]) advocate that NPOs market their organizations through the adoption of the following:

2.5.1 Ansoff matrix

Ansoff Matrix provides different business expansion strategies, namely market penetration, product development, market development, and diversification [32, 73], to assist companies in making strategic decisions about the development and expansion of their products, services, and markets. Using it, executives and marketers can devise strategies to ensure their long-term growth and success [73].

	Current Products	New
Current Markets	Market Penetration	Product Development
New Markets	Market Development	Diversification

2.5.2 Market penetration

Market penetration is a revenue-generating approach in which an organization focuses on selling existing goods or services to existing consumers or markets [74, 75]. NPOs are service-oriented organizations, not product-oriented. While for-profit businesses often utilize this strategy and are seldom explored by nonprofit organizations, the latter may offer their existing core goods to their present beneficiaries and generate cash to fund its expansion and sustainability [76]. This means that selling existing products and services could favor market dominance by an NPO. By attaining market dominance, an organization demonstrates a preference for its product, allowing clients to instantly identify with the organization, assisting in endorsing and developing a positive brand image. According to Custodio [77], creating a strong brand is critical for an NPO because it establishes its distinctiveness, fosters confidence in the organization, and demonstrates awareness in customers' eyes. Establishing a positive reputation and brand image might assist an NPO by providing a competitive edge over other sector competitors. According to Ansoff [75], this technique may not benefit the NPO since more service offering necessitates increased funding.

2.5.3 Market development

Market development happens when a business makes concerted efforts to expand its current market. As defined by Mwiti (2011), market penetration is the process of pursuing more market categories or geographical regions. According to Coetzee [76], NPOs are good at and are content with fundraising. They remain inside their fundraising comfort zone, even though business-like methods of revenue creation

are required. By implementing a market development plan, nonprofit organizations may provide services to new markets, communities, or target groups with comparable needs that align with the organization's cause and goal. They could segment the market and provide certain services for free while charging a fee for others. For instance, as Coetzee [78] described, how a national rehabilitation organization used a system of price differentiation in which some services were provided for free to low-income clients but paid to those who could afford them. This implies that the NPO may earn income from the segments that pay for the NPO's services. Therefore, an NPO can extend its services and possibly attract new donors [79, 80].

2.5.4 Product development

Product development entails the creation of new or enhanced goods or services aimed at existing or new markets in order to ensure the continued success of a company [81]. NPOs advocate for certain causes and provide various free services to society. By pursuing this strategy, the NPO may benefit financially by providing new products or services. Apart from donations, an NPO may generate money via the sale of items, such as instructional materials, books, and consumables, and through the provision of services, such as technical assistance to other organizations, outsourcing personnel, consulting, and project management. An organization's earnings can either be reinvested or put aside as a financial reserve to ensure its long-term viability and use. The Sunflower Foundation, for example, pioneered the sale of bandanas [82]. The fear of losing money and clients is real, even though a few nonprofits are using this strategy [83].

2.5.5 Diversification

In order to grow and increase revenue, a company must diversify by creating new products and entering new markets. Chirani and Effatdoost [84] assert that a company's ability to grow and thrive will be determined by its ability to diversify. NPOs could adopt this marketing strategy to achieve growth and sustainability. Apart from providing the services demanded by donors, which they are expected to do in order to sustain and establish long-term existence, NPOs may begin to be creative and imaginative, developing new goods that they can sell profitably to an altogether new market. This will boost the organization's income. Diversifying and pursuing commercial activities strengthen and create a competitive advantage for NPOs [26]. Several South African NPOs have begun to diversify their revenue streams and revenue strategies beyond the not-for-profit sector, rather than relying solely on donations. Coetzee [76] concurs that nongovernmental organizations should cultivate additional revenue streams through side businesses and social enterprise activities. For example, in Cape Town, several nongovernmental organizations have established car wash businesses, coffee or cafe shops, bookshops, training facilities, and social enterprise hubs.

NPOs might use the strategies outlined above to expand, generate revenue, and ultimately attain organizational sustainability. However, implementing this technique in an NPO may be challenging because when donors donate funds, they often define the geographic regions in which the funds must be used and whether the service should be provided for free or not [85]. Coetzee [78] further noted that certain funders, leaders, and government agencies are uneasy with nonprofit organizations generating a profit and want them to work at a discounted rate without profit.

Coetzee [78] found that contributions are only one source of revenue and that there is no issue with NPOs making money as long as beneficiaries are not harmed, ignored, or abused and revenues and surpluses are reinvested in promoting the organization's objective.

2.5.6 Boston matrix

The Boston Matrix is a mechanism for rating items or services in order to determine the potential monetary contribution and demand for each [86]. The matrix categorizes products based on their performance: cash cows, dogs, stars, and question marks – based on their growth rate, cash flow, and market share [87]. As part of brand marketing and product management, the technique is used to select new products or services and expand existing ones. The method aids organizations in avoiding some of the negative elements that might affect market share and industry growth when balancing market share and industry growth [86]. Boston Matrix's theoretical applicability in nonprofit organizations is based on the fact that it enables businesses to make decisions about how to manage a wide range of businesses and products as well as the marketing portfolio of nonprofit organizations, expressed in terms of the organization's financial resources [88].
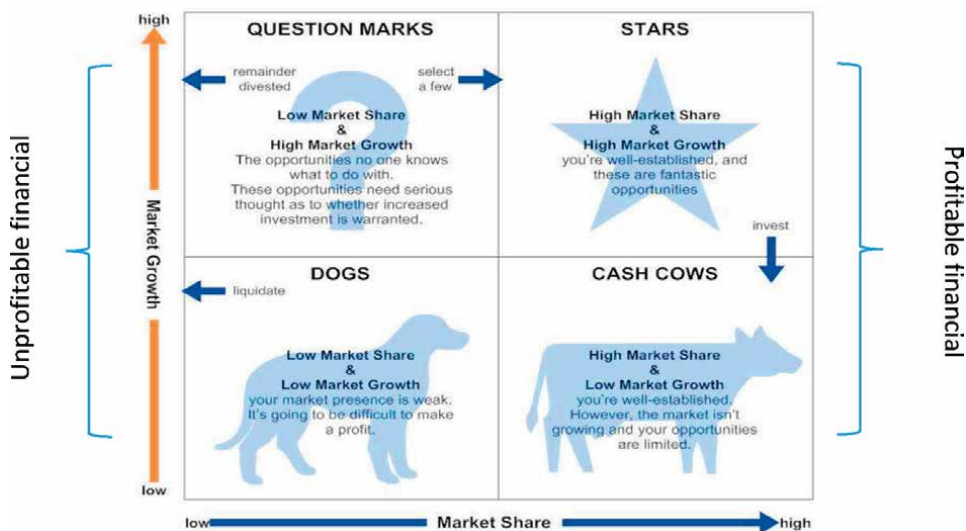
2.5.7 Other marketing strategies

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) can implement various marketing strategies and approaches without changing their mission [56]. These methods, according to MacMillan et al. [69], include:

- **Market segmentation:** Classifying the people who care most about the NPO's mission and helping it succeed.

- **Product positioning:** The organization's marketing efforts should create an image that appeals to its market segment.

- **Advertising:** Marketing communications will then be developed to target this market segment.

- **Place:** Utilizing marketing strategies and communicating with a specific target market through their channels. In essence, marketing strategies help nonprofit organizations act strategically and position themselves in order to reach their target market and benefit from it.

3. Methodology

To gather and analyze data, a qualitative technique was used, combined with in-depth semi-structured interviews. This technique was chosen as the best fit for this research since it allowed the researchers to compile a full report on the participants' thoughts, opinions, and understandings pertaining to the research [89]. The qualitative technique also helped the researchers to obtain more in-depth knowledge [90]about NPO marketing and sustainability through interaction with study participants [91].

The study population included all NPOs in the healthcare sector in the Cape Metropolitan region of South Africa's Western Cape. It was impossible to contact all of the individuals in the research due to time restrictions and inadequate resources. As a result, a sample was chosen to reflect the population using the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling involves selecting a sample based on the author's judgment and experience that the identified individuals will fulfill the study objectives [92]. This strategy was chosen because it was considered that it would be more effective as it provides greater access to the relevant research participants [93]. As a result, it enabled the identification of professionals who were well-versed in the issue under investigation [94].

The study's sample was chosen from 960 Western Cape healthcare NPOs [95]. The following factors influenced sample selection: First, the NPO must be in the healthcare sector and have received donor support. Second, the NPO must have been in existence for at least three years. However, not all identified NPOs consented to participate in the study since they did not engage in any form of marketing, limiting the participation to seven (7) NPOs.

The inclusion criteria for the individual participants were defined as follows: the participant must be part of the marketing, operations, and financial management functions of the selected NPOs. These significant members were chosen because of their critical responsibilities within the organization. Their portfolios include responsibilities in production/operations, marketing, and finance because they are closely related to organizational performance [96], which the researchers considered valuable participants to inform the study.

The participating NPOs were approached for permission to conduct the study. The fieldwork started after obtaining the required consent from each participating company. A pilot study was then conducted to validate the interview questions. Face-to-face, in-depth interviews were undertaken with 15 participants from the 7 NPOs reached. All interview responses were recorded and transcribed during the interview process. In addition, 3 focus groups were conducted, which comprised five (5) people each. Because many of the investigated organizations did not have enough staff to cover the essential functions under study, the individuals contacted during the focus

groups were only from 3 NPOs that represented marketing, finance, and operations responsibilities.

The appropriate number of participants reached through interviews and focus groups were guided by data saturation. Data saturation occurs when there is enough data to replicate the investigation and the ability to get more fresh data has been exhausted [97, 98]. The study included thirty (30) participants: 15 participants in in-depth interviews and 15 focus group participants. Content and thematic analysis approaches were used for data analysis.

4. Results

To make sense of the data acquired, the researchers kept the study aim in mind and classified the data into different themes according to the study's objective. The results are presented in themes emerging from the literature, followed by the relevant verbal responses and a summary discussion of the findings in relation to the study objective and literature.

4.1 The role of study participants

From the 15 interviews conducted, 13% performed the marketing function, 47% finance function, 33% operations management, and 7% performed other business development functions.

Although operations, finance, and marketing are essential functions for achieving sustainability, it is evident that some of the surveyed nonprofits lack these essential functions. Based on the findings, one can observe a lack of staffing capacity, as the majority of surveyed nonprofit organizations had one person performing multiple roles, and some lacked the key positions. Marketing and management strategies for long-term success can be hampered if these essential functions are missing.

Bettley and Burnley [99] and Sanders [100] argue that operations management substantially impacts sustainability and that the operations function must embrace sustainability. However, it is impossible to separate the financial function from others, such as marketing [101]. Similarly, Parthasarathy [102] concludes that nonprofits require good governance, fiscal prudence, and brand building (marketing) to continue attracting funding.

Given the preceding, nonprofits must be equipped to embrace sustainability. According to Batti [103], a lack of staff in nonprofits has resulted in many being unable to take advantage of the many opportunities out there for them because they lack the knowledge and resources to do so.

4.2 Years in operation

To determine whether the number of years an organization has been in operation is a determinant of its viability, the study included a question about the number of years each NGO had been in operation. From the seven organizations contacted, the majority of organizations interviewed had been in operation for more than 10 years, with 57 percent (4), 29 percent (2), and 14 percent (1) having been in operation for more than 20 years, respectively.

Even though most NPOs had been around for a long time, none had demonstrated that they had become autonomous or self-sufficient, as they were still reliant

on donations, particularly from outside the country. To achieve long-term viability, it may be necessary to implement effective marketing and management strategies. Coetzee [76] asserts that nonprofit organizations excel at fundraising and are happy to do so. Despite the fact that they must use business-like methods for generating income and ensuring long-term viability, they remain in their fundraising comfort zone.

Could this be why they had been in operation for several years? Can this be considered a sustainable practice?

4.3 Theme 1: marketing knowledge and management expertise

The main objective of this study was to establish the extent to which NPOs employ marketing strategies to achieve sustainability. The researchers use the following subthemes in order to achieve this specific goal:

4.3.1 Marketing expertise within NPOs

Examining the current implementation of marketing strategies in nonprofit organizations, the study assessed the marketing expertise possessed by the surveyed nonprofits to adapt marketing strategies for sustainability effectively. Only two out of fifteen nonprofit interviewees (or 13% of the total) confirmed having a marketing department. The rest of the participants viewed marketing as a function that could be performed by any member of the organization at any given time. The study found that nonprofit organizations lacked marketing expertise, which hindered their ability to adopt these strategies for sustainability. As a result, nonprofits may find it difficult to implement sustainable marketing strategies due to a lack of marketing expertise. Concurring, one of the participants (**Participant 1**) notes that *marketing expertise in the nonprofit sector was never considered necessary. The sector is completely devoid of market insight, which has a negative impact on their ability to sustain themselves because there is no strategic directive guiding the expansion or incorporation of programs or the ability to influence this decision.*

In addition, most participants acknowledged that their organizations lacked the financial resources necessary to attract marketing specialists, which prevented nonprofits from fully embracing business opportunities and establishing brand visibility. Several participants provide the following explanations:

> **Participant 4:** *If you examine the trends regarding the attraction of marketing talent to the nonprofit sector, you will likely discover that it is exceedingly difficult to find true strategic marketing talents, such as chief marketing officers and marketing specialists. In the nonprofit sector, these salary trends are unaffordable.*

> **Participant 8:** *We do not have a marketing person within our organization due to a lack of funding. However, marketing is crucial to ensuring that your brand is visible and well-known, but it is expensive for me. I am battling on the ground to hire a marketing professional. It is pricey. I believe that one of the reasons nonprofit organizations are struggling is that we cannot afford to have a marketer who is capable of pushing the organization toward sustainability.*

According to another participant, the donors impose strict rules and regulations on their funding, which are not conducive to marketing efforts.

> **Participant 13:** *Without a marketing expert, one of the difficulties we face as an organization is generating interest in what we do. Our donors do not even cover the cost of hiring marketing personnel. If we employ them, it will be with funds from a source other than donors.*

According to other participants, marketing is not a requirement but rather an ad hoc function that can be performed as needed by any member of the organization, even if they lack marketing experience or expertise. In a summary of the findings, one of the participants stated:

> **Participant 6:** *When the need arises, the organization occasionally contracts individuals to perform these specialized functions.*

It is evident from the participants' opinions that nonprofits lacked marketing expertise, even though this function was deemed essential for these organizations. It is clear from these findings that nonprofit organizations lack the marketing expertise to implement and adopt sustainable marketing strategies. This could indicate that nonprofit organizations are not using effective marketing strategies because they lack the necessary expertise. Even though some claim this is due to a lack of funding and resources, these findings back up the claim made by Othman et al. [104] that NPOs have lost out in critical areas like financial health enhancement and expansion because of a lack of experience and skills.

The participants' perspectives are also somewhat congruent with those of Drucker [105], Dolnicar and Lazarevski [23], and Williamson [106], who found that despite the shift to adopting marketing strategies in nonprofit organizations, marketing is frequently not prioritized. There is a dearth of marketing education among nonprofit workers [23, 33, 34]. An investigation conducted by Proust et al. [107] found that marketing tasks are frequently delegated or assigned to untrained volunteers or overburdened employees. This could also be a reason why nonprofits are not reaping the full benefits of the effective adoption of marketing strategies.

Based on these findings, we believe that the availability of marketing expertise in the NPO sector will positively impact the organization's competitive positioning, which will attract the necessary funds for sustainability.

4.3.2 Marketing activities in NPOs

Since the study focused on nonprofit organizations (NPOs) adopting marketing strategies to achieve sustainability, information about NPOs' marketing activities had to be gathered. Participants agreed that marketing is crucial for nonprofits; however, their activities aim not necessarily to achieve sustainability but rather to increase the organization's visibility. As some of the participants explained:

> **Participant 1:** *I must advance the organization's niche as well as our donor's reputation in a transparent, equitable, and fair manner. Despite this, I integrated marketing and communication across multiple channels, annual reports, digital channels, and brand activation within the community we serve.*

It is apparent from the above responses that the NPOs are engaged in various marketing strategies. Despite this, our view is that some participants are either not au fait

with what marketing is or believe that their attempts are improperly targeted and as such, they have not been able to attract meaningful funding avenues sufficiently. For instance, Participant 1 said: "...*marketing is very often misunderstood by non-marketers as promotion which it's not.*" Almost consistent with this view is the expression of Participant 8, who said, "*If our marketing was correct, by now people would have known who we are in South Africa.*"

Could those responses be linked to what Tabaku and Mersini [56] referred to as NPOs' lack of understanding of what and how marketing should be conducted? As extant literature suggests, confusion about effectively deploying marketing strategies in NPOs can result in depleted opportunities to remain sustainable. NPOs' lack of understanding and knowledge of marketing principles is consistent with the evidence in the literature (e.g., [33, 34]), which shows that NPOs are still lacking in the ability to effectively implement marketing strategies that will lead to long-term sustainability. Essentially, NPOs must prioritize marketing in order to remain in operation [34].

4.3.3 The existence of a marketing budget and marketing strategy in NPOs

According to the survey results, there was no marketing budget or marketing strategy in any of the participants' organizations. Hence, they believe that the latter is critical to implementing marketing strategies to grow and expand the organization. These, according to the participants, did exist because they did not have the necessary skills and resources. As one of the participants recounted:

> **Participant 8:** "*We lack a marketing strategy; I want to develop a strategy with this organization. It's one thing we lack but we do not have the skills or someone with marketing knowledge within the organization to drive this.*"

In relation to having a marketing budget, some of the participants said:

> **Participant 1:** "*One of the challenges in the organization is not having a centralized marketing budget to advance the organizational objectives.*"

> **Participant 6:** "*We do not work with a marketing budget, [rather] we have to see whether there are any extra funds from the unrestricted funds.*"

The participants remarked on the importance of a marketing strategy:

> **Participant 3:** "*No, we do not have a particular process to follow when it comes to marketing. There isn't a specifically defined strategy in place to follow. The process is rather conversational.*"

> **Participant 5:** "*No, we never had a proper plan of how do we progress or what are we doing in terms of marketing.*"

If these organizations lack a marketing strategy and are unsure of how to go about marketing, it could explain their lack of success [34]. An organization's marketing strategy outlines its target markets—the market's value to the organization based on market analysis, as outlined by Kotler and Keller [49]. Therefore, nonprofit organizations must consider prioritizing marketing if they are to overcome challenges such as limited resources [23, 105, 106].

4.3.4 The importance of marketing in NPOs

The researchers wanted to know how marketing is perceived in nonprofit organizations and if it is necessary for them. Interestingly, all 15 participants (100 percent) agreed that marketing is critical for nonprofit organizations. Emphasizing the importance of marketing, some of the participants had this to say:

> **Participant 1: "***I don't think it's an if, it's a must-do. I think with the current global trends with the number of NPOs that are out there, I think there is a huge amount of competition for a limited amount of resources and already speaking about that you realize that the ones that are most visible, market the best and has the best public relations."*

> **Participant 3:** *"Marketing for me, yes, I think it's very important. It is the branding of the organization. How big marketing should be in any organization, I don't know, but I think it should be there."*

> **Participant 8: "***Marketing, let me be honest, you need to have a competitive edge. That's what marketing is all about. In the current situation where NGOs are fighting for money, for the same bulk of funders, you need to come up with a competitive advantage in order to survive."*

Adding on, another respondent (Participant 10) indicated that: *"Marketing is everyone's job within an organization."*

It is evident that the adoption of marketing in nonprofit organizations helps their brands stand out and better position their organizations better positioned to competitively attract funding. Previous studies have found that marketing is beneficial, and these findings are consistent with them. It helps with growth, attracts funding [54], defines and defends the organization's position, and brings it closer to achieving its mission successfully [55]. It ensures that the nonprofit has enough money to carry out its stated goals and objectives [56]. Likewise, marketing allows nonprofit organizations to manage their brand and understand the needs of their donors, customers, and beneficiaries [20]. Thus, mission-related resources can be attracted [21, 22].

4.4 NPO challenges

4.4.1 Funding and resources shortages

Clearly, the NPO sector's funding situation is at the heart of most of the issues. When it comes to nonprofit organizations (NPOs), raising money is the biggest challenge they face. This is because NPOs are heavily dependent on donor funding [64, 108–110]. In relation to these findings, one of the participants said as follows:

> **Participant 1:** *"We face a myriad of challenges. NPOs are, by definition, resource-poor. There is always a funding challenge. There is always that macro force that exerts pressure on the organization's ability to sustain itself."*

Are these problems the result of NPOs' inability to attract and retain qualified staff or their failure to effectively adapt their marketing strategies for sustainability? The following is what one of the attendees said:

> **Participant 12:** *"…NPOs are sometimes not able to attract the correct skillset at the right price, and they substitute that with lesser equivalent. I think it's a major barrier to sustainability going forward".*

According to this investigation, funding for nonprofit organizations was also found to be inconsistent and discontinuous. This is consistent with Lombard's [111] assertion that a lack of system transparency results in significant inconsistencies in distributing funds to nonprofit organizations. There has been a decline in South Africa's support for nonprofit organizations [112]. It is clear from the following accounts that this is so.

> **Participant 4:** *"Of course, the issue of funding, the challenge is that each year it is being cut. Also, changes in the government policies of our funders affect the funding."*
>
> **Participant 15:** *"Access to funding. Donors push back when they no longer want to fund you by raising the standards, requirements or criteria of funding."*

According to Pope et al. [34], a lack of financial resources is linked to poor brand recognition, an unclear target market and competition, and an inability to use online marketing. This demonstrates the need for financial resources to support nonprofit organizations' marketing efforts in their quest for sustainability.

4.4.2 Education, lack of skills, and lack of knowledge

According to Morris et al. [113], nonprofit organizations typically lack the skills and experience of for-profit organizations. Many argue that the lack of resources and funding is to blame for NPOs' poor performance in critical areas like financial health improvement and expansion. Still, Othman et al. [104] found that the lack of experience and skills has contributed to NPOs' poor performance. Only a small number of nonprofit marketing staff have received formal marketing training [23].

According to the study's findings, there is a strong correlation between the skills of nonprofit organizations and their capacity to implement marketing and management strategies effectively. In this regard, we found that the following participant responses indicate agreement with the premise that NPO marketing requires essential skills.

> **Participant 1:** *"I think that education also plays a huge role because of the lack of resources, NPOs are sometimes not able to attract the correct skillset at the right price, and they substitute that with lesser equivalent. I think it's a major barrier to sustainability going forward."*
>
> **Participant 8:** *"Marketing goes hand-in-hand with business principles. Not all organizations, especially small or community-based organizations, they do not have the knowledge. That is a massive gap."*
>
> **Participant 15:** *"One of the biggest gaps when it comes to sustainability is that NPOs do not have the proper skills to market their product."*

Respondent 8's remarks reveal a lack of marketing expertise among nonprofits: *"Marketing the product to the wrong market and not to the relevant people like advertising youth programs in ECD."* A lack of understanding of the intended audience is evident in this account.

5. Discussion

This study confirms that NPOs lack sufficient marketing knowledge to adopt and implement marketing strategies. One can infer from these findings that NPOs have a harder time implementing long-term marketing strategies because they lack marketing expertise. We argue that marketing experts in the NPO sector should help the organization's position in the market and its ability to raise money, which allows the organization to become sustainable.

Secondly, NPOs' marketing activities were more focused on promoting their cause than on achieving long-term sustainability. NPOs, according to these findings, have a poor grasp of marketing and how to approach marketing in order to achieve sustainability. Nonprofits could benefit from a better grasp of marketing concepts and principles in order to develop and implement more sustainable strategies.

A third finding of the study was that nonprofit organizations lack a marketing strategy and a marketing budget, which are essential for successful marketing strategies. Nonprofit organizations may lack marketing prioritization due to a lack of marketing direction and a lack of funds to implement marketing strategies. According to Barone [114], nonprofit organizations must first have a proper marketing strategy to effectively implement marketing strategies for sustainability to reach customers and achieve organizational objectives.

Fourthly, the study uncovered a shortage of skills in the organization's core functions. From these findings, it is safe to say that the leadership of nonprofit organizations lacks the marketing expertise needed to implement strategies for long-term success. Because of this, we believe that an organization's marketing, operational and financial functions require the full attention of its management and board and cannot be implemented effectively if there are skillset gaps. For nonprofits to be sustainable, management must lead and spearhead the necessary change. Marketing and management are critical components of nonprofit organizations, so they must be prioritized within the organization and resources allocated to attract or hire marketing specialists.

Finally, the study found that funding is the most common challenge faced by nonprofits. Among other things, the participants discussed the importance of education, the sustainability gap, donor priorities, and political and economic challenges. These issues hinder these organizations' ability to pursue sustainable marketing and management strategies.

The majority of the study's findings indicate that marketing in nonprofit organizations is not prioritized, even though all participants stated that marketing was of the utmost importance. Marketing, according to Corak and Snajder [115], is the constant planning and conception of ideas or services that drive organizational change. A plan outlining how to implement the ideas must be in place to properly implement ideas that drive change.

6. Conclusion and implications

On the one hand, nonprofit organizations have been shown to benefit from effective marketing strategies that positively impact their growth and sustainability. Nonprofit organizations, on the other hand, rarely reap the full benefits of marketing

and management strategies because of a dearth of marketing expertise and a reliance on donor funding.

A growing number of nonprofit organizations are competing with each other, which has led to a decrease in funding sources [5, 6, 8, 9, 98]. South African NPOs must be able to continue delivering value and impacting disadvantaged groups in order to remain sustainable. These goals can only be achieved by enacting legislation that promotes nonprofit growth and development. This result is consistent with the current research, which promotes the development of a conducive environment for nonprofit organizations [116, 117].

Many studies have found that nonprofit organizations are hindered by a lack of business acumen that prevents them from effectively pursuing growth and sustainability strategies [23, 34, 103, 104, 113, 118]. Other studies indicate that NPOs have been compromised by entrusting these essential functions to unqualified personnel, resulting in a loss of ground in crucial areas, such as financial health enhancement and expansion [104, 107, 119]. To avoid this, the policies of nonprofit organizations should consider establishing certain criteria or standards that employees must meet prior to being entrusted with positions that are essential to the organization's survival. Nonprofit organizations should invest in qualified personnel for these crucial positions.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommend the following:

- In order to diversify and increase their revenue streams, nonprofit organizations should look into other funding sources and income-generating activities. This will provide them with sufficient finances to lure the marketing skills necessary in the industry. This will also allow them to avoid some of the drawbacks of relying on a single means of funding.

- Nonprofits should prioritize marketing and not view marketing as a strategy that only relates to the businesses that are for profit-making. Also, NPOs should dedicate and allocate funding to market their organizations.

- NPOs should invest in training the individuals who are already engaged in the marketing for their organization about marketing in NPOs, specifically how to view marketing as a vehicle for establishing exposure for the organization and as a vehicle for sustainability.

- NPOs should invest in recruiting marketing professionals so that marketing strategies and concepts may be properly implemented in order to create organizational sustainability.

- Before imposing terms and conditions, donors should begin to consider the needs of NPOs. The donor and the NPO must agree upon terms and conditions, which should be in both parties' best interests.

- Donors should direct funds toward activities that promote organizational growth and development, such as marketing.

8. Limitations and upcoming studies

Due to time and budget constraints, the study only included seven healthcare NPOs. More so, it excluded all NPOs outside the Cape Metropolitan Area and other regions of South Africa, thus limiting generalization. This study relied significantly on qualitative methodologies considering the nature of the research problem. As such, the data was not subjected to significant arduous statistical scrutiny that is often associated with quantitative methods.

Future research may consider adopting the quantitative approach with a more significant sample. Whereas this research mainly looked at marketing and management strategies for NPO sustainability, future research might explore other strategies for NPO sustainability, including creating a framework for how these marketing and management strategies might be effectively used in NPOs to ensure long-term sustainability. This would provide a resource for educating nonprofit organizations on how to execute these techniques.

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Evaluating the Sourcing Challenges Faced by Humanitarian Charities

Hailan Guo

Abstract

The COVID-19 outbreak has had a knock-on effect on the humanitarian supply chain. This research aims to identify the sourcing barriers in humanitarian charities' supply chains and evaluate the interrelationships between the identified barriers. The agency theory and institutional theory are employed as the theoretical rationales to comprehend the value chain and operations of the humanitarian charity. To identify sourcing barriers related to humanitarian charities, a literature review and focus group discussion are conducted. Following the fuzzy Delphi method (FDM), 10 key barriers are chosen for further investigation. Finally, total interpretive structural Modeling (TISM) and matrix of cross-impact multiplications applied to a classification (MICMAC) are applied to further investigate the interrelationships among barriers and rank their priority. The findings are highly useful for the decision-makers to develop potential interventions based on the identified priorities.

1. Introduction

The rate of disasters is expanding year by year around the world. The rate of death because of disasters is predicted to be growing over the next 50 years [1]. Humanitarian aid operations have therefore emerged as a new area of interest to researchers. In parallel to this, the increasing complexity of humanitarian aid activity creates a vital need for an efficient humanitarian supply chain (HSC) [2]. As humanitarian supply chains are increasingly disrupted by extreme weather, price volatility (e.g., grain, gas, oil), pandemics (such as COVID-19), and terrorism, humanitarian supply chain practices may no longer assume a stable operating environment [3, 4]. For example, the COVID-19 outbreak has caused ripple effects throughout the humanitarian supply chains (HSCs) [5]. Therefore, investigating the barriers that mitigate the effects of disruptive consequences is critical. To improve the resilience of the humanitarian charity supply chain and take advantage of the opportunities, this paper aims to identify the sourcing challenges in the humanitarian charity supply chain.

Although previous studies have illuminated the operations of humanitarian charities in various aspects, such as donor behavior [6, 7], charitable giving [8, 9], and logistics issues [10], relatively limited research has been conducted to date on the sourcing challenges faced by humanitarian charity supply chain. Since the late 1980s,

the image of charities has shifted from poor secondary trading outlets to primary high street shops as a result of professional management skills [11, 12]. Today, the number of charities in the United Kingdom has risen to over 11,200 [13], making it difficult for charities to source high-quality items due to intense competition and an economic downturn [6]. Furthermore, because donations from individuals/organizations are highly stochastic in nature, charities face challenges in ensuring consistent high-quality donations. Thus, it is necessary to identify and evaluate the sourcing barriers that inhibit the resilience of humanitarian charity supply chain. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to (1) comprehend the value chain and current operations of humanitarian charities, and (2) assess the barriers to sourcing in humanitarian charities. To achieve the research goal and fill research gaps, this study addresses the following research questions: Q1: What are the major sourcing barriers in humanitarian supply chains? Q2: How do these barriers interact with one another?

The rest of this chapter is structured as follows. Next section contains a review of the literature. Following that, the research methodology is presented. Ten key barriers are selected for further investigation after applying the fuzzy Delphi method (FDM). The total interpretive structural modeling (TISM) and matrix of cross-impact multiplications applied to a classification (MICMAC) are applied to further examine the interrelationship among barriers and rank these barriers by priority. The research findings, implications, and limitations are then presented. Finally, it concludes with a discussion of the future scope of research.

2. Literature review

This section employs the agency theory and institutional theory to comprehend the value chain and operations of humanitarian charities. The value chain assists in conceptualizing the sourcing process of charities. Then, it provides a literature review of related sourcing barriers.

2.1 Agency theory and institutional theory

Agency theory is a principle that is used to explain and resolve problems in the relationship between principles and agents [14]. Problems arise as a result of information asymmetry when the agent (for example, the humanitarian charities) represents the principal (for example, the donors), as it is difficult for the principal (donors) to track what the agent (humanitarian charities) is doing [6]. Principals may face risks as a result of this [15]; hence, to address the aforementioned principal-agent problems and ensure donation continuity, it is becoming increasingly important for the charities commission to establish strong governance and accountability [16]. Corporate governance within the charity sector may be referred to as the process of charities discharging accountability to their donors (how they spend funds to support the beneficiaries). In terms of accountability, charities act as a middleman, receiving donations from donors and selling them to raise funds to support the intended beneficiaries [6]. Understanding the process from sourcing donations to supporting the intended beneficiaries helps to capture the value chain and operations of humanitarian charities.

Furthermore, the institutional theory could be used to supplement the agency theory and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of the first-tier supplier in a multi-tier supply chain [17]. This expands on the concept of charity

governance, which considers all issues related to charities to reduce risk and institutional pressure. Moreover, each charity is embedded in its own institutional environment, which may influence how charities respond to donor pressure [18]. Even if charities operate in the same institutional field, they may have different external constituents (for example, donors, beneficiaries, consumers, and regulators) who exert institutional pressure. This institutional pressure frequently results in the decoupling of adopted policies or actual practices by businesses [17, 19]. This is because charities, on the one hand, want to gain legitimacy to meet the demands of institutional stakeholders, such as converting donor donations into funds to support target beneficiaries. However, it is constrained by certain circumstances, such as the required expertise to deal with sourcing barriers [6]. Furthermore, natural disasters, diseases, terrorism, political turmoil, and other factors have all severely disrupted the normal day-to-day operations of humanitarian charities [5, 20]. For example, the recent COVID-19 outbreak revealed that unprecedented uncertainty had impacted normal supply patterns, potentially disrupting the sourcing systems of humanitarian charities. Hence, to understand the sourcing barriers, it is necessary to first comprehend the value chain of humanitarian charities under different institutional environments and pressures.

As illustrated in **Figure 1**, charities collect donations through several following channels: donors visiting charities to donate; donors dropping bags in collection points such as clothing banks, and book banks; donors using free pick-up services; charities acquiring stock from commercial retailers and warehouses. The high-quality items are
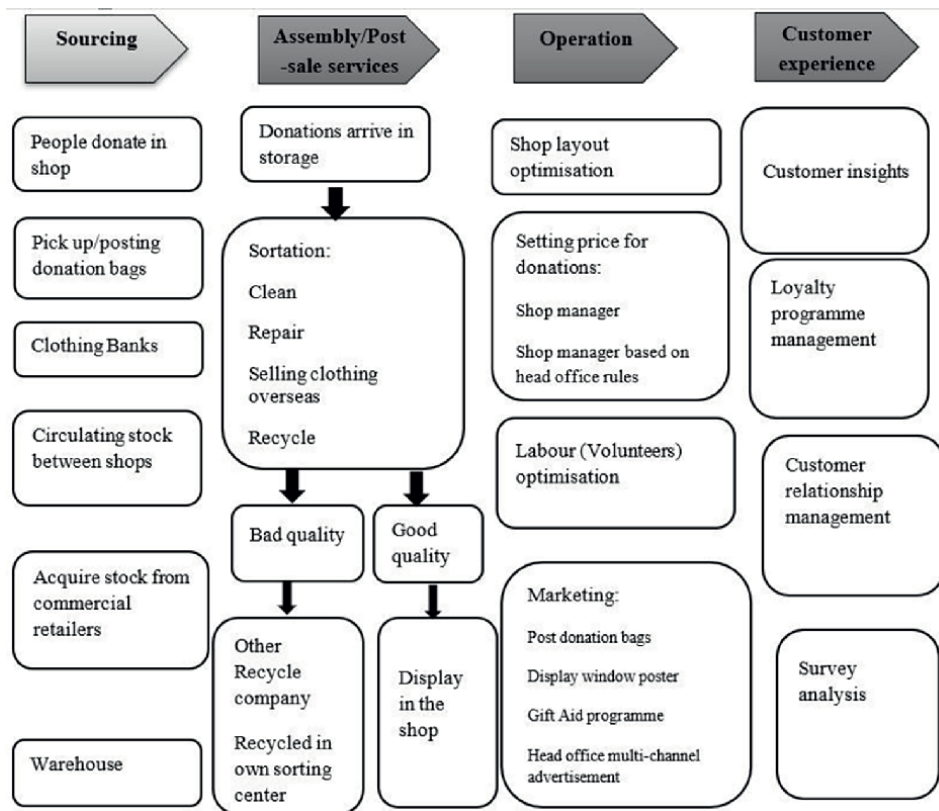

Figure 1.
The value chain of humanitarian charities.

then kept in the local charities after arriving at the storage facility. High-quality items are displayed for sale in shops after sorting. If items are unable to be sold during a specific period, some charities will circulate them between shops or transport them to the central warehouse. If a charity has no central warehouse, the low-quality and unsold items will be collected by the recycling company for other eco-friendly use. If a charity has a sorting warehouse, for example, Oxfam has their sorting warehouse in Batley, UK, poor quality items and unsold items will be transported to this sorting warehouse, where experts hand sort these items and decide where they should go next. Some items are typically resold in an online store, a festival store, or a high street store. If not, the items will be recycled for future use. Most charity's daily works are done by volunteers. Charities rely heavily on volunteers to keep their operations running smoothly and to provide a positive customer experience. Charities set donation prices according to head office policies, raise awareness through multi-channel advertising from headquarters, and promote loyalty programs to manage customer relationships.

2.2 Sourcing barriers

With an expanding number of disasters disrupting people's lives, humanitarian charities assist those in need by providing clothing, food, and personal hygiene products. The increasing complexity of humanitarian aid activities necessitates the establishment of an effective humanitarian supply chain [21]. Based on their respective business models, charities collect donated items for sale to raise funds to support humanitarian aid activities [22]. Yet, the donations received are highly stochastic in nature. Due to the uncertainty regarding the quantity and quality of received donations, charities face significant sourcing barriers. Based on the literature review and focus group discussion, 14 related sourcing barriers (B1–B14) are summarized in the following section.

Sourcing barriers can arise as a result of a supplier's operational inefficiency, variations in product quality and quantity, logistics and transportation delays, or a lack of coordination between the supplier and the firm [23, 24]. Because COVID-19 infections are expected to spread in waves over the next few years, further disrupting supply chains [25], charities may face insufficient donations (B1) from donors as well as seasonal fluctuations in supply (seasonality) (B2). The increased emphasis on supply and demand risk has highlighted the importance of risk management in business. Firm profits may be reduced by both high supply and high demand risks [26]. Because charities have limited control over the input, it is unknown how many donations can be received at any given time. This may lead to supply fluctuations. Thus, charities may encounter specific issues such as excess inventory, stock-outs, and a mismatch between demand and supply at certain times.

The persistence of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic has heralded a new era in the world, even as we continue to grapple with the crippling effects on various aspects of our daily lives [27]. The high street retail sector is no exception, and it is in the spotlight, as evidenced by images of long lines forming in front of retail shops after they reopen, which have flooded social media. Despite the government's guarantee of price stability, COVID-19 has revealed inherent flaws in the resilience of UK charities. Another major obstacle is the location of the store/collection nodes (B3). The traditional method of determining the location of a charity shop is based on the potential customer base and the competition. There is a growing body of research focusing on the ability and availability of data sources for store location forecasting. Although these are not specifically for charity shops, they have been successfully implemented in a variety of retailing sectors. Location has a significant impact on charities'

exposure [6]. Charities on main streets help to raise awareness [28], but they also pose challenges for donors who need to get rid of large items because it may be difficult to find parking to access shops. Meanwhile, those charities with limited collection methods (B4) may encounter difficulties in collecting large donations such as furniture. To encourage donations, some charities offer free pick-up services. Some charities hire third-party logistics companies to collect donations [20, 22, 23]. However, some charities may be unable to provide free pick-up services (B12) due to limited financial resources. Moreover, some charities may be able to afford to let donors choose suitable time slots. Most charities, on the other hand, usually post the donation bags and then pick them up at specific times. People who received donation bags may not have items to donate at that time. When they have items to donate, however, they may have already missed the time slots [6]. Furthermore, while some charities with their own logistics may be able to provide free pick-up service a few times per week, others with a limited budget may not be able to.

Another sourcing barrier is poor-quality donations from their suppliers (donors) (B5). The importance of quality sourcing in improving organizational performance has been acknowledged in the relevant management literature [29]. Firms would be able to reduce risks by improving sourcing quality and eliminating uncertainties, and a supplier's financial stability and ability have a significant impact on sourcing quality [29]. Charities used to report that up to 80% of donated items were rejected due to poor quality [22]. The high-quality donations demonstrate a high priority to some professionalized charities. Charities have become more professional over the last two decades, and they would rather recycle low-quality items than risk their reputation by selling them [30]. However, because of the current economic uncertainty, people may keep items for longer rather than donate them. Thus, charities may continue to struggle to secure high-quality items to sell.

Supply chain management involves making thousands of decisions daily, including decisions on prices, storage levels, operational schedules, etc. These decisions have an impact on the firm's profitability [21]. Many charity shops are located on the main street, where storage space is limited (B6). The inventory is difficult to manage due to the variety of donated items and the limited storage space. Furthermore, due to the limited pricing strategy (B8), items may not be sold at a reasonable price or may never be presented in the shop before being recycled. It may have an impact on the profitability and sustainability of charities. The following criteria are important in determining the price: the item's quality, the location of the charities, the brand name, the local competition, and the price as new [22]. Furthermore, some donors may want the best price for their items. The best price reflects the value they place on their donated items and is viewed as a reflection of the donors' socioeconomic status [22]. Hence, a dynamic pricing strategy may be needed for charities to meet the different needs of stakeholders.

Another sourcing barrier related to the supply chains of humanitarian charities is a lack of communication between donors and charities (B7). Humanitarian disasters are occurring at a higher rate than ever before, and the need for humanitarian assistance is expected to grow even more [31]. Humanitarian supply chains (HSCs) have become more transparent as information technology has advanced [21, 32]. However, improved HSC data have not yet resulted in a more efficient and effective response [3, 33]. Disasters disrupt established information and communication infrastructure, obstructing the channel for gathering real-time information from stakeholders and limiting the agility of humanitarian supply chains [21, 34]. This creates a chaotic and uncertain environment for charities, making it difficult for them to collect donations. Hence, humanitarian supply chains are plagued by a lack of real-time information

or communication, resulting in ineffective supply coordination [35]. Thus, there is tremendous value in improving communication between donors and charities, as it is expected to increase effectiveness.

The long process time (B9) and lack of volunteers (B11) may affect the sourcing process of charities. Because donated items are of varying quality, the selection and cleaning activities are critical before presenting them for resale in charity shops [11, 22, 36]. These activities are frequently performed by volunteers. The initial work includes opening bags; categorizing donated items into different types, such as clothing, shoes, accessories, toys, and so on; and raging unsaleable items. This preliminary work is considered strenuous, and some volunteers refuse to do the initial work because it usually involves the worst aspects of used items: dirt, disease, and death [22]. Charities rely heavily on volunteers. Volunteers help out in the day-to-day operations of charities. For example, currently, over 230,000 volunteers work in charities in the United Kingdom. Some charity shops are even entirely run by volunteers [13]. Due to a lack of volunteers, some charity shops may not be able to open every day. The collection, sorting, and displaying of items become highly uncertain and take a long time.

The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown affect outbound logistics and consequently deteriorate sourcing performance in terms of delivery time [25, 29]. Because of the closures of charity shops during the pandemic lockdown, problems with logistics and transportation, as well as a lack of coordination between donors and charities, have become significant. Due to the lack of own logistics (B10), some charity shops may outsource the transportation activity. Some charities could offer free pick-up services by collaborating with third-party logistics. Instead of investing in their own logistics, this helps charities save money while also providing donors with convenience. Though logistic outsourcing can reduce logistics costs and improve service quality [37], a previous study [38] indicated firm performance and logistics outsourcing are not positively related. Charities such as Oxfam and the British Heart Foundation create their logistics to increase supply chain flexibility. When charity has its logistics, it has more leeway in establishing more flexible routines for collecting donated items. For example, charities with own collection logistics are able to offer a convenient free pick-up service whenever donors have the need. This helps to increase the brand awareness and keep donors loyal. Because ultimate convenience is a significant factor in encouraging donors to donate [22], charity with own logistics could afford to let donors choose the time slots; this provides donors with convenience. Furthermore, some charities acquire stock from commercial retailers. However, the current economic downturn, as well as the knock-on effects of COVID-19, poses operational challenges for commercial retailers. This could jeopardize commercial retailer-charity collaborations (B13: lack of partnerships between commercial retailers and charities). The latest figure showed the economic downturn affects 59% of charity shops, and the total dollar value that charity shops receive decreased by 13% at the peak of the economic downturn in 2018 [39]. Moreover, based on the analysis of donors' intention to donate, a prior study [6] found that charity shops receive relatively fewer donations from young people (B14: lack of innovative ways to target younger donors). Thus, charity shops may need to innovate in their advertising to raise awareness of their mission and the impact of donations among young donors.

3. Research methodology

The 14 barriers identified through the literature review and focus group discussions are then accessed using the FDM method, yielding 10 selected barriers. Furthermore,
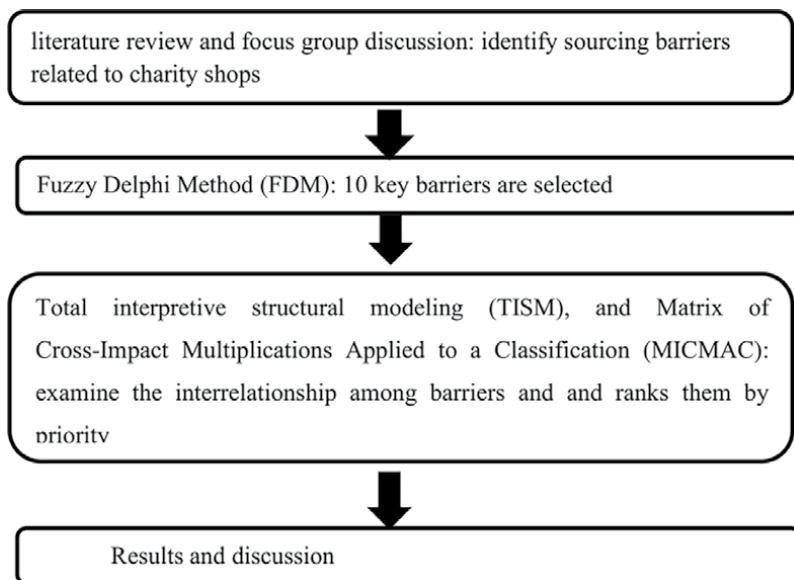
Figure 2.
Research procedure [6, 40].

expert opinions generated by the TISM and MICMAC analyses are used to establish the relationships between the barriers. TISM is an interactive learning procedure used to investigate relationships between some distinct and directly related factors [40]. The goal of an MICMAC analysis is to calculate the driving and dependent power of factors [41]. The hybrid method, which combines TISM and MICMAC analysis, has been used to clarify the complexities of factor relationships [21, 40]. Hence, it is appropriate for investigating the complex interrelationships of sourcing barriers. The research procedure for this study is depicted in **Figures 2** and **3**.

3.1 Fuzzy Delphi method

We apply the FDM to evaluate and select barriers. The main advantage of the FDM technique is that it 1) considers and integrates every expert opinion; 2) allows expert opinions to be fully expressed and the inevitable ambiguity to be considered; and 3) builds consensus, determines the suitability of implementing instructional interventions, and interacts with research subjects without being limited by time and space [40, 42, 43]. In this study, 10 UK charity managers and four academics are invited to assess the listed barriers. The FDM process consists of four steps: 1) gather decision group opinions, 2) defuzzification, 3) screen evaluation indexes, and 4) set up triangular fuzzy numbers [44]. A minimum requirement of 65% agreement was adopted based on a majority vote of the experts, and the results yielded 10 of the 14 barriers for further investigation. The selected barriers, as determined by the FDM decisions, are shown in **Table 1** and are labeled B1–B10.

3.2 Total interpretive structural modeling

The TISM technique aims to depict direct and significant transitive relationships in a graph [45], which is useful for understanding contextual relationships among the
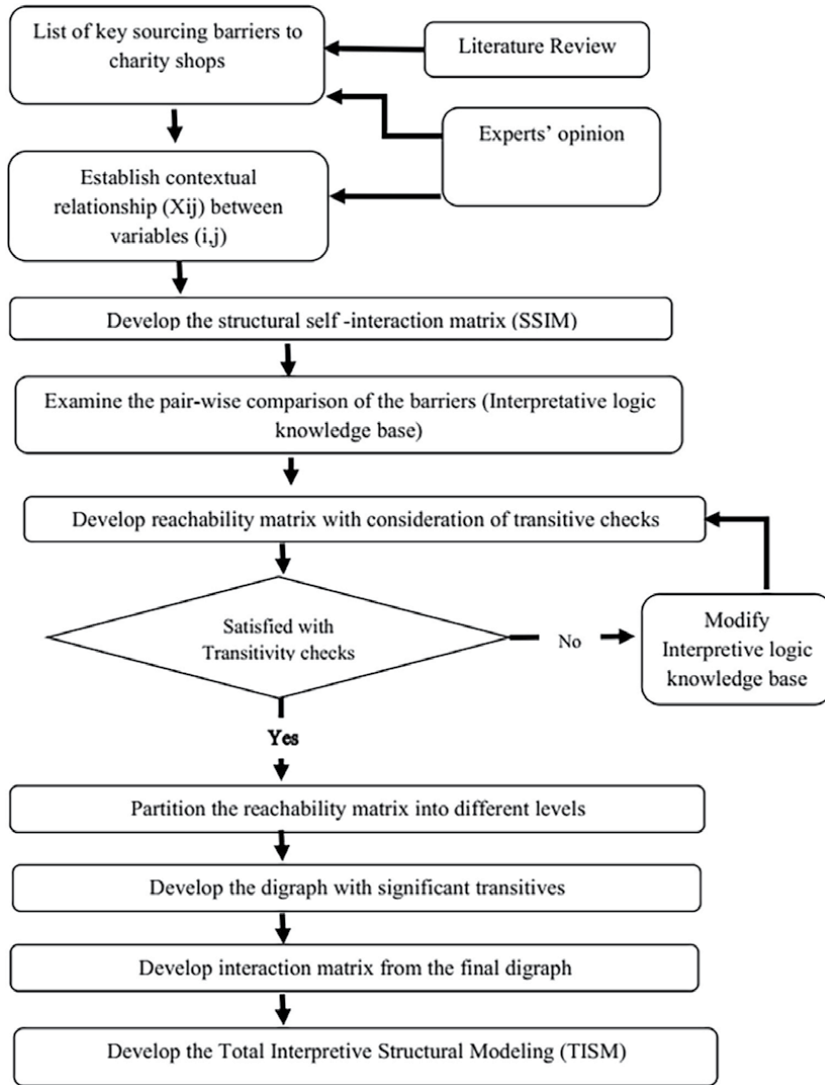
Figure 3.
Total interpretive structural modeling (TISM) procedure [45].

barriers. TISM uses experts' skills and experience to break down a complex system into elements and build a multi-level structural model [40]. The TISM procedure used in this study is depicted in **Figure 3**, which was adapted from previous studies. First, 10 barriers are selected for TISM after conducting the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM). Then, the opinions of 10 charity managers and four academics are collected to identify the contextual relationship of each barrier by examining the pairs of variables. In step 3, a pairwise comparison of barriers is made to develop the structural self-interaction matrix (SSIM) (**Table 1**). The following four symbols are used to define the relationships among the barriers (A: If """" is a predictor of "j"; B: If "j" is a predictor of "i"; C: If "I" and "j" predict each other. D: If none predict each other). In step 4, the experts are expected to describe the rationale behind such a relationship based on a pairwise comparison of these ten barriers. For example, they do not simply

Variable	Barriers	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
B1	Lack of sufficient donations	B	B	D	B	D	D	B	B	B
B2	Fluctuations in supply (seasonality)	B	D	D	B	D	D	B	B	
B3	Location of the store/collection nodes	D	D	D	D	A	D	D		
B4	Limited collection methods	B	A	D	B	D	A			
B5	Poor quality donation	D	D	D	B	D				
B6	Limited storage space	D	D	D	D					
B7	Lack of communication between donors and charities	B	A	D						
B8	Limited price strategy	D	D							
B9	Long process time	B								
B10	Lack of own logistics for the collection									

Table 1.
Structural self-interaction matrix.

provide opinions on the potential of barrier 1 to influence/improve barrier 2, but rather provide a comprehensive description of how barrier 1 could influence/improve barrier 2. **Table 2** depicts an illustrative example of an interpretive logic-knowledge base. In step 5, the reachability matrix is created while taking transitive checks into account. Using the following rules, we create the initial reachability matrix: (i, j) is 1 if (i, j) in SSIM is A or C; (i, j) is 0 if (i, j) in SSIM is B or D; (j, i) is 1 if (i, j) in SSIM is B or C; (j, i) is 0 if (i, j) in SSIM is A or D. After that, the initial reachability matrix is checked for transitivity. If barrier 1 is related to barrier 2 and barrier 2 is related to barrier 3, the transitivity rule applies, implying that barrier 1 is related to barrier 3. Transitivity was deemed significant and was adopted when experts' opinions were in

Variable	Barriers	Contextual Relationship	Interpretation
		Will Barrier 1 influence/enhance Barrier 2…Barrier 10?	**How Do You Think Barrier 1 influence/enhance Barrier 2…Barrier 10?**
1	Lack of sufficient donations		
2	Fluctuations in supply (seasonality)		
.	.		
.	.		
.	.		
10	Lack of own logistics for the collection		

Table 2.
Sample interpretative logic-knowledge base.

#	Barriers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DP
1	Lack of sufficient donations	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2	Fluctuations in supply (seasonality)	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4
3	Location of the store/ collection nodes	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	8
4	Limited collection methods	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	8
5	Poor quality donation	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
6	Limited storage space	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	4
7	Lack of communication between donors and charities	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	8
8	Limited price strategy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
9	Long process time	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	6
10	Lack of own logistics for collection	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	6
	Dependence	7	7	4	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	

Table 3.
Final reachability matrix.

agreement or a majority agreed on the relationship. Following the transitivity check, the final reachability matrix is created, as shown in **Table 3**.

In step 6, the final reachability matrix is then partitioned based on the driving power and dependence of the barriers. The details of level partitioning are presented in **Table 4**. The reachability set for a selected barrier includes both the barrier and the barrier it influences. The antecedent set, on the other hand, includes the barrier itself as well as other barriers that may help achieve it. The intersection set displays the barriers found in both the reachability and antecedent sets [45]. When the intersection set and reachability matrix of a barrier are identical, it is ranked as the first level barrier. This iteration will be repeated until the levels of each barrier are determined. In this case, three iterations are performed to determine the level of each barrier. The three recognized levels contribute to the formation of the directed graph and, consequently, the TISM model. In step 7, a digraph is created that depicts the graphical structural relationship of the barriers, with the last level at the bottom and the first derived levels on top. The final digraph is then used to generate a binary interaction matrix in step 8, and the TISM model is created as the final step of the procedure (**Figure 4**).

3.3 Classification of barriers: MICMAC analysis

The TISM results are expanded further by employing the MICMAC method to calculate driving and dependence powers and classify barriers. The driver power dependence figure (**Figure 5**) provides some useful information about the relative importance and interdependence of the barriers. In the classification of barriers, the MICMAC method examines hidden and indirect relationships and assesses how much

Barriers	Reachability	Antecedent	Intersection	Levels
				Iteration 1
1	1	1,2,3,4,7,9,10	1	I
2	1,2,6,9	2,3,4,6, 7,9, 10	2,6,9	
3	1,2,3,4,6,7, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
4	1,2,3,4,7,9, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
5	5	4,5,6,7,9	5	I
6	2,5, 6, 9	2,3,6,9	2,6,9	
7	1,2,3,4,7,9, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
8	8	8,9	8	I
9	1, 2, 6,9	2,4,6,7,9	2,6,9	
10	1, 2,3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
				Iteration 2
2	2,6,9	2,3,4,6, 7,9, 10	2,6,9	II
3	2,3,4,6,7, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
4	2,3,4,7,9, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
6	2, 6, 9	2,3,6,9	2,6,9	II
7	2,3,4,7,9, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
9	2, 6,9	2,4,6,7,9	2,6,9	II
10	2,3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	
				Iteration 3
3	3,4,7, 10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	III
4	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	III
7	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	III
10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	3,4,7,10	III

Table 4.
Level partition of the reachability matrix.

they influence each other [45]. The barriers are clustered based on their respective driving power and dependence, as presented in **Figure 5**. There are four types of clusters. Barriers with low driving power and low dependence are clustered as autonomous barriers. Barriers that have low driving power but high dependence, such as lack of sufficient donations or fluctuations in supply, are clustered as dependent barriers. The barriers such as the location of the store, limited collection methods, and lack of communication between donors and charities, which have high driving power but low dependence, are clustered as independent barriers. It is to be noted that the barriers with high driving power and high dependence are called linkage barriers. These barriers can make the entire system very volatile as a minor fluctuation in these barriers can have a significant impact on the entire system. It is found that none of the barriers is clustered as linkage.
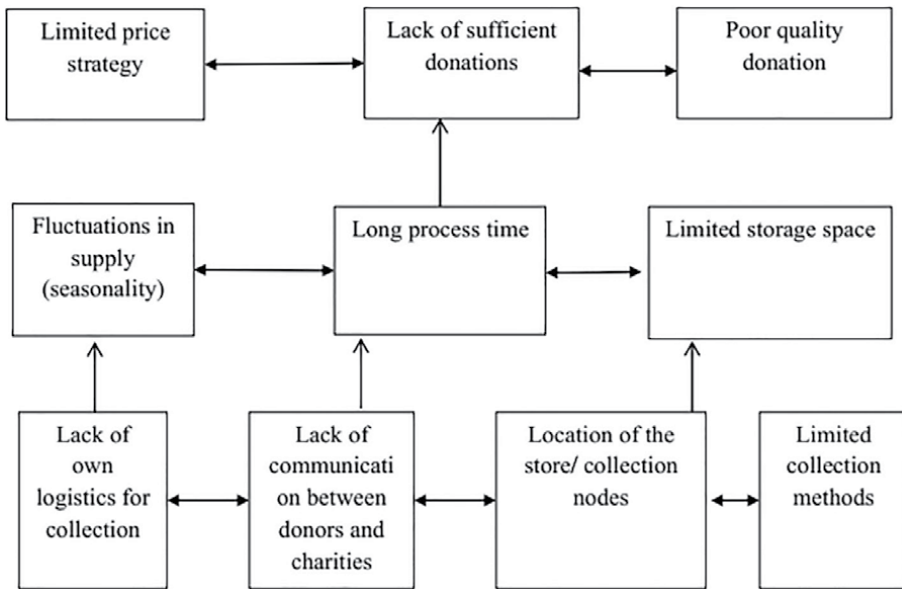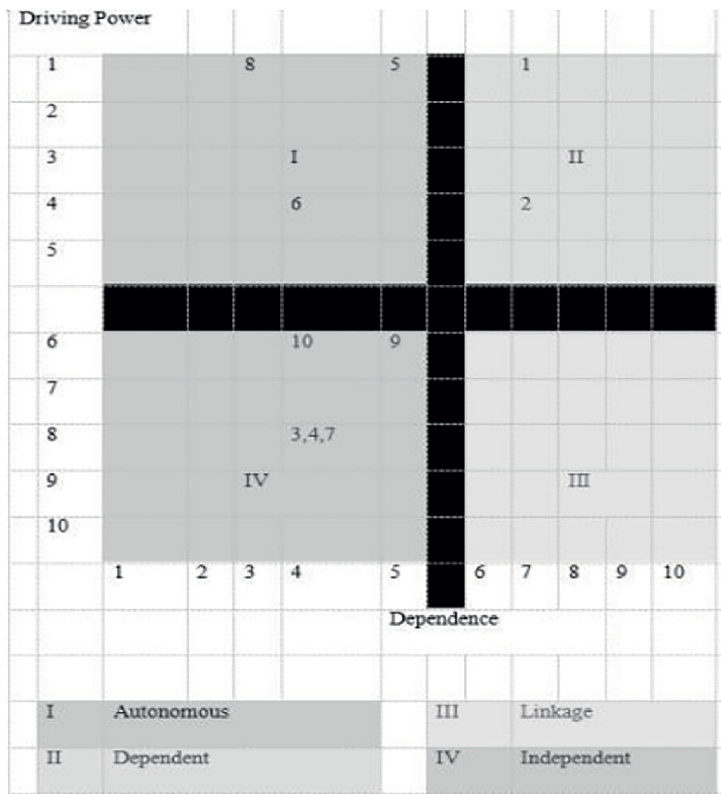
Figure 4.
Final TISM model.

Figure 5.
Classification of the barriers.

4. Results

First, the TISM hierarchy (**Figure 4**) ranks the barriers that significantly affect the sourcing in humanitarian charities' supply chains. The lower-level barriers drive the barriers partitioned to upper levels. The TISM model shows that lack of own logistics for collection (B10), lack of communication between donors and charities (B7), location of the store/collection nodes (B3), and limited collection methods (B4) are at the bottom, indicating that they have a significant impact on the system. Furthermore, according to the barrier classification figure (**Figure 5**), these four barriers have very high driving power and are thus regarded as the most important barriers. Thus, charities should accord high priority to dealing with these barriers.

Second, the TISM model (**Figure 4**) shows that the middle-level barriers are fluctuations in supply (seasonality) (B2), long process time (B9), and limited storage space (B6). These three barriers complement one another. The classification of the barriers figure (**Figure 5**) also shows that long process time (B9) has a higher driver power and dependence than the other two drivers. Thus, this barrier has a greater impact on the charities' sourcing process. Hence, managers should pay closer attention to this barrier.

Third, it is observed that the lack of sufficient donations (B1), poor-quality donation (B5), and limited price strategy (B8) are the top-level barriers in the TISM hierarchy. In addition, the driver power dependence diagram (**Figure 5**) shows that poor-quality donation (B5) and limited price strategy (B8) are autonomous variables. These variables with weak drivers and weak dependents have little impact on the system. Charities should therefore accord low priority to dealing with these barriers.

5. Discussions and implications

This research contributes to both theory and practice. In terms of theory, this study extends the literature on the sourcing challenges that charities face. First, this study employs agency theory and institutional theory as theoretical foundations to comprehend the value chain and operations of the humanitarian charity. Thus, this study contributed to the literature by investigating the application of the aforementioned combined theories in the charity sector. Second, the sourcing barriers in the charity sector have yet to be comprehensively synthesized in a coherent model and empirically tested. There is also limited literature on using the combined techniques of the fuzzy Delphi method (FDM), total interpretive structural modeling (TISM), and matrix of cross-impact multiplications applied to a classification (MICMAC) in empirical research related to humanitarian charity. Using the abovementioned combined techniques, this study investigated charities' sourcing barriers as well as their interrelationships, filling a significant gap in the literature on the resilience of humanitarian charity supply chains.

In terms of real practice, this study offers valuable insight into assessing the sourcing barriers faced by humanitarian charities. The findings are highly useful for managers and decision-makers in developing potential interventions. First, as discussed in the previous section, when dealing with the above 10 sourcing barriers, the lack of own logistics for collection (B10), lack of communication between donors and charities (B7), location of the store/collection nodes (B3), and limited collection methods (B4) should be given the highest priority. In terms of the limited collection methods (B4), charities have traditionally relied on donors to donate unwanted

clothes voluntarily. Because of the increased competition, charities are finding it extremely difficult to obtain supplies; thus, they are looking for alternative options. Some charities, for example, may acquire stock from commercial retailers, circulate stock between charity shops, display donation banks, and distribute donation bags [11, 12, 20, 22, 46]. However, collection methods are still disorganized [47]. Providing the ultimate convenience is a significant factor in encouraging donors to donate. Donors appear to find free pick-up/door-to-door collection convenient. However, door-to-door collection may be complicated due to the following factors: charity loyalty, collection frequencies, collection time slots, and the time of year (charities may experience supply fluctuations during special holiday periods). Donors' lack of information makes it difficult for charities to determine collection frequencies and time slots efficiently. Furthermore, some charities advice donors to leave donation bags outside their homes during certain times of the year; however, these donated items are vulnerable to theft when left outside.

Furthermore, the location has a significant impact on the awareness and exposure of charities [6, 22]. Because high rents are associated with high street locations, charities may consider whether it is worthwhile to make such a significant investment in location. Some charities are located in high-traffic areas to attract donors and buyers. However, this may harm donations because donors may find it difficult to "park and drop" in these charities [6]. Another interesting point to investigate is whether or not buyers on the high street purchase from charity shops. Ideally, charity shops should be located in low-income areas close to the target customers [6, 12].

Furthermore, some charities have their logistics for collecting donations. It allows them to cover a large geographical area while also balancing their inventories [12]. However, some charities still rely on the donor to donate the items using their transportation. Some charities outsource logistics. Logistics activities are classified into four levels: packaging, transportation, transportation management, and distribution network management [37, 48]. Charities with own logistics have more freedom to circulate stock between shops and send oversupplies to nearby shops or central warehouses. Donated items are sent to Oxfam's central warehouse, for example, may be distributed to other Oxfam charity shops, Oxfam's Festival shops, Oxfam's online shop, and Oxfam's replying plant. This increases the chances of selling the donated items.

Second, as previously discussed, the barriers such as fluctuations in supply (seasonality) (B2), long process time (B9), and limited storage space (B6) should be given medium priority. In terms of long process time, charity operations necessitate processing time when collecting, sorting, and disposing of used items. Some charities provide free pick-up services. However, the time between receiving the phone call and picking up the donated item may be longer than donors anticipate. Donors may cancel their contributions due to the long lead time. Furthermore, charities have sourcing policies, and some items are not accepted. When securing stocks, charities should adhere to a few pieces of safety legislation as well as recycling and waste regulations. Before donating, donors are encouraged to review the list of donations that charities may accept. Some items, such as toys without the CE mark, second-hand children's shoes except wellington boots, jellies and flip flops, items made of fur, religious items, and golliwog-related items, cannot be accepted by charities due to hygiene and desirability [49]. People may want to get rid of the items and fail to check the list of donations that charity cannot accept. It may result in a lengthy sorting process for charities.

Furthermore, some charity shops are located on the main street. They would prefer a large display space to attract buyers, but to keep operating costs low, the overall space is kept to a minimum [50]. However, when stock levels are high, the limited

storage space poses a problem for those charities without a central warehouse to deal with oversupplies. Moreover, some donations may not apply to the current season. Sorting and storing non-current season donations are a challenge for charities with limited storage space.

Additionally, there is a significant seasonality effect in donations, as donors see charities as a good way to get rid of unwanted items [6, 22]. Charities have limited control over the level and nature of the inputs. This causes significant supply fluctuations. Charities may benefit from seasonal clear-outs at certain times of the year. For example, people may have done a mass clean-up around Easter. However, when the demand for gifts spikes during the Christmas and New Year's holidays, some charities may lack sufficient donations. Researchers investigate how the nature of the disruption affects the firm's risk management strategies, and their results indicate firms' ability to recover from inadvertent disruption is dependent on their ability to return to the previous supply chain [51, 52]. Hence, when there aren't enough donations, charities may try to encourage more by, for example, distributing more donation bags. When inventory levels are high, charities may use an inventory-based dynamic pricing strategy to reduce inventory holding costs and stimulate demand.

Third, in comparison to the previous seven barriers, the findings indicate that the following three should be given the lowest priority: lack of sufficient donations (B1), poor-quality donation (B5), and limited price strategy (B8). Concerning the limited price strategy (B8), standard pricing guidelines for donated items must be followed for all donated items. The prices in charities are fairly fixed, with little room for discounts or bargains. It is because senior management believes that, unlike commercial retailers, charity shops should not sell goods at prices below a certain threshold [38]. However, the dynamic pricing strategy may be more effective in encouraging donation flows. If the product's inventory reaches a certain level, the price may be raised [53]. Furthermore, dynamic pricing is an effective profit-boosting strategy. It is most effective when combined with inventory replenishment decisions [54]. Previous research on joint inventory replenishment and pricing problems shows that a high inventory level provides the company with an incentive to lower the price to reduce inventory holding costs and stimulate demand [55]. Hence, to maximize profit, charities could use inventory-based dynamic pricing strategies. When there is an oversupply of donated items, charities may lower the price and raise the price when the inventory level is low. Furthermore, pricing donated items is often complicated due to the variety of donations of varying quality. Although there is a rough guideline in some online second-hand exchanging marketplaces that the price is 20% below the market value [56], this may not be appropriate for all items. Thus, the headoffice of charities should make strategic pricing guidelines.

Furthermore, the nature of the donations received is highly stochastic. The condition ranges from like new to unusable. The variations in quality can be attributed to a variety of factors, including natural wear and tear, mishandling, and so on [6]. Furthermore, some discount stores, such as Primark, pose a competitive threat to charity shops. Because they can afford new items at charity shop prices, this type of discount store detracts from the appeal of the charity shop. Purchases of low-cost, short-life items, on the other hand, may have an impact on subsequent consumption cycles. If this type of discount store becomes popular, it may have an impact on the quality of donated goods in the future. Hence, charities should raise consumer awareness of sustainability and promote reuse and recycling projects.

Furthermore, according to **Figure 5**, a lack of sufficient donations (B1) is a weak driver that is heavily reliant on other barriers. Thus, this barrier is critical,

and managers must exert greater effort in dealing with it. Donations are becoming increasingly difficult for charities, especially as the number of charities increases. As charities become more commercial, they are looking into alternative ways to secure stocks. There is increased competition among charities to obtain high-quality items [6, 22, 41, 47]. Online marketplaces are another major competitive threat to charities. Gumtree, Vinted, Depop, and Shpock are a few examples of online marketplaces for selling second-hand items locally. These online marketplaces are simple and convenient to use. People who want to declutter their belongings only need to take a few photos of used items and publish them online in a matter of seconds. The growth of today's sharing economy has helped to reshape people's attitudes toward used items and increased demand for used goods. Gumtree, the UK's number one local community classifieds, is used by one in every three adults each month [56]. Hence, instead of donating items to charities, people can now swap used items through an online marketplace, or they can easily sell used items online for a small fee. Hence, to compete with the for-profit online marketplace and encourage more donations, charities may need to take practical steps. For example, charities may use online social media to increase brand awareness to attract the attention of these online marketplace users.

6. Limitations

Some limitations of this study could be addressed in future research. First, this study is limited to UK charities, limiting the generalizability of our findings to other countries and industries. Second, while the barriers were identified after a thorough review of the relevant literature and a combination of analysis techniques, it cannot be concluded that this research has identified all possible sourcing barriers. Furthermore, while there have been many studies on supply chain management, research on sourcing barriers in humanitarian charities' supply chains has been relatively limited. This study contributes significantly to ongoing studies on the resilience of the humanitarian charity supply chain by illustrating the value chain of charities, identifying the sourcing barriers and assessing the interrelationships among them. We hope that this study spurs researchers' interest in overcoming these barriers and improving the resilience of the humanitarian charity supply chain.

7. Conclusion

COVID-19 has caused significant disruptions in many industries' supply chains [57], including the charity sector. The operating environment of charities is marked by high levels of uncertainty and complexity, making them vulnerable to supply chain disruptions. This study investigated the barriers to sourcing in humanitarian charities' supply chains. Some barriers, such as extra space or own logistics, can be overcome by investing, but others, such as poor-quality donations, seasonal donations, and so on, will necessitate educating the population and changing their behavior, which will be extremely difficult. The findings are extremely useful for decision-makers in developing potential interventions to address these barriers. Researchers may be inspired to look into other issues to improve the resilience of humanitarian charity supply chains if they further investigate and overcome these barriers.

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Section 2

Case Studies of NGOs

Chapter 4

The Rise and Fall of the NGOs in Bangladesh: What Does the Future Hold?

Shahadat Baser and Syed Abu Hasnath

Abstract

This chapter introduces Bangladesh's national and international NGOs, followed by an evaluation of some leading NGOs' roles in alleviating poverty of the economically vulnerable population, particularly women and children. The NGOs address these concerns through microcredit programs, nonformal education, and primary healthcare, creating employment opportunities, promoting participation in asset-building, and grassroots advocacy programs as catalysts for policy action. However, recently, NGOs have faced challenges that tend to diminish their role due to donors' declining funds and growing government restrictions. Therefore, the chapter suggests that NGOs, in their engagement with a leadership position, survive the present economic and political challenges—and continue to help the people left behind and exploited—through social enterprises and more commitment.

Keywords: Bangladesh, engagement, NGOs, microcredit, social enterprises

1. Introduction

> *"Bangladesh has some of the most innovative, effective, and imitated non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the world."*

> Professor David Lewis, London School of Economics.

Nongovernmental organizations, commonly referred to as NGOs, were first called such in Article 71 of the newly formed United Nations Charter in 1945. Since then, they have become an important partner of human development by improving communities and promoting citizen participation in developed and developing countries and, more importantly, in developing countries, including Bangladesh, where millions of people are poor and left behind.

NGOs are generally nonprofit entities, independent of government influence, although they receive funds from donor agencies, government contracts, and private charitable organizations. In addition, NGOs generate resources through investments and social enterprises—nonprofit and for-profit companies. In that way, many NGOs are engaged in income-generating activities, defined as social impact businesses, such as Savar Gonoshasthaya Hospital and BRAC University in Dhaka, Bangladesh [1].

A concise description of the aims and objectives of NGOs in Bangladesh—what we know of their activities and official documents describing their Mission, vision, strength, and modus operandi—may be summarized as follows: (a) to provide affordable financial services (microcredit) to fight poverty and catalyze socioeconomic development for the poor; (b) giving nonformal education (literacy, numeracy, and skill development) to increase the productivity of poor and thereby improving their life and living; (c) providing healthcare services and healthcare advocacy (i.e., increasing awareness to initiate change); (d) engaging in the environment (climate, clean air, safe water, uncontaminated soil, and green home); and (e) advocating human rights based on humanist values (something close to the objectives of the United Nations and its agencies). Together the NGOs work to empower the powerless. Or enabling the poor.

The NGOs modus operandi is evidently to reach out to the disadvantaged people with a sense of rebuilding the community—by providing resources, including basic education and healthcare—through teamwork and participatory efforts. Many NGO leaders envisage growth with alleviation of poverty, promotion of equity, and people's participation to involve the redistribution of economic and political power, including women's empowerment. That sounds quite promising—and we look ahead.

The organization below reflects theoretical and practical purposes. Section 2 sets forth the essay's analytical perspective. Section 3 is a narrative of the genesis of NGOs in Bangladesh. The following section provides a case study of 10 selected NGOs—eight domestic and two international NGOs (INGOs). The case studies are written within a broad framework of founding, funding, and function to address "key priority needs" and "current gaps in humanitarian response." Section 5 turns to substantive issues, including sources of funding and fund cuts—and the growing government restrictions on NGOs in Bangladesh. Against this background, we have tried to develop our view from a comparative perspective—which may be called a *new perspective* following the book's sub-title—of the present and future of NGOs in Bangladesh. Section 6 presents a critical overview of NGOs in Bangladesh. The final Section 7 is the central concern of the chapter: the future of NGOs and some tentative suggestions to overcome the challenges of the times.

2. Analytical framework

At the heart of our theoretical arguments for NGOs in Bangladesh is that the voluntary organizations—at least in their initial stage—were spearheaded in the absence of state capacity to deliver welfare to abysmally poor and neglected people of the country. Instead, the NGOs carried out many tasks—including small loans and advocacy—to raise them above poverty through participation. The idea flows quietly with the concept of Paulo Freire's ideas of community empowerment and participation in NGOs' discourse that focuses on resistance in the workplace, emphasizing class harmony rather than class struggle—and interaction for humanization for the permanent process. The central point of Freire's *Pedagogy* is that education not only empowers individuals to earn their livelihood but also raises awareness of human rights—empowering them to become valuable citizens [2].

Cavalieri Coimbra [3] defined empowerment as an intentional and continuous process centered on the local community. The method of empowerment includes help, respect, critical reflection, and participation through which those people are lacking resources can access and control them. They organize an active community

and participate democratically in the economy and environment. The organized community gives them a sense of belonging to the country [3].

The idea is also consistent with that of donor agencies from western democracies—including North America, Europe, Japan, and Australia that promote the ideals of participation and empowerment, which is not only cost-effective but also conducive to gaining control over decisions and resources. Moreover, participation has a political agenda that advocates for marginalized populations by opening up more spaces and opportunities for building political capabilities and participatory democracy.

There is a renewed interest among the scholars of development studies and public officials in developing countries, including Bangladesh, that economic growth with equity—and poverty alleviation—demands people's participation within the empowerment framework. Democracy provides that framework. In one of its entries, NGOs in *Banglapedia* (The National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh) notes:

> *NGO is envisaged to involve redistribution of economic and political power, integrating rural areas into national development efforts with expanded opportunities for employment and income for rural people. ... The problems in rural areas are so gigantic and complex that governments and public sector organizations often find it tough to deal with them without the full support and involvement of the people [4].*

Despite those inspiring statements—and success stories that prevail in some selected NGOs—many questions remain about NGOs' scope, impact, and effectiveness in sustainable national development [5]. There is plenty of literature on NGOs' contribution to the fight against poverty and social exclusion, but little is known about their accountability in general financial transactions. Although transparency is critical for development organizations, many NGOs are not immune to corruption.

In this regard, Professor Paul [6] provided a guide to evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of NGOs, including transparency, accountability, limitations, and corruption (see **Table 1**). We keep in mind his guidelines in our following discussion.

From an academic perspective, there is a serious disagreement between the liberal view and neoliberalism over the role of NGOs. The proponents of the liberal view give credit to NGOs as a progressive force—a potentially transformative force in promoting equal, participative, and sustainable development [7, 8]. While the neoliberals vigorously present their criticism that NGOs are nothing but privatization of public interest that maintain systematic exploitation and perpetuate inequality [9].

An Indian author and political activist, Arundhati Roy, believes NGOs pacify grassroots movements—in other words, the NGO-ization of resistance [10].

NGOs give the impression that they are filling the vacuum created by a retreating state. And they are, but their real contribution is that they defuse political anger and dole out as aid or benevolence what people ought to have by right. They alter the public psyche [10].

Not very many scholars subscribe to the idea of revolution. In their view, revolution brings the chaos of unstable state systems that people can hardly afford. In that context, we briefly review the rhetoric of NGO literature, such as "making poverty as a museum piece." But, at the same time, we interfere with the notion that NGOs emerged with the rise of the neoliberal view, following the new economic world order—including the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in the 1980s and onward [11].

We attempt to provide a review of some more active, innovative, and popular national and international NGOs in Bangladesh: How much contribution they have made in average time. We also review the role of NGOs in exceptional circumstances,

Strengths	Weaknesses
• NOGs are less bureaucratic; swift decision-makers; and have lower overhead expenses	• Activities of some NGOs are more sporadic, independent, and small in size. And most of them lack resources and are dependent on external funding
• NGOs generally work on a small-scale grassroots project in remote and isolated areas, be it in development or disaster relief	• NGOs are not accountable to others, including the Government
• NGOs can design location-specific, innovative, disseminated methods on a specific practice.	• NGOs are not obliged to do partnership or collaborative work with the Government
• Group formation by NGOs is effective, and their system is easy to replicate	• Absence of self-evaluation mechanism
• NGOs are flexible, adaptative, and participatory, and their innovative work can be pushed comfortably	• High job insecurity but the high turnout
• NGOs' outreach capacity is more effective in working with grassroots people. They are good at identifying vulnerable groups	

Source: [6].

Table 1.
Strength and weakness of NGOs.

such as the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, during the coronavirus outbreak in Bangladesh, and the recent devastating floods in Sylhet. Finally, how does the partnership (relationship between NGOs, donors, and the Government) landscape impact the development at scale sustainably, that is, survival in the future?

3. The genesis of NGOs in Bangladesh

The social sciences of development and the environment have sidelined, if not neglected, the role of NGOs as *the third sector* between state and market—and connecting them. So, the question is: Why does the third sector exist? The Heterogeneity Theory argues that two situations are accountable for being and prospering in the third sector—market failure and government failure. Market failure is based on the idea that the marketplace cannot deliver goods and services such as roads, security, clean air, and public health. Market failure also indicates that goods and services are available in the market, but poor people cannot afford those services—urban low-income housing is a good case.

Between one-third and one-fourth of Dhaka's population live in slums and squatters. An estimated 600,000 children live and make a living on the street. The Government has a street children rehabilitation program, which is small in size and rife with corruption. One may define the situation as an example of government failure; there are, however, many such examples.

A few NGOs—including Restless Being and Save the Children—work exclusively for children's welfare. For example, Restless Being focuses on accommodation, clothing, education, medical treatment, and life skill to have a sense of responsibility. At the same time, Save the Children endeavors to protect children from abuse,

exploitation, trafficking, and violence through protection, education, health service, and advocacy.

Few other NGOs in Bangladesh handle externalities, such as contamination of river water and issues in shrinking open space in the cities. In all three cases, however, their work scope is minimal compared to the great demand for those kinds of services. We have elaborated on the case of environmental protection issues where we have discussed BELA (Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association).

Long before the independence of Bangladesh (1971), there were quite a few non-state/nongovernment organizations working with a good reputation for entertaining work and campus—they are functioning well today. The organizations include, among others, Kumudini Hospital (Tangail, Bangladesh), run by Kumudini Welfare Trust, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, known for its work of piety. In addition, the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) at Comilla devised an integrated rural development model emphasizing agriculture cooperatives.

Some prominent international NGOs—including Red Cross/Red Crescent, UNICEF, CARE, and CARITAS—have worked in Pakistan since the country gained independence in 1947. Then, East Pakistan—today's Bangladesh—was the eastern wing of Pakistan. As a result, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society was established in 1973. Since then, the Society has been working with a mission to become a leading humanitarian organization. Other INGOs worth mentioning are UNICEF, Oxfam, CARE, and CARITAS. Below we have concisely introduced UNICEF and CARE.

Following the war of independence in 1971, Bangladesh became a popular site for NGOs. Why? The precarious economic condition of the country may be an answer to the question. Another answer was a bond of thought embedded in patriotism and giving to the needy.

The decade began with a devastating Bhola cyclone in 1970, ravaging the country's southern part and losing approximately 300,000 lives. The following year experienced a bloody civil war, with the estimated death toll varying from hundreds of thousands to 3 million. In addition, the economy was in total disarray, followed by the famine in 1974—with an estimated death toll between one million and 1.5 million—that further ruined the country, whatever was left. Quibria [12] describes the situation as follows:

> *At independence, the vast majority of the people in Bangladesh lived in poverty, and a large proportion of them was in abject poverty. This was reflected in a low per capita income, estimated to be less than $70 (in current price), and about 20% of the population subsisted on an annual income between $15 and $20. Nearly half of the population suffered from malnutrition, and more than 80% suffered from micronutrient deficiency (p. 2) [12].*

Against this background, the top domestic NGOs in Bangladesh, including Gonoshasthaya Kendra (or People's Health Center, herein after G.K.), Grameen Bank, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), and the Association for Social Advancement (ASA), came into being between 1971 and 1980. In addition, another NGO, Nijera Kori (we do it ourselves), for rural social mobilization was also established in 1980. A few notable NGOs of recent origin are Jaago Foundation (for children's education), Bangladesh Plan International (for slum improvement), and Shakti Foundation (which helps children with special needs).

The following discussion focuses on three aspects of each NGO—founding, function, and funding. Since the funding source is numerous and the NGOs do not fully disclose the references to the public, we only mention some major donor agencies at

the end of the case studies. Some NGOs receive substantial help from the Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), the most significant rural development funding and skill development agency sponsored by the Government. All NGOs draw funds from national and international sources—while some generate revenues through social business—in addition to receiving donations. However, all of them function within the legal framework of the country. And the NGO Affairs Bureau of the Government regulates some 26,000 registered NGOs in Bangladesh.

This essay briefly reports case studies of 10 selected NGOs—eight domestic and two internationals. The domestic NGOs are Gonoshasthaya Kendra, Grameen Bank, BRAC, ASA, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Shakti Foundation, and Plan International Bangladesh. At the same time, the two international NGOs are UNICEF and CARE. The NGOs have similarities and differences in how they undertake service delivery—and how much they fulfill their objectives.

4. Ten case studies of NGOs—eight domestic and two INGOs

4.1 Gonosasthaya Kendra (G.K.): a nongovernment People's health center

Bangladesh was fighting a bloody civil war (known as the liberation war between March 1971 and December 1971) against the occupation army of Pakistan. According to the government document, 3 million people were killed, and 10 million people, including 150,000 freedom fighters and displaced person, took refuge in the Indian border states of West Bengal, Meghalaya, and Tripura. Being imbued by patriotism and the call of duty, Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury, finishing his FRCS (Fellowship of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons) in England, returned to the liberation war sector in Tripura. He was accompanied by another Bangladeshi senior cardiac surgeon, Dr. M. A. Mobin. In mid-May 1971, they set up a 480-bed field hospital to treat the wounded freedom fighters in war with the least capabilities [13].

Following the independence of Bangladesh, the field hospital became a G.K. of the all-purpose, fully-fledged hospital under the leadership of Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury—and over the years, Chowdhury became an uncrowned emperor of community health service in Bangladesh. He rightly observed that.

> *Ill health is an important factor that forces the poor to remain poor. Even if they make a little bit of money, one episode of illness can wipe them out.*

Accordingly, the purpose was to reach poor people, the villagers, and the people without health care, which led to the establishment of G.K. The Government donated land and building materials for G.K. headquarters at Dhaka, and the villagers gave land and labor to have a branch of G.K. in their area. In addition, France and Netherlands gave money; the Philippines presented Ramon Magsaysay Award, and Sweden gave Right Livelihood Award. Furthermore, U.K. Bangladeshi Medical Association donated generously. In addition, several other international organizations, including UNCHR and GlobalGiving, Bangladesh charities—such as Future Bangladesh—and many individuals regularly contribute to G.K [13].

Although fees are minimal, G.K. earns revenues from two leading and five secondary hospitals in Dhaka city and its suburb at Savar—and nearly 40 health centers spread all over the country. G.K.'s Savar Kidney Dialysis Center is the largest in the

country—an open heart and transplant surgery unit is near completion. In addition, the organization maintains a certain level of self-reliance by engaging in more commercial activities—such as the People's Pharmaceutical Industry, Gonosasthya Textile Mill, Gonosasthya Printing Press, and the Gonosasthya University (a private university in Savar) to become less dependent on donors.

Figure 1.
Gonosasthaya Kendra Heath Service Centers in Bangladesh. Source: www.gonoshasthayakendra.com.

The above statement indicates that G.K. is growing—spread all over the country (see **Figure 1**). Besides health care, primary education, and vocational training for income earning and women empowerment, G.H. has several other important functions, including disaster management and helping rehabilitation of the victims. One such example is the role of G.K. in support of recent flood victims.

In mid-June 2022, about 8 million people have been severely affected by devastating flash floods in the northern districts of Bangladesh, including Sylhet, Sunamganj, Netrokona, and Mymensingh. People have never seen such an intensive flood with so much death and destruction in their lifetime—a harsh reminder of climate change. About 100 people died, and over 3 million have been rendered homeless. Moreover, as expected, the flooding outbreak of infectious disease seized the whole area.

While it took the government functionaries—with the army, navy, and air force—72 h to start a rescue operation of the stranded people, G.K. reached the spot with the delivery of lifesaving supplies within 48 h with 100 metric tons of food, clean water, and water purification tablets. In addition, the enthusiasm and dedication of dozens of domestic NGOs, INGOs, and many private organizations and individuals were remarkable. For instance, the Government allocated Tk 120 million for flood relief; at the same time, the NGOs and personal donations amount to Tk 600 million—a reaffirmation of their role and response to the national emergency.

Two other examples: G.K.'s presence in Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar is visible: Medical personnel with boxes of medicines and medical equipment started working on the day the displaced people arrived from Myanmar. Likewise, the displaced people from Myanmar today get health services from G.K. Second thing, in mid-March 2020, when Bangladesh urgently needed a COVID-19 testing kit at an economical price, G.K. came up with a seemingly practical solution with a kit at $3 only to detect the disease. The project was, however, stuck in a political quagmire—and its chief scientist returned to his previous position in Singapore.

Besides developing people-oriented health care centers, G.K. is devoted to promoting education among poor women and children and is committed to establishing women's rights by changing their social status. Among 2500 staff of G.K., 40% are female—and working with the people, they help income generation activities—and making them aware of health and environmental issues, such as reducing carbon emissions by introducing improved cookstoves and solar lamps [13].

The location of health centers is selected based on uneven regional development in the country. For example, the northeast region—the Rangpur division, a lagging part with the highest level of poverty—has a disproportionately more significant number of G.K. projects—and there are several clinics in remote Char (shoal) areas. G.K.'s many programs, including post-flood rehabilitation—and primary health care programs in remote areas, are supported by Oxfam, the Government, and UNICEF. That means there is coordination between and engagement with the Government, NGOs, and G.K.

A Board of Trustees administers the G.K. Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury is a Trustee—a founding Trustee, of course. For the last 50 years, he has been arguing and working for inclusive growth and social justice, and minimum dignity for the poor and downtrodden—engaged in building power at the base. He has written books and seminal papers community health and development, including the National Drug Policy in 1982, and drafted other national policies in the following years. Dr. Chowdhury is highly respected and a lovable man whose larger-than-life persona is inextricably linked to the NGO literature. His great work resists not promoting neoliberalism at home and abroad (see **Figure 2**: Main building of G.K.).

Figure 2.
Main building of Gonosasthaya Kendra, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: www.gonoshasthayakendra.com.

4.2 Bangladesh rural advancement committee (BRAC)

Two NGO leaders of Bangladesh—Sir Fazle Hasan Abed of BRAC and Nobel Laureates Professor Mohammed Yunus of Grameen Bank—are distinguished for the dream and work of social entrepreneurship since the country's independence. Their passion and path to change the life of teeming millions of rural Bangladesh by meeting the needs of small finance capital, primary healthcare, and nonformal education made a difference. Cooperation with the Government and international NGOs—including UNICEF, Oxfam, and CARE—and multinational companies (MNCs) such as Nokia, BRAC, and Grameen Bank have substantially alleviated poverty (between 1980 and 2020) by providing immunization, vaccination, family awareness, and microfinance loans. We will first discuss BRAC, followed by Grameen Bank.

Like G.K., BRAC has its roots in war-torn, poverty-stricken Bangladesh due to the liberation war in 1971. With a naval architecture degree from Glasgow and chartered accountancy from London, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed sold his apartment in London and returned home in early 1972. With that money, he founded the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee (later Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) to fight poverty, predominantly by concentrating on women. BRAC dealt with the long-term task of improving the living condition of the rural poor and women's empowerment using tools like microfinance, primary education, healthcare, raising awareness, and social enterprises.

BRAC's microfinancing program offers small loans to women to promote economic entrepreneurship in local communities addressing issues related to gender inequality. Raising awareness among the people means investing in their future by using loans, sending children to BRAC school, and taking opportunities for BRAC health services. Another example of awareness is the organization of community-based rights programs, such as "barefoot lawyers," a project that increases awareness of legal rights and delivers services to the doorsteps of the poor—so that individuals recognize and defend their legal rights and duties of a citizen.

Microcredit, microfinance, and small loans—are interchangeably used in NGO literature without much clarification. Their aims and objectives—and the nature of repayments—are rarely mentioned. Hence a brief statement of the concepts (in the context of BRAC) is in order [14].

The loans are distributed against some documents (address, assets, social image (e.g., police record, etc.) but without collateral assurance—but refundable within 52 weeks with 6 weeks grace period. The loans are of two types—*Dabi* loan, which borrowers can use the money without accountability, and *Progoti* or enterprise loan, which is distributed for the initiation of new small businesses or entrepreneurs who want the expansion of existing business.

There are four categories of enterprise loans with some observable characteristics, which are as follows:

1. Incentive loan with a range of Tk. 75,000–400,000, payable in monthly installments.

2. A growth loan is similar to an incentive loan; the difference is the loan amount, which ranges from 400,000 to 1,000,000 Taka. In addition, the eligible customers must have a good track record of repayment.

3. Flow loans do not have installments. Instead, the loan takers arrange with BRAC and repay according to the contract.

4. Finally, the consumer loan generates comfort in their life—and more efficient living—with consumers durable, such as T.V., refrigerator, furniture, motorbike, and computer [15].

While there are specific rules that BRAC follows in disbursing loans, there are no such clear-cut principles that make a difference between social enterprise (nonprofit) and business for profit. Social enterprises may be defined as engaging in commercial activities seemingly nonprofit with social objectives. BRAC has a dozen social enterprises, including Aarong (a chain shop of articles of clothing), BRAC Dairy, Seeds and Agro-industry, Artificial Insemination, Nursery, Sericulture, Fisheries, Recycled Handmade Paper, Cold Storage, Printing Press, Sanitary Napkins, and Delivery Kits. In addition, BRAC has four profit-making organizations—BRAC Bank, BRAC IT Service Company, and a 26% share in edotco (a network telecommunication infrastructure with 15,000 towers)—and BRAC University. The university—with its Business School, Computer Science Department, and BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), is ranked among the highest in Bangladesh's higher education and research seats.

BRAC is the number one NGO in the world—empowering people and community, creating opportunities for social development, including education, health, human rights, livelihood, and disaster preparedness in a dozen countries, including Asia, Africa, and the Americas with its headquarters in Dhaka. The claim may sound an exaggeration, but the impact of BRAC cannot be overemphasized. Since its foundation, 13 million children have graduated from 31,000 BRAC schools in rural areas, 9 million clients received microfinance, 50 thousand health workers delivered primary health care in four corners, and 2.1 million families graduated from poverty. Moreover, BRAC's presence—with its elaborate organizational structure, was noticeable in all regular programs and disaster-affected areas, including the recent ruinous flood in the country's northeastern region mentioned above (see **Figure 3**). Reliefweb notes:
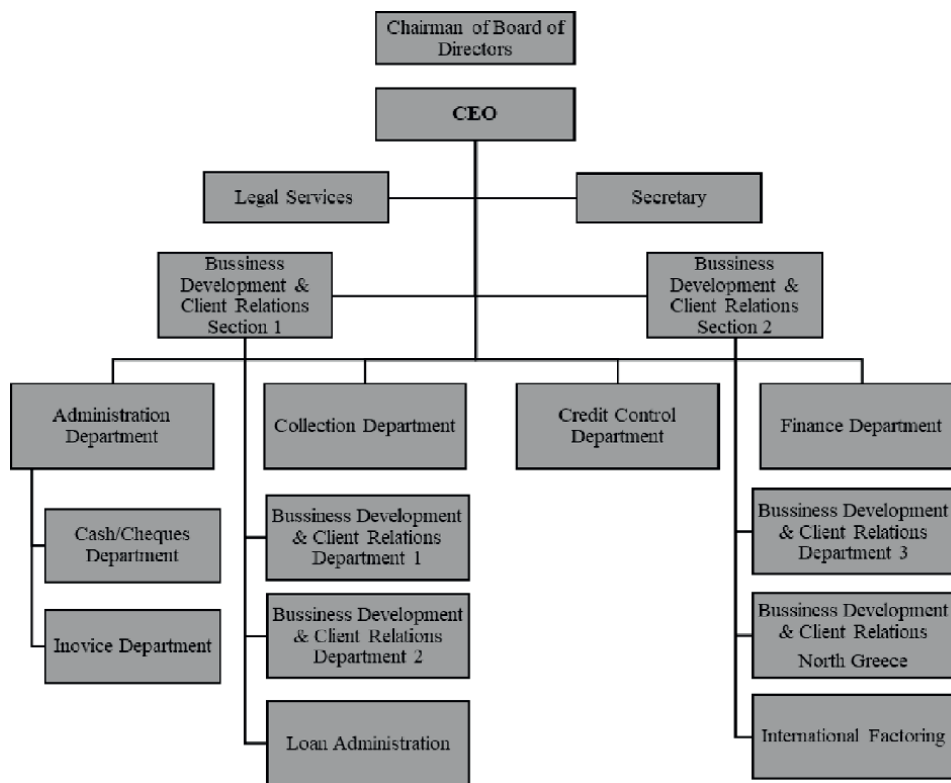
Figure 3.
BRAC's organizational structure. Source: www.brac.net.

> *The non-governmental organization BRAC has been working alongside the local Government since the beginning of the recent flood situation in the country. The organization has allocated Bangladeshi Taka 3 crore from its funds for emergency flood relief. The money will be used to provide dry food, safe drinking water, oral saline, matches, candles, essential medicines, and other services to people affected by the flood. The money will also be used to rescue people trapped in floods. Initially, the relief will provide support to around 52,000 families [16].*

The border between social enterprise (seemingly nonprofit) and for-profit organizations such as Aarong and BRAC Bank is overlapping, if not elusive. Nevertheless, BRAC earns revenues from those enterprises that cover 75% of its expenditure for rural development—and urban slum improvement, including water supply and sanitation (see **Figure 4**). In that sense, BRAC is both a large organization and a self-supporting, autonomous institution. In addition, there is a long list of donors and partners—including World Bank, UNICEF, ADB, USAID, UNDP, UNCHR, FAO, Citibank, Mastercard, Living Goods, and U.K. Aid British people—who give money, materials, and international supports. The donor's aid—in the form of funds, awards, and recognition—ensures the clout and prestige of BRAC. The NGO Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) is also a development partner of BRAC. PKSF is an apex government institution training rural people with microfinance to implement sustainable rural development. BRAC's employment opportunities programs for women and marginalized groups are tailored to meet the local needs—and complement to PKSF program.

Figure 4.
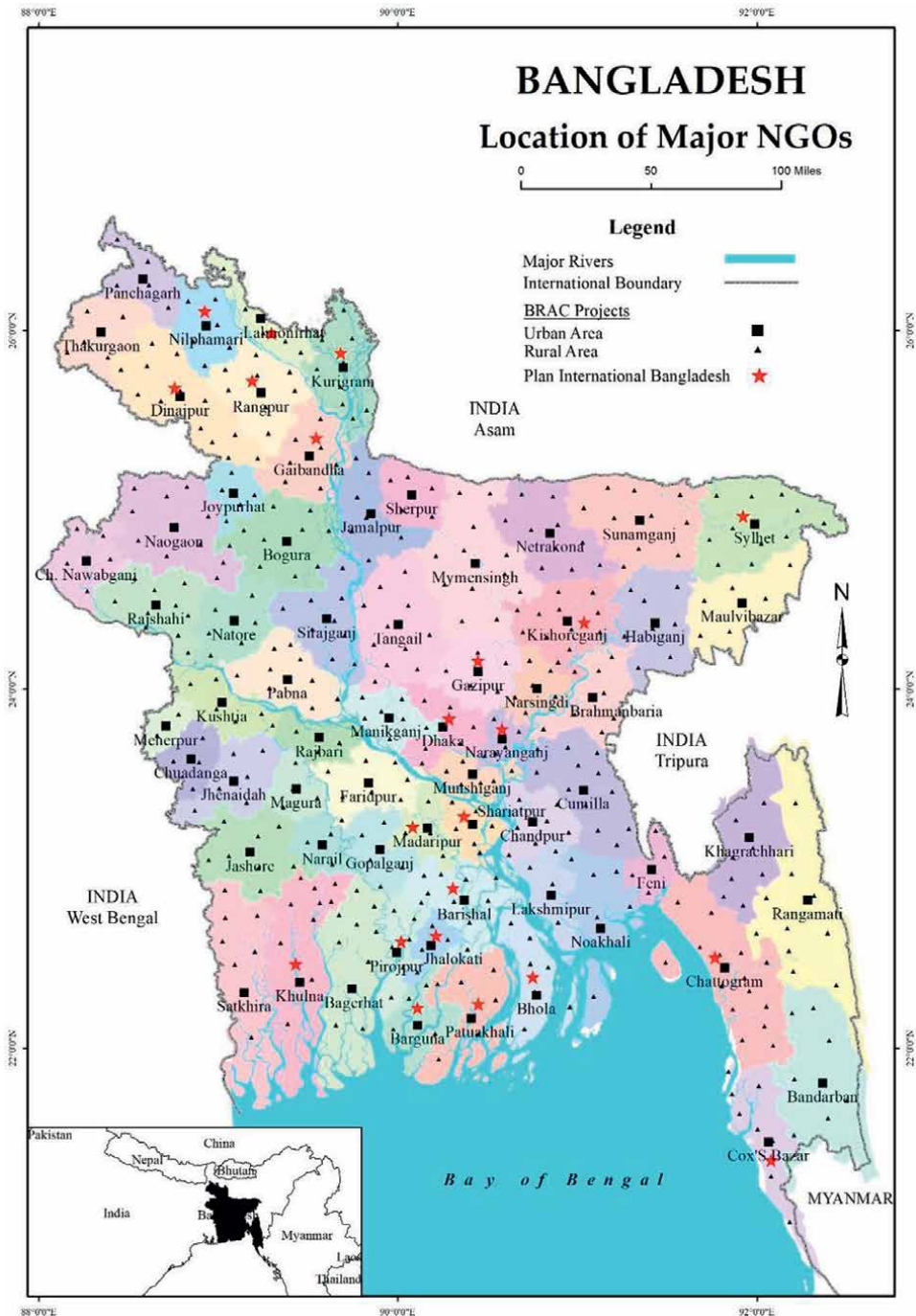*Distribution of enormous branches of BRAC both in rural and urban regions of Bangladesh as well as plan international Bangladesh. Source: Author.*

However, in June 2021, BRAC suffered great disappointment with the U.K. aid cut worth 450 million British Sterling Pound a year with a plea that the fund would go to the poverty-stricken African countries needing more overseas help than Bangladesh.

Nevertheless, the withdrawal of funds affected women's and girls' education and those in extreme poverty in Bangladesh. According to one study by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), more than 20 million people have slipped into extreme poverty since the pandemic. In addition, millions of people left cities during the pandemic to their rural homes—as they lost their work and income—many have not returned, putting an extra burden on the rural economy. The fund cut was not simply a financial loss but a withdrawal of BRAC's strategic partnership with the U.K. The flop came when Bangladesh recovered from the widespread corona pandemic and flood havoc in North Bengal that marooned one-fourth of the country. The situation in 2022 is even worse, with an indirect effect on food and fuel due to the Ukraine–Russia war, followed by another heaviest flood in 121 years.

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, the lifeblood of BRAC, received numerous national and international awards, including the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, Spanish Order of Civil Merit (2014), Leo Tolstoy International Gold Medal (2014), UNDP Mahbub ul Haq Award for Outstanding Contribution to Human Development (2004), and Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) Award for lifetime achievement in social development and poverty alleviation. He also received many honorary degrees from Yale, Columbia, Oxford, and Princeton University. In addition, in 2010, he was knighted in a special ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London to recognize his contribution to reducing poverty in Bangladesh and internationally. The legend died on December 20, 2019, at 83. The leadership vacuum in BRAC at this critical juncture would not be filled in quickly if at all filled in.

4.3 Grameen Bank: bank for the poor in Bangladesh

With a freshly minted Ph.D. in Economics from Vanderbilt University (USA), Professor Muhammad Yunus returned home in 1972 with the same passion and zeal as his two predecessors (Dr. Zafrullah and Sir Abed) to do something for the poor and helpless in the country. He joined as the head of the Economics Department of Chittagong University and eventually became involved with poverty reduction after observing the 1974–1975 famine—established rural economics program in his department. The famine led to an escalation of food prices, a rise in unemployment, and the erosion of farmers' purchasing power—poverty looms large all around—left a deep mark on him.

In 1976, Professor Yunus closely observed the poverty situation of a village named Jobra, close to Chittagong University. His observation revealed the problem affecting the poor in Bangladesh in person was the lack of access to money at low interest so that they could start a small business, including cattle raising, start raising poultry, or buying a small cart to carry people and goods. They also build small water well for irrigation. The traditional moneylenders charged usurious interest. The excessive rate of interest kept the borrower perpetually poor. Professor Yunus also realized that training and subsidy to agriculture alone could not alleviate poverty in rural areas where 92% of people used to live.

He firmly believes that given a chance with a small loan, the poor villagers can improve their income and pay back the loan in time. It may sound trifling, but he lent $27 from his pocket to 42 people without collateral—and the initiative worked well. Overcoming many obstructions, Professor Yunus met his well-intention effort in securing a credit line from Janata Bank, offering himself as the guarantor for the project. By October 1983, the project—specializing in making a small loan to poor

villagers—was converted into a fully-fledged bank named Grameen Bank or Village Bank. Grameen Bank was an independent project—established through a special government act—while the Government owned a minority stake. Thus, Professor Yunus became the pioneer of microfinance. Although before him, a microcredit-based poverty alleviation program was in practice at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla, Bangladesh, albeit on a small scale.

The uplifting story of Grameen Bank with microenterprise loan continued to grow in the 1990s and 2000s with new programs, which are as follows:

- Housing the poor: At the end of 1999, Grameen built 560,000 homes with a housing loan of $190 and near perfect repayment. In 2000, Grameen Housing Program received the prestigious Aga Khan International Award for Architecture.

- Scholarships for the children: Grameen provided scholarships for the children of Grameen members, keeping 50% of scholarships exclusively for girls.

- A special provision of higher education loans and financial assistance for nursing training was made for the Grameen children.

- Grameen gave a loan to 1.6 million+ villagers to buy a mobile phones to raise the village's voice toward an inclusive information network. The project engaged people interested in social communication, financial transaction, and behavioral change.

The combined effect of microenterprise and mobile phones—which helped make an informed choice—changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of villagers, particularly village women in Bangladesh. Their income-earning through self-employment rather than labor-wage made a behavioral change with confidence to help themselves invest in their small business that can bring a significant shift in families (see **Figure 5**). In the images of busy rural housewives making a substantial income by raising livestock and poultry.

Figure 5.
Livestock raising with a microloan from Grameen. She started with one goat, and after 10 years, she owns a small firm. The example is not anecdotal, there are many such examples. Source: [17].

While the role of microfinance hardly needs an introduction in developing countries, including Bangladesh, where market failure and government failure loom, what is new and novel in Grameen Bank is its modus operandi. The Bank's credit delivery system and its recovery are more specific:

- Grameen gives small loans (around $100) to poor people without requiring collateral and creates "mutual trust, participation, and creativity." The borrowers formally organize a group of five—and the members of the group are morally responsible for repaying two of their members' loans.

- Loans are repayable in weekly or monthly installments, and the borrower is eligible for a subsequent loan depending on the repayment of an earlier installment.

- The Bank does not work for profit but initially takes a low interest from the borrowers, but the interest rate increases in later years. By December 2015, the Bank had 8.81 million borrowers, and the Bank earned Taka 24 million with a loan recovery rate of more than 97%.

Many organizations were initially enthusiastic about Grameen Bank's role as an institution for poverty alleviation in Bangladesh. Some of them, including the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Ford Foundation, and Bangladesh Bank, gave millions of dollars to make sure the Bank functions unconstrained. However, in 1995, Grameen Bank decided not to receive any donations as it became self-sufficient[1].

The Grameen Bank of Bangladesh attracted worldwide attention, leading to its many replications in over 40 countries, including Grameen America in Brooklyn, New York. At home, another subsidiary of Grameen Bank is the Grameen Kalyan (Welfare) Health Program, which provides primary care for the bottom 20% of income households in urban and rural areas—millions of people are served with empathy and empathy care. As a result of various social contribution activities, the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh and its founder Professor Muhammad Yunus received Nobel Peace Prize in 2006. In addition, he received the U.S. Congressional Medal in 2013, Olympic Laurel in 2021, and 136 awards from 33 countries.

However, some analysts suggested that microcredit was linked to exploitation—many borrowers cannot escape from the exorbitant rate of interest (between 15% and 20%) the Bank charged from early 2000. In addition, many poor families had to sell their belongings—some borrowers even committed suicide—to avoid humiliation from the Bank workers. Finally, in March 2011, the Government stripped off his position as Managing Director of the Bank in charge of financial irregularity, age bared for the post, and exploitation of the poor. Dr. Yunus denied all the allegations [18]. Nevertheless, the professor amassed a considerable fortune through other social businesses, including Grameen Telecom. Bangladesh Anti-Corruption Commission is investigating Yunus' Grameen Telecom irregularities, while at 82 years old professor is fighting a rolling political criticism against him.

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[1] In 1996, Professor Yunus and his friend Mr. Iqbal Qader, an investment banker in the U.S., founded Grameenphone—the largest telecommunication operator with a nationwide network. They successfully raised money from a U.S. philanthropist Joshua Mailman and the Norwegian telecom company Telenor. Grameenphone covers 100% population, including women, in Bangladesh. It is a large corporation with profit unbound.

4.4 Dhaka Ahsania Mission

The oldest and one of the most prominent NGOs—working in the field of human welfare—in Bangladesh is Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM); it was established in 1935 by Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah, then Assistant Director, Education of undivided Bengal. Khan was *a Sufi* philosopher believing in the divine and humanitarian services. His contribution to the Muslim awakening in the Indian subcontinent—when the Muslims were lagging—is remembered with great reverence. Although DAM aimed to promote education for the socioeconomic development of Muslim majority East Bengal, a spiritual current followed quietly. Khan described the purpose of the mission as follows:

This mission's purpose is comprehensive: worshiping the creator and service to the creation. This mission has been born with the great responsibility of developing the whole human Society and shaping a spiritual life. It is not limited to any particular community … and does not differentiate between human beings. The love of the creator for every creation is equally present, so to discriminate against the creation is to look contemptuously at the creator. The service of creation is the service of God [19].

DAM has a long list of projects for socioeconomic development. Below we provide the number of projects in each development sector—with some elaboration on the three most outstanding projects. DAM has 13 projects in the education sector, 10 in the health sector, five in the economic development, four in the technical and vocation, three in WASH, two in rights and governance, and six in climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Three outstanding projects are as follows:

1. Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST) was established in 1996 with the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science, Architecture & Planning, and Business and Social Sciences. In addition to the university, there are two other technical universities outside Dhaka and a dozen institutes of science and information technology spread all over the country.

2. Ahsania Mission Cancer and General Hospital. A state-of-the-art modern cancer hospital with 500 beds serving approximately 3.5 million patients each year. The low-income patient pays 30% lower than the actual cost others pay the total cost. DAM raises funds from individuals, corporations, and donor agencies—many wealthy religious people donate generously.

3. Ahsania Mission Children City was established a decade ago to rehabilitate street children of Dhaka city. According to one estimate, there are 1.5 million street children in Bangladesh; out of that, close to one million languishes in Dhaka. They live and work on the street, including unoccupied dwellings, bus garages, railway stations, and launch terminals. DAM has provided secured shelter for 250+ children with functional education and skill training for the last 2 years. In addition, a full-grown village is near completion to accommodate 10,000 street children with education and compassion.

4.5 Association for Social Advancement (ASA), Bangladesh

ASA belongs to the first-generation NGOs in Bangladesh, established in 1978 by a well-educated visionary (M. Shafiqul Haque Choudhury) with a commitment to

improving the economic and social wellbeing of mostly rural landless people. ASA's following ongoing programs may provide a more explicit representation of the NGO's functions:

- Microfinance: Like Grameen Bank, ASA's microfinance program provides uncollateralized small loans, small savings (or capital built-ups), and microinsurance services. Savings and insurance program offers opportunities for borrowers to deposit money with a withdrawal option in an unexpected economic emergency—and provide security against default. The program started in 1991, with 7.2 million clients living all over the country. In addition, ASA offers loans and consultation services to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). SMEs play an important role in the economic success of developing countries, including Bangladesh.

- In the beginning, ASA had a substantial program for social development in the rural areas of health, education, and sanitation. However, in 1991 the organization abandoned those programs and focused solely on microcredit lending, operating mainly in Bangladesh but having branches in Africa and South America. Over time ASA International has become one of the world's largest microfinance institutions giving loans to low-income entrepreneurs, most of whom are women.

- ASA is a less donor-dependent—that is, a self-financed—institution. It has a university—ASA University Bangladesh with 4000+ students. Although it does not pursue any significant social development program, it responds—like many other NGOs in Bangladesh—to help with disaster management, including the recent floods in Sylhet.

4.6 Three second generation NGOs: Shakti, PIB, and BELA

The focus of those NGOs is other than microfinance for the rural poor. For example,

i. *Shakti (Energy) Foundation*—established by Dr. Humaira Islam in 1992—is devoted to disadvantaged women's economic promotion in slum areas of Dhaka with small loans. However, Shakti's more important function has been a renewable energy program by setting up a solar home system in remote rural areas of Bangladesh where on-grid electricity is not available. Shakti has provided about 60,000 with the solar system with a convenient payment scheme and free training on how to use the system. The program contributes to the socioeconomic as well as environmental benefits of the households.

ii. *Plan International Bangladesh (PIB)*: On June 12, 2022, a less-known NGO, PIB, made a headline in the Daily Star, the top most circulated English daily newspaper in Bangladesh. The story's title reads: 72% of girls in Dhaka slums are scared while bathing in open spaces. This is because they do not have security, let alone privacy. Moreover, some nasty people in the neighborhood living in tall buildings may videotape their bathing pictures and then spread the videos on social media.

To address the issue, PIB started a project titled "Empowering Girls for Economic Opportunity and Safe Bathing Space for Community Use." Under this project, they have established 15 shaded bath spaces in four slum areas of Dhaka city. As the project

title indicates, PIB has low-income (informal sector) urban development programs to empower girls for economic opportunity. A few important projects are preadult (between 11 and 15 years old boys and girls), reproductive health care education for young adult girls, skill training for income earning, encouraging participation in community activities, and extending help for disaster management. PIB has expanded its activities on a larger extent in different parts of Bangladesh to ameliorate the development activities (see **Figure 4**).

iii. *The Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) was* established in 1992 "to assist efforts to protect the environment." According to its founder, Dr. Syeda Rizwana Hasan—a law school graduate with distinction—the focus of BELA is to "promote the notion of environmental justice in Bangladesh."[2]

BELA has several noteworthy achievements to credit, including creating environmental awareness among people and compliance monitoring (i.e., the Government, private businesses, and individuals) following Bangladesh's environmental law. Next is the war against the shipbreaking industry. The industry is highly polluting as it contains large amounts of carcinogens and toxic substances that harm the human body and the environment. Under Rezuana's supervision, BELA won three lawsuits demanding "rights for workers and banning in Bangladesh of ships carrying poisonous substances." Other notable works include stopping the real estate invasion of wetlands, cutting hills, deforestation, and unlawful construction of St. Martin's Island.

From an intellectual perspective, BELA has a strong publication record. Two of its books—*Laws Regulating Environment in Bangladesh and Transboundary Water Issues in South Asia*—are used in legal practice and academic reference. BELA also publishes its newsletters in English and Bengali (*Bela Barta*), updating its activities.

Because of the organization's outstanding contribution to environmental protection, BELA received quite a few prestigious awards, including the Global 500 Roll of Honor' under the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) in 2003 and the joint winner of the 2020 Tang Prize in Rule of Law for Sustainable Development.

4.6.1 Small NGOs

Small NGOs are doing great work. There are several small NGOs that do great jobs. We will give three examples of such NGOs in Bangladesh.

- **IPDC** finance (Industrial Promotion and Development Company) offers advisory services to the corporate sector and supply finance in the SME sector. What is more important in our context is that IPDC provides Child Marriage Prevention Loans to low-income families. More than 50% of girls in Bangladesh are given marriage away before they 18. The loan ends child marriage in numerous cases and helps them keep in school.

- **Jibon Tori:** A floating hospital for the people living in poverty-stricken remote char (shoal) area. This NGO is a unique organization that provides health services—with doctors, nurses, medicine, and health information unavailable—where government and private health services do not exist.

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[2] The first CEO of BELA was Dr. Mohiuddin Farooque (1992–1997). After his untimely death in 1997, Dr. Syeda Rizwana Hasan. became CEO of BELA.

- **Nabolok Parishad** means an assembly of a new world. The NGO upholds the value of people's rights—and works for human rights in general and women's empowerment in particular. Like many developing countries, women in Bangladesh suffer from exploitation, abuse, and intimate partner violence (IPV), putting wife beating. In a broader sense, the NGO works to ensure human dignity, gender equality, and democracy.

All those NGOs get grants from foreign donors and large domestic NGOs such as BRAC by doing a part of the latter's work and sharing revenues of the project.

4.6.2 Expatriate NGOs

Another exciting development in NGO networks has occurred recently. Many Bangladeshis living and working in Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia are stakeholders in the development of their home countries. Bangladesh's government is very positive in support of expatriate NGOs' contribution. We give two examples of such NGOs.

- **Humane Water**: This is a scientific NGO based in Wichita, Kansas, which aims at providing a "sustainable solution to potable water supply free from the pathogen, arsenic, and other organic and inorganic containments of both surface and groundwater." Their program includes the installation of water wells with water filters in arsenic-prone areas in Bangladesh. They also distribute food and clothes to Rohingya refugees and install clean water wells there.

- **SHEBI** (The Society to Help Education in Bangladesh International) is another expatriate NGO based in Boston, Massachusetts. The organization is "composed of people of Bangladeshi origin and friends of Bangladesh in the U.S. and abroad." SHEBI's objective is to provide general education for children and physically challenged students (such as autistic children) in Bangladesh.

4.7 Two international nongovernment organizations (INGOs): CARE and UNICEF

Two hundred plus INGOs are doing their humanitarian work in Bangladesh. More familiar names are Red Crescent (Red Cross), Oxfam, UNICEF, CARE, Save the Children, and Action Aid. We have selected CARE (for their massive relief effort in Rohingya Refugee Camp in Cox's Bazar) and UNICEF (supplying 190 million COVID-19 vaccines and 2022 flood relief). Below we briefly describe their founding, functions, and funding source[3].

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[3] Following the devastation of World War II, President Harry Truman ordered to ship out million tons of food, medicines, and other basic supplies for individuals and families in war-ravaged Europe. However, he also decided to let private organizations provide relief to the people who suffered from starvation due to War. As a result, a large number of NGOs and other compassionate organizations—including Red Cross, Oxfam, UNICEF, Save the Children, Doctors Without Borders, Catholic Relief Organization, World Vision, and CARE, to name a few—came forward to alleviate the suffering of the societies. And they are continuing to give people in more than one way.

4.7.1 CARE

Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) is one of the largest and oldest INGOs committed to providing emergency relief and humanitarian assistance to several countries, including Bangladesh. CARE International was founded in 1945 with its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. It was established in 1971 in Bangladesh with food security, health and nutrition, climate emergency adaptation, women empowerment, and disaster risk reduction programs.

However, one of the unique functions of the organization is to deliver emergency relief for disaster victims. The disasters include the civil war in Syria and Yemen, the earthquake in Nepal and the Southern Coast of Mexico, the drought in the horn of Africa (Ethiopia and Kenya), and one million-plus Rohingya refugees fled to Bangladesh after Myanmar's armed forces crackdown in August 2017.

CARE has provided shelter, water, sanitation, and hygiene programs (WASH), cash vouchers for essential household items, and sexual and reproductive health services—and they do through intersectoral coordination and interorganizational coordination. One hundred fifty-six NGOs—80 international and 76 local NGOs—are working in the camps. The staggering number of NGOs indicates the magnitude of the problem and the importance of national and internal NGOs for delivering humanitarian services that the Government could not handle alone, particularly in an emergency.

Let us take two examples. First, fire hazards and flooding are common problems in the camps. For instance, on January 9, 2022, a massive fire broke out in two Blocks of the camps. Under the supervision of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRC), CARE reached the spot in a rush—called fire service and civil defense—to rescue the victims—and rehabilitate them in safe places. Another example was in May 2018, when heavy rains in Bangladesh threatened the lives—and made thousands of lives vulnerable—with landslides and flooding in the camps; CARE made a substantial contribution to save their lives. In cooperation with the Government and other NGOs, including the International Organization of Migration (IOM), CARE relocated them to a safe place protected by a concrete footpath and railing. In short, many refugees in the camp consider CARE—and UNICEF—as a stand-by help.

CARE receives contributions from individuals, organizations, corporations, and governments of western countries—and multilateral funding partners, including the E.U. and major organs of the U.N., such as FAO, ILO, and UNDP, to name a few partners.

4.7.2 UNICEF

The United Nations International Children's Fund was created in 1945 to improve the health and wellbeing—and long-term needs of children and mothers of Western Europe devastated by World War II. The mission of this special U.N. program eventually spread to many developing countries and came to Bangladesh in 1950.

Since then, UNICEF has been cooperating with successive governments of (former) East Pakistan and today's Bangladesh to address the deadly issues of childhood tuberculosis, smallpox, malaria, and cholera. They also develop maternal health services training local midwives. In a broad sense, UNICEF is engaged in improving the condition of children affected by poverty and social exclusion living in the urban slums of Dhaka and Chittagong. In addition, they work closely with the Government to support children's needs, including health, nutrition, and education. For example, their education program in the Rohingya camp covers 10,000 children, which many consider a milestone for refugee children.

UNICE's list of humanitarian actions is long, and its history is rich. We will give two examples of historical importance. During the civil war between Bangladesh and Pakistan in 1971, approximately 10 million people fled to the neighboring Indian states of West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, and Meghalaya. Many were sick, critically malnourished children and reported cholera cases. UNICEF's readiness and dedication to helping were remarkable.

Next, on May 31, 2022,

> *UNICEF delivered over 190 million COVID-19 vaccines to Bangladesh in one year through COVAX. To date, Bangladesh remains the top recipient of doses under COVAX, the global initiative co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the World Health Organization, with UNICEF as a key delivery partner [20].*

UNICEF is a highly organized institution with its headquarters in New York— and seven regional offices (in Panama City, Geneva, Bangkok, Nairobi, Amman, Kathmandu, and Dakar) administer overall management. UNICEF also has six other offices—located in different parts of the world—each with a unique function, including program and policy, external relations, operations, and emergency programs.

UNICEF receives five types of funding: Regular resources (on which UNICEF builds programs); Thematic funding (that helps meet the basic needs of children and protect their rights); Earmarked fund for a specific program purpose); Humanitarian Funding (for emergency relief); and Pool funding and trust funds (representing more than one donor's contributions and holding the fund in trust. UNICEF's annual revenue has been increasing over the years: Its revenue in 2014 was 5266 million dollars; in 2017, 6577 billion dollars, and in 2021, 7.2 billion dollars, according to UNICEF Annual Report 2021.

5. Sources of funding and fund cut for domestic NGOs

The domestic NGOs of Bangladesh are not so lucky to receive donors' funds. Although there are numerous donor agencies—including the U.K. Department of Fund for International Development (DFID), the Global Fund, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), USAID, Embassy of Demark, United Nations Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, World Food Program (WFP), Global Affairs Canada (CAN), Swedish International Development (SIDA), and Bill & Melinda Gate Foundation, to name a few.

However, the flow of donations—foreign grants to NGOs working in Bangladesh— declined by 14% till May 21, 2021. The more than Tk. One thousand crores (U.S. $1 = Tk. 90) drop in funding is causing an existential crisis for many small and medium NGOs (see **Figure 6**). Even one of the most prominent NGOs, BRAC, feels aid cut to Bangladesh is a gut punch to them. The organization stumbled in the shadow of disappointment by the U.K. aid cut—worth 450 million British Starling Pound a year to BRAC. This withdrawal from long-term partnerships affected women and girls' education and those in extreme poverty in Bangladesh due to the devastating impact of the coronavirus endemic, followed by the ensuing war between Russia and Ukraine [21].

According to one estimate, there are 26,000 NGOs in Bangladesh; out of that, 2600 NGOs are registered. And some 260 international NGOs are working in Bangladesh. Both national and international NGOs are registered with the NGO
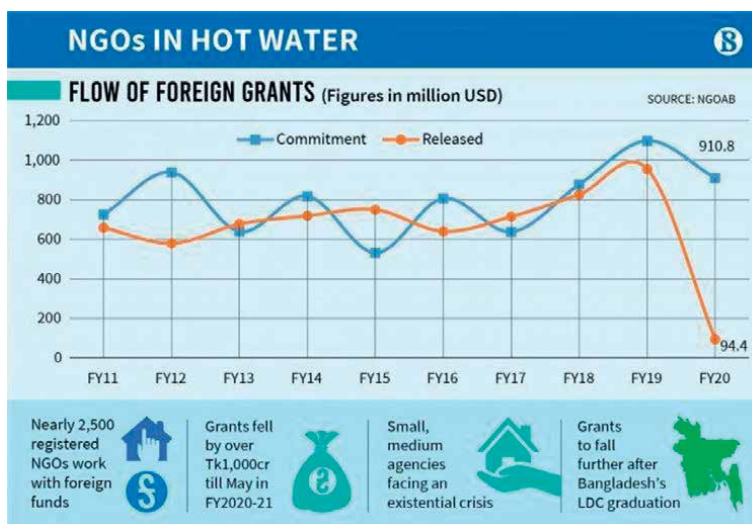
Figure 6.
The flow of foreign grants to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in Bangladesh.
Source: [21].

Affairs Bureau, Government of Bangladesh. They are regulated by the rule and regulations of the Bureau.

The Foreign Donation Regulation Act 2016 in Bangladesh provides for a series of highly restrictive measures that significantly limit the ability of NGOs to operate independently. Another restrictive action is that NGOs cannot receive foreign donations without government approval. Many NGO heads complain the restrictions encourage red tape on bureaucratic behavior that hinders NGOs' work progress.

About 40-plus INGOs working in Rohingya Camps are upset that their work is hindered without reason. Although the domestic and international NGOs are doing vital work on the Government's development plan, there is no uniform law and authority for regulating and monitoring this sector [22]. This state-NGO relation in Bangladesh may be defined as a *new dimension* of "indifference and ambivalence" while, at the same time, the donor's contributions are shrinking.

Against this background, what do we think about the future of NGOs in Bangladesh? And why do we feel so? We present a concise critical overview below in the form of the essay's conclusion in the following sections.

6. A critical overview of the NGOs in Bangladesh

6.1 Raison d'être of NGOs in Bangladesh

6.1.1 National perspective

Above, we have presented a concise account of the origin, growth, and development of the four most prominent NGOs—Gonosasthaya Kendra, BRAC, Grameen Bank, and ASA—that came into being as a historical necessity. They share the same goal: rebuilding Bangladesh, which is devasted by the liberation war. Leadership in this socioeconomic development movement was highly educated, dedicated, and

determined, knowing fully well what was the right thing to do for poverty alleviation and overall development of the poor. They delivered health services, a small loan to poor people, particularly women, and primary education to underprivileged children—and created awareness among women about the practice of family planning, preventing child marriage, and abuse of females.

Although there is no objective definition of success—and it is more difficult to quantify success—we will substantiate the role of NGOs from three perspectives: a quantitative measure, some anecdotal examples, and an evident part of NGOs during emergencies. We consider the contributions of all registered NGOs after independence (1971)—and NGOs working long before independence, such as Ahsania Mission, Dhaka.

At the time of independence, the threat of the Malthusian catastrophe was frighteningly real: many economists thought that Bangladesh's ability to control its population would be its litmus test for economic viability. However, belying conventional belief, Bangladesh displayed a striking success in birth control: in 1980, the population growth rate in Bangladesh was 2.72, and in 2000, the rate declined to 1.01. Other demographic indicators are equally inspiring. For example, the infant mortality rate fell from 138 to 25—and the literacy rate increased from 35 to 75. Bangladesh has experienced a stellar growth rate of, on average, 6% + for the last three decades, 1991–2021. As a result, the poverty rate declined from 50% in 2000 to 20% in 2020 [12].

A World Bank study examined the contribution of microfinance, the standard function of most NGOs in Bangladesh, in 2016. The following results were concluded from the study:

Microfinance institutions (MFI) have sustained benefits over two decades in reducing poverty and increasing incomes. Microcredit accounted for a 10% reduction in rural poverty in Bangladesh over that time—meaning MFI lifted some 2.5 million Bangladeshis from the ranks of poor [23]. However, this role in alleviating poverty is no mean achievement. Moreover, the NGOs offer entrepreneurial skills in raising livestock and poultry. By doing that, there are plenty of examples that rural homemakers improved their income earning opportunities—and increased the supply of eggs and poultry meats to the local market.

Microloans are used not only for raising livestock and poultry but for various other purposes, such as operating as working capital, purchasing inventory and supplies, purchasing (or leasing) boats, trishaws, fishing nets, and materials for embroidery quit. Moreover, what preceding analysis shows that NGOs are not simply giving microloans; they are hope givers. They provide health and wellness, primary education, skill training, and opportunities for women, which the Government and the market failed to reach [24].

Employment generation is another NGO contribution to the development of Bangladesh's economy. They create employment in two ways: a) NGOs provide loans and assistance to rural poor to participate in employment generation activities, and b) they provide employment in their organization. For example, BRAC has 120,000 people on its payroll. Gonosathaya Kendra has even more employees. However, more than one-third of college graduates remain unemployed in Bangladesh. Therefore, NGOs employing fresh college graduates greatly help the economy.

6.1.2 International perspective

NGOs are a significant part of the international system in today's globalized world. The problem of developing nations becomes more apparent, and their level of democracy and development constitute a substantial space in the foreign policy

agenda of the western governments. NGOs have grown in number, size, and stature since the end of World War II. Western donor states—and several U.N. agencies and World Bank—emphasize the role of NGOs in democratization, service provision, and prioritizing climate change.

The World Bank defines NGOs as private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide essential social services, or undertake community development [25, 26]. Some critics say NGOs are part of the promotion of western hegemony in the global south Maybe. But the facts remain that NGOs have a strong foundation, draw resources from home and abroad and retain a substantial potential role in bridging the gap between Government and Civil Society. So, the NGOs are not going wither away due to fund cuts and government restrictions. However, the fund cut will minimize the scope of NGOs' work and development programs in the country. Some small NGOs will be closed down temporarily or seize to exist forever.

6.1.3 Emergency perspective

Bangladesh is a disaster-prone country: periodic floods, cyclones, tidal bore, and droughts are perennial problems. On top of that, 1.2 million Rohingya refugees fled their homes, creating the largest refugee crisis in today's world. And a return of Rohingya is a world-class debate. That means, with all probability, they are not going back home, and the problem remains. Furthermore, the aid has declined in recent years (see **Figure 7**), which has accelerated multifaceted problems for Bangladesh.

Time and again, it has been proved that NGOs and INGOs rush to help alleviate the predicaments of the disaster victims—in addition to their long-term goal of social development, including poverty alleviation. We have discussed the caring and constructive role of most NGOs at a reasonable length and found their role is substantive—and their connection is international. So, the role of NGOs leads us to conclude that they do good by helping people and doing business to help themselves. Moreover, our observation of some NGOs' dedication and enthusiasm to rescue victims of massive flooding in Sylhet–Sunamganj–Netrokona gives us an impression that for some people, helping others—particularly those living with poverty and vulnerability—is transcendental.
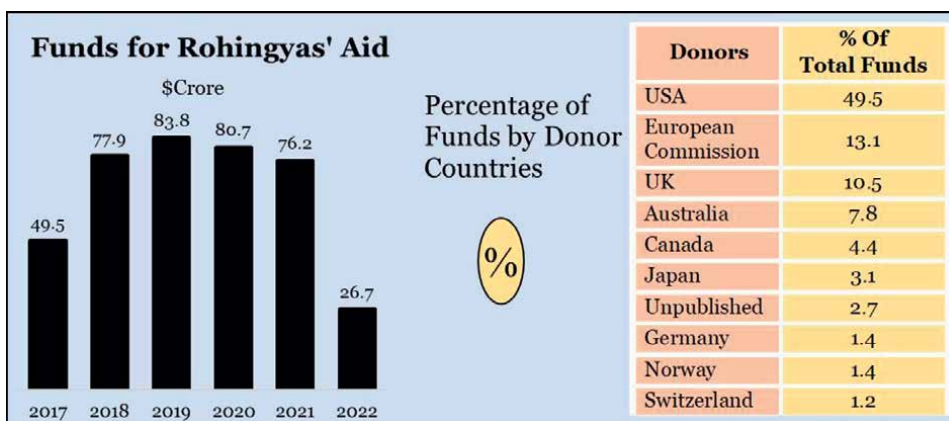

Figure 7.
Fund for Rohingya's aid declined (2017–2022). Source: www.unocha.org.

Nevertheless, it is pertinent to present a brief criticism directed at the NGOs in Bangladesh—without being ambiguous and logically confused.

- **Issues in Sustainability of Development:** During the last three decades (1990–2020), rural areas of Bangladesh have witnessed a considerable positive change due to several factors. The critical factors are—among other things—microcredit as a bottom-up financial tool to alleviate rural poverty [27]. So, the role of micro-finance is once more recognized. But the recent survey by the South Asia Network of Economic Models (SANEM) shows that the poverty rate in Bangladesh increased from 21% in 2019 to 42% in 2021. While the reason for this exacerbating poverty was the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, there is no denying that the development in Bangladesh was not sustainable. The Government and the NGOs cannot evade responsibility for this disastrous situation.

  Unfortunately, the NGOs were not "very visible in the COVID-19 response." Save the delivery of 150 million COVID-19 vaccines by UNICEF' Furthermore, in the post-COVID regime (2022 onward), Russia's invasion of Ukraine has disrupted the global trade of food, fuel, and fertilizer. And the impact of war is being felt in Bangladesh—inflation increased close to 10%, making many more low-income people worse off. Since the western donor's fund declined, the NGOs' presence in rural areas has been less conspicuous.

- **The Gap between Promise and Performance**: Most NGOs seek to combine economic development (through offering microloans, training, and skill development) and social development (in health, education, nutrition, and sanitation) with credit provision. Their report cards, considered by many critics, are so-so. However, many NGOs' goals include establishing human rights, particularly the rights of women at levels—in family and workplaces. Yet, there is plenty of evidence that females are discriminated against by male members of the family and get lower wages in industries—including the ready-made garment factories—for doing the same jobs. Moreover, the dowry-related death (between 0.6 and 2.8 brides per year per 100,000 women) remain unabated over the years. So are the suicides, fire, and other forms of domestic violence against women reported [28].

- **Rural Bias in Development Goals:** Grameen Bank and BRAC stated their programs taking some 12–15 villages, then spread all over the rural areas in Bangladesh—the program is often called grassroots level program because of its origin, growth, and development mainly cover the rural geography. This anomaly occurred due to two phenomena: a) Bangladesh in the 1970s and 1980s was primarily a rural agricultural economy; and b) historically, the successive governments of Bangladesh followed an urban containment policy. Now things have changed: in the 2020s, urbanization is 40%, the urban contribution to GDP is 70%, and employment in the labor force is 40%. However, One-fourth of Dhaka city's population (5 million people) lives in slums and squatters with a subhuman condition. Therefore, the issues need to be carefully studied and addressed.

7. Concluding remarks about the future of NGOs in Bangladesh

The future of NGOs is the future of the 1st decile population in Bangladesh, whose income share is 1.01% of national income, as opposed to the 10th decile, which gets

Division name	No. of microfinance branches (MFB)	No. of village organizations	No. of MFBs per 1 million popn
Barisal	122	12,302	15
Chattogram	566	34,063	23
Dhaka	587	43,417	13
Khulna	261	27,652	16
Mymensingh	155	16,768	13
Rajshahi	636	67,125	34
Sylhet	154	12,727	13
Source: www.brac.net.			

Table 2.
Division-wise number of microfinance branches and village organizations of BRAC.

38.16%. Besides interpersonal income inequality, there is a vast regional disparity. For example, the population below the poverty level in Kurigram and Dinajpur—the two poverty-stricken districts of the Rajshahi Division—was 70.8 and 64.1, respectively. While the percentage of the below-poverty population in Narayanganj and Munshiganj are 2.6 and 3.1 only. The two districts are in close vicinity of Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. The data shows that interregional uneven development is broad and conspicuous [29].

It is worth noting that many NGOs, including BRAC, have not overlooked this regional gap in development. For example, **Table 2** (Row 6) clearly shows that the most significant number of division-wise microfinance branches and village organizations are located in the Rajshahi division. While this geographical development in the lagging regions, remote villages of that region—is a considerable challenge for the Government—which relies on the bureaucrats and local leaders with a vested interest—NGOs can reach the target people more effectively.

Let us substantiate our view on humanitarianism. Buthe et al. [30] study—based on an original data set—finds "*strong support for the argument that the deeply rooted humanitarian discourse within and among aid NGOs drives their aid allocation, consistent with a view of aid NGOs as principled actors and constructivist theories of international relations* [30]."

However, Freire's concept, challenges, and opportunities are inherent in organizations, including NGOs. Nevertheless, we believe the future of NGOs is partly the future of the grassroot development of Bangladesh. Several inspiring stories of NGOs' success in poverty alleviation with the provision of health and education are mentioned above. In addition, INGOs' rapid response to disasters and emergencies guided by humanitarian principles cannot be overstated. So, NGOs and INGOs deserve more support from home and abroad. However, the question remains how the NGOs could reconcile with the funding challenge situation.

Scholarly literature on how to cope with NGO funding issues suggests

- To achieve financial stability and resource mobilization through business activities—balancing social and entrepreneurial values. The suggestion is good for microfinance or healthcare services but of no use for environmental protection. For the latter, goodwill and the generosity of others to cover costs are essential

- Next is diversification: Investment in various projects, in other words, allocating resources to multiple projects to minimize the risks and uncertainties. Also, to subsidize the nonprofit from the profit of the social business.

- NGOs should leverage inspiration, time, and relationships to achieve momentum and success. And when a new opportunity arrives, NGOs should avail themselves of it. Let us give two examples.

In November 2020, Bangladesh received $256.5 million from the U.N. Green Climate Fund (GCF) to promote private sector investment by adopting energy-efficient technologies in the textile and garment sectors [31]. In addition, in July 2022, the World Bank approved a $500 million credit to Bangladesh for disaster preparedness and to minimize the impact of inland flooding [32, 33]. These small amounts compare the country's need for implementing National Adaptation Plan. And more funds are expected to come. What is needed is for the environment-oriented NGOs to build up their capabilities to undertake adaptive actions to minimize the negatives of climate change.

Those are general suggestions for all NGOs. But NGOs are not a monolithic concept—they vary in size and function. There are large, medium, and small NGOs based on resources, annual revenue, and the size of employees. So, the future of all NGOs is not the same. However, large NGOs have distinct advantages over medium and small NGOs, and their future is relatively more secure than others.

7.1 Large NGOs

Large NGOs are like banyan trees. Over time, they have spread out to several major sectors of the economy, including health, industry, education, bank, agro-firm, cottage industry, trust fund, and microcredit business. As a result, they earn substantial revenue from that, and they can comfortably cross-subsidize nonprofitable programs, such as free schooling in rural areas or eye-camp for cataract surgery. Nevertheless, when donors' contributions become less generous, the NGOs' nonprofit programs tend to shrink—or close altogether. Again, we have the example of BRAC above. The U.K. government's funding cut has negatively impacted girls' education, access to family planning, and support to families in extreme poverty.

7.2 Medium-size NGOs

Although there is no standard scale for measuring large, medium, and small NGOs, we may consider some criteria such as annual revenue and the size of employees. For example, while BRAC has 120,000 employees, JAAGO Foundation has 400-plus employees, and Shakti Foundation only has 176 employees. So we may define them as a medium size NGO. Those kinds of NGOs usually maintain a good connection with large NGOs, INGOs, and the Government—and they receive some funds and, more importantly, subcontract a project from them. They also do microfinancing, making some profits. So, they have a good chance of survival in one way or other.

7.3 Small NGOs

Small NGOs are less resilient to any exogenous shock, including donation loss. They are mainly run by small projects in remote areas with funds from large NGOs and INGOs. However, they do microcredit business in those rural villages and city

slums, which overlooked other NGOs. Small-scale microfinance is the primary source of survival. Many of them are, however, vulnerable due to reduced donor support.

7.4 INGOs

INGOs have relatively large and secured funding for they belong to the donors' community—and their reputation is above board, though they are not blameless. It is alleged that a significant part of the donation is spent on the maintenance of INGO staff in the form of their salary, travel, research, and allowances. Others say the compensation of INGOs staff appears to be high in the context of Bangladesh, not in an international context.

The classification of NGOs—large, medium, small, and INGOs—are broad. Each category of NGOs has a diverse function and sources of revenue. For example, Gonosathya Kendo and BRAC are both large NGOs. Still, they are known for different functions—Gonosasthya for healthcare, BRAC for microfinance and rural development—similarly Shakti for education, and Plan International for slum improvement.

Therefore, further investigation of each NGO based on functional category is needed to better understand their work and network. On the same token, the source of funding from donors and local governments—and local private sources—need to be a constant search for opportunities arising from potential sources of funding for the NGO sector. One last point: NGOs have rich databases but are mostly under-cited. This database—may be used by universities and research organizations—that can provide new insights into critical areas of national development.

To summarize the stories, funding cuts force many NGOs to minimize the scope of their work, sometimes breaking their commitments. Moreover, the post-pandemic situation—further aggravated by the Russia-Ukraine War—is a significant challenge for the Government and nongovernment organizations to carry through their development and humanitarian work. However, the future of NGOs depends on how effectively they cope and build resilience [34]. Help may come from progressive groups whose willingness to help we have defined as *transcendental*.

Challenges and opportunities are inherent in all organizations [2], including NGOs. Nevertheless, we believe the future of NGOs is partly the future of the grass-root development of Bangladesh. Several inspiring stories of NGOs' success in poverty alleviation with the provision of health and education are mentioned above. In addition, INGOs' rapid response to disasters and emergencies guided by humanitarian principles cannot be overstated. So, NGOs and INGOs deserve more support from home and abroad. However, the question remains how the NGOs could reconcile with the funding challenge situation. Our answer is they should do both: social business with a nominal profit and social work with a humanitarian action and social transformation mission.

The Rise and Fall of the NGOs in Bangladesh: What Does the Future Hold?
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Contributions in Early Intervention Programs: The Case of Vision Community-Based Rehabilitation Association in Ambo, Ethiopia

Bonsa Tola and Dawit Negassa Golga

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the contributions of the vision community-based rehabilitation association (VCBRA) in early intervention programs in Ambo, Ethiopia. In this case study, a total of 18 respondents, consisting of the VCBRAs' staff, such as the program director, the manager, social workers, beneficiaries, and participants from partners' institutions, such as Ambo branch organizations of persons with disabilities, Ambo University, Ambo town social affairs office, were participated in the study as sources of data. Data were collected through document analysis, interview, and close-ended questionnaire. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, and mean. In addition, data from document analysis and interviews were analyzed thematically and supplemented by narrative descriptions and verbatim quotations. The effectiveness of VCBRA intervention programs were assessed using a CBR matrix, and the finding uncovered that VCBRA intervention programs were found to be effective in general. Specifically, VCBRA seems to be more effective in the three intervention areas, such as health, education, and livelihood components, while empowerment and social components of rehabilitation programs were less focused. In addition, children and youths with different disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, and poor families were beneficiaries of VCBRA intervention programs. Further, lack of trained and diversified staff, lack of financial resources, low parent involvements, and the negative impact of COVID-19 were identified as the main challenges hindering the implementation of early intervention programs provided by the VCBRA.

Keywords: contributions, early intervention program, community-based rehabilitation

1. Introduction

The World Disability Report estimates that there are over one billion people with disabilities in the world, of which 110–190 million experience very significant difficulties, and amongst them 80% of persons with disabilities live in low- and middle-income countries [1]. In Ethiopia, it is estimated that 17.6% of the Ethiopian population has a disability [1].

Ethiopia has ratified and adopted almost all of the relevant initiatives and international legal documents on the rights of persons with disabilities, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [2]. The Convention in its article 26 states that comprehensive rehabilitation services, including health, employment, education, and social services are needed "to enable people with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life." ([2] article 26).

Accordingly, supporting children with disabilities at an early age is paramount. Early intervention is a range of all necessary interventions social, medical, psychological, and educational targeted toward children and their families, to meet the special needs of children who show or risk some degree of delay in development (Karanth et al., n.d.). Evidence indicates that two-thirds of the young children who need early intervention programs are yet marginalized and underserved.

The responsibility for improving the situation of children with disabilities lies not only on the government but also requires the engagement of civil society, including the private sector and the general public [3]. In relation to this, different governmental and non-governmental organizations have been working to ameliorate the situation of PWDs in Ethiopia [4]. Specifically, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a critical role, along with the government, in the design of early intervention programs that create a foundation for providing support for children, their caregivers, and the community.

In the Ethiopian context, plan international and save the children were amongst the organizations that are widely involved in early intervention programs (Belay H. and Belay T., 2016). But, most of the interventions made in developing countries, such as Ethiopia, are uncoordinated and do not adequately involve the community in rehabilitation activities [4]. Besides, it was reported that children with disabilities are excluded from education, health, employment, and other aspects of society, and that this can potentially lead to or exacerbate poverty and there is a need for stronger evidence base on the efficacy and effectiveness of CBR programs [1].

Likewise, studies in Ethiopia reported that the majority of the children with disabilities have not yet been reached by rehabilitation service providers and their access to basic services remains limited and concentrated in urban areas [3] and mostly located in the capital city, Addis Ababa, at Paulos specialized hospital, and in a number of major towns, such as Mekele, Hawassa, Arba Minch, Dire Dawa, and Jimma [4]. Therefore, these centers cannot serve children with disabilities who live far away from the service deliverers.

As a result, among millions of children with various degrees of disabilities in Ethiopia, only a few are beneficiaries of intervention services and the traditional approach has been predominantly applied in delivering rehabilitation services in Ethiopia [4].

Thus, there is still a great need to work for the full inclusion of children with disabilities in all aspects of society [3]. The lack of comprehensive research-based data on the access, practice, and challenges at the national level in Ethiopia makes it impossible to understand to what extent CBR is an effective strategy [4]. Hence, the engagements of civic society in the provision of early intervention programs need to be investigated in Ethiopia [5]. To this end, this study was aimed at assessing the effectiveness of on-going early intervention programs by VCBRA under operation in Ambo, Ethiopia.

Many organizations and stakeholders have been involved in early intervention programs and practices in Ethiopia [5]. However, the practice, strengths, and opportunities of early intervention programs functioning, particularly found in the community have not been explored sufficiently in Ethiopia [5]. As a result, there is a lack of reliable data and statistics about disability and intervention practices in the country [3].

VCBRA is one of the disability service providing NGOs in Ethiopia. It is responsible for providing technical guidance, delivery of services, and support for PWD in collaboration with the government and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) [3]. Recognizing the challenges people with disabilities are facing in west Shewa Zone in Ethiopia, the vision community-based rehabilitation association (VCBRA) was established in 2006, and licensed to provide rehabilitation services for people with disabilities (PWDs). VCBRA used community-based rehabilitation (CBR) as the main strategy to address the needs of people with disabilities. The association provides early intervention programs for children below 15 years of age and works by mainly focusing on the four components of CBR: health, education, livelihood, and social, to offer comprehensive rehabilitation services. VCBRA has been operating in Oromia regional state and provided a wide range of rehabilitation services to people with disabilities in Ambo and the surrounding areas.

However, the VCBRA's current practices, status, success scenario, and challenges in implementing early intervention programs need to be researched and communicated to the scientific community. Accordingly, this study aimed at investigating the ongoing early intervention programs provided by VCBRA in Ethiopia.

The following basic research questions guided the investigation:

- To what extent are the VCBRA's intervention programs effective?

- What are the challenges in VCBRA's intervention programs?

This study has both theoretical and practical contributions for intervention programs in Ethiopia and other similar contexts. It attempts at filling the literature and research gap in the current practice, components, and challenges of intervention programs, as well as contribute to the enrichment of the body of knowledge in the area. In addition, this study is significant to solve current problems related to the early intervention by assessing VCBRA's strengths and challenges and suggesting some practicable recommendations for improving the intervention quality of the association.

2. Methods

The study area, Ambo, is located in the Oromia regional state in Ethiopia, 110 km west of Addis Ababa (Finfinne), the capital city. The town has a latitude and longitude of 8°59′N 37°51′E and an elevation of 2101 meters. Ambo is a center for institutions, such as the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, Ambo University, Rift Valley University, Ambo Mineral Water, and several NGOs, including VCBRA. VCBRA was established in Ambo town and provides intervention services to the surrounding areas, such as Guder, Woliso Tiulubollo, Dillella, and Goro towns.

To assess the nature of VCBRA's early intervention programs, a case study design was employed, to investigate the institution-bounded issue (VCBRA), through detailed data collection that involved multiple sources of information (e.g., questionnaires, interviews, and documents). Quantitative and qualitative data were collected

simultaneously to analyze, merge and use the results of both. A basic rationale for this design was that one data collection form supplies strengths to offset the weaknesses of the other form and that a more complete understanding of a research problem results from collecting both quantitative and qualitative data [6].

This study attempted to assess the early intervention programs being delivered by VCBRA in Ambo and the surrounding areas. A total of 18 participants were selected purposively based on their collaborations and experiences with VCBRA early intervention programs in Ambo town. More specifically, seven (39%) participants were VCBRA staff members, including executive director and founder, program manager, two field workers, a workshop worker, and two supervisors. On the other hand, about 11 (61 %) of the respondents were recruited from partner institutions currently working with VCBRA, such as two beneficiaries, one Ambo town labor and social affairs office expert, two experts from Ambo town education office, two leaders and one teacher from primary schools, one representative of Ambo branch organization of persons with disabilities (OPD), and two staff of Ambo University.

Besides, from the total participants, seven(39%) were female, 11 (61%) were male, and the majority of the respondents have work experience ranging from 6 to 26 years. Further, regarding participants' educational background, nine(50%) of them were second-degree holders, while five(27.8%), three(16.7%), and one(5.6%) were first-degree, diploma, and primary school certificate holders, respectively.

A questionnaire, document analysis, and interview were employed to collect data. All sample participants filled a closed-ended questionnaire in which four items were designed to collect participants' background data, 25 closed-ended items were prepared with three points rating scale: 3-agree, 2-not sure, and 1-disagree, and employed to collect data on the type and effectiveness of VCBRA's early intervention programs. In addition, documents, such as VCBRA plans and reports, internal and external evaluation reports from 2019/20 to 2021/22, and photo gallery methods. Finally, interviews conducted with the VCBRA director, program manager, and beneficiaries were used as data sources.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis based on the CBR matrix developed by ILO, UNESCO & WHO [7]. The quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and means. In addition, data from document analysis and interviews were analyzed thematically and supplemented by narrative description and verbatim.

The CBR matrix provides a structured overview of thematic areas (health and education), life conditions (livelihood and social), and political strategies to improve the situation (empowerment). The CBR guidelines aim to connect the different areas and to show the direction toward inclusive development [4]. The CBR matrix (**Table 1**) provides a basic framework for CBR programs. It highlights the need to target intervention in different aspects of life, including the five key components: health, education, livelihood, social, and empowerment. Each component includes five elements where the different activities are listed. A CBR program is formed by one or more activities in one or more of the five components. Thus, a CBR program is not expected to implement every component of the CBR matrix, and not all people with disabilities require assistance in each component of the matrix [9].

The five components of CBR matrix are: health, education, livelihood, social, and empowerment. **Table 1** shows the components of the matrix along with its element:

Health	Education	Livelihood	Social	Empowerment
Promotion	Early childhood	Skills development	Personnel assistance	Advocacy and communication
Prevention	Primary	Self-employment	Relationships, marriage, and family	Community mobilization
Medical care	Secondary and higher	Wage employment	Culture and arts	Political participation
Rehabilitation	Non-formal	Financial support	Recreation, leisure, and sports	Self-help groups
Assistive devices	Lifelong learning	Social protection	Justice	Disabled people's organization
Note: From [8].				

Table 1.
CBR matrix.

The way in which CBR might work varies depending on the targets of specific components included in the program are: health, education, livelihood, social, and empowerment.

Therefore, VCBRA's intervention programs were assessed by using the CBR matrix depicted in **Figure 1** [9] as a conceptual framework. The overall approach includes a focus on including people with disabilities in existing services, as well as creating new interventions, specifically considering people with disabilities and their families.

Respondents agreed to participate in the study with a clear understanding of the purpose of the study, the type of information required, and their roles and rights in the study process. In addition, an agreement was made with the study participants not to misuse the results of the study and to provide them with access to the research findings.
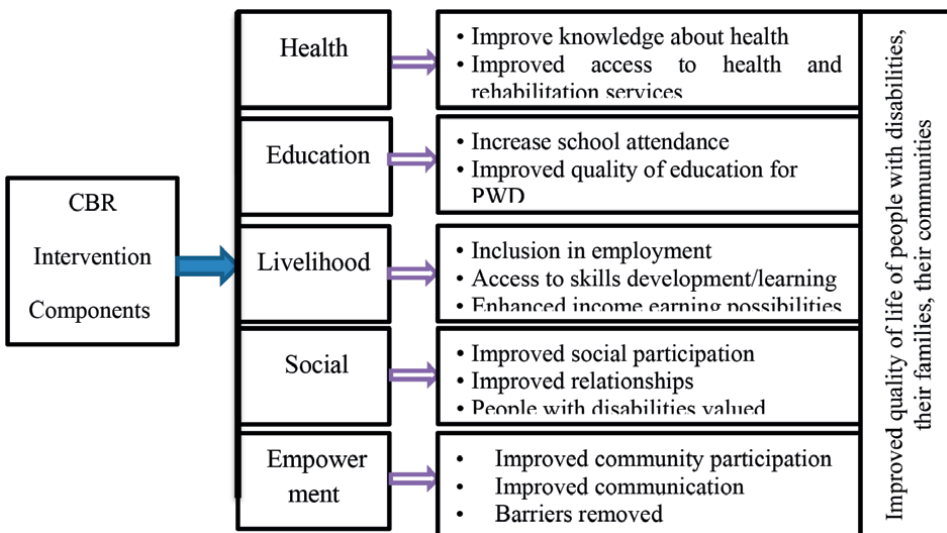

Figure 1.
Conceptual framework of CBR programs for PWDs. Adapted from ([7], Figure 3, p. 4).

3. Results and discussion

In this section, the results and discussion sections are combined "for not separating the finding from its interpreted meaning" within this research context ([10], p. 169). Results from the quantitative strand are presented first followed by the data from document analysis and interview. Respondents' views of disagreement are compiled together to reveal the low performance of VCBRA in early intervention program provision. On the other hand, respondents' views of the agreement are compiled together to indicate VCBRA's high level of performance in the provision of an early intervention program. The analyses are arranged under four themes: background of VCBRA, intervention type and beneficiaries (health, education, social, empowerment, and livelihood), the effectiveness of intervention programs, and challenges faced.

3.1 Background of VCBRA

The data obtained from document analysis indicated that VCBRA is a non-profit, non-partisan association that was initiated in 2005 and registered by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Agency under law No 0263. It was established in 2006 and licensed for three years as an Ethiopian Resident Charity (indigenous) NGO in accordance with Charities and Societies Proclamation No 621/2009. It was re-registered as the Ethiopian Resident Charity Organization in 2009 to help persons with different disabilities. VCBRA was established by a person without disability (current executive director) based on his commitment to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

VCBRA has the vision to see disadvantaged people free from experiencing major life challenges and the mission to prevent disability and ensure meaningful involvement of people with disabilities in the development endeavors of the country.

VCBRA operates in Oromia regional state, west and south west Shewa Zones, Ethiopia. It has two branches; the main branch is located at Ambo town and the sub-branch is located at Woliso town. The association has different offices with full equipment, indoor and outdoor therapy centers, and a mini-workshop that produces assistive devices for people with disabilities. Further, it has internet, transportation, and health insurance services for all its staff members.

From interviews conducted with the manager it was noted that the association runs different activities in Ambo, Guder, Waliso towns, and adjacent areas of Ambo town. In addition, the manager explained that VCBRA has different permanent and contract staff members, including physiotherapists, nurses, and social workers. In addition, data from the document review depicts that some of the VCBRA staff members have an educational background in such fields of study as psychology, development study, business administration, management, and ICT. By reviewing VCBRA's staff profile it was ascertained that the association did not have workers with special needs and inclusive education background. However, the director of the association during the interview revealed that some of the employees have taken training in special needs and inclusive education organized by the Ministry of Education, CBR Network Ethiopia, and Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD). The major donors for VCBRA are Light for the World, Rehabilitation International, and Cittadinanza Onlus of Italy.

3.2 Intervention types and beneficiaries of VCBRA

The UNCRPWDs state that comprehensive rehabilitation services for PWDs should include health, employment, education, and social services to enable PWD to maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social, vocational ability, and full inclusion participation in all aspects of life [2]. Accordingly, the intervention programs carried out by VCBRA in the west and south west Shoa Zone of the Oromia region are presented based on the CBR matrix, as follows: health, education, social, empowerment, and livelihood.

3.3 Health

The health component of the matrix aims for people with disabilities to achieve their highest attainable standard of health. It includes health promotion, prevention of impairment or illness, medical care provision, rehabilitation, and provision of assistive devices [8]. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Article 25 which addresses the right to health for people with disabilities [2].

Participants of the study were requested to assess the extent to which VCBRA's health intervention programs are effective. The observed mean score for "health intervention" was found to be 2.4, which becomes greater than the expected mean of two, which indicates VCBRA's health intervention programs are effective (**Table 2**).

Early Identification and Referral Services: Identification and admission of children with disability are the primary activities of the schools to realize their education. Regarding this idea, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education ensures that screening and assessment tools are prepared at the national level and used to identify children with disability in the schools [11].

In relation to the health component, VCBRA has been working to meet the health needs of PWDs.

The annual report of the VCBRA, (2019/20 and 2021/22) shows that in 2019/20, 425 and 2021/22, 584 children with disabilities were identified and benefited from rehabilitation services under the VCBRA project catchment area.

The same report reveals that VCBRA has established effective referral systems with general and specialized medical care services at governmental and non-governmental

In delivering health intervention, VCBRA'	N	Mean
Collaboration with health services providers	18	2.28
Educating the local community on nutrition, sanitation, eye health, disability prevention	18	2.06
Referring clients to health services	18	2.67
Provision of training to clients in its rehabilitation center	18	2.5
Provision assistive devices for children with disabilities	18	2.56
Grand Mean		2.414

Table 2.
Health component.

hospitals. In 2019/2020, more than 547 and in 2021, 199 children, youths, and adults with disabilities were referred to St. Luke, Cure, and Ambo hospitals and to other similar rehabilitation centers to get access to a wide range of rehabilitation services such as medical treatment, corrective surgery, and provision of assistive devices (VCBRA Annual Report, 2019/20 and 2021/22).

One of the VCBRA management members confirmed during an interview that *"in the provision of referral services … VCBRA covers the coast of general and specialized medical care services for people with disabilities in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental hospitals while in some hospitals they are served free of charge and/ or half payment."* This indicates great achievement attained by VCBRA in providing referral services for children with disabilities. VCBRA conducted a disability-specific baseline survey to determine the status of disability in Ambo town, Woliso town, and surrounding areas. Accordingly, 3,686 persons with disabilities were identified to have various rehabilitation services (Annual report, 2021/22).

Regarding the referral service, the director took as an example ten years old boy, with a club foot on his left leg, who was treated through the referral system and brought to normalcy. The director mentioned that, currently, the child is attending primary school (**Figure 2**).

Home Based Rehabilitation: According to the annual reports of the VCBRA (2019/20), 361 and (2021/22) 294 children with disabilities were benefited from home-based rehabilitation services. The report reveals that various exercises and therapies for the hand, leg, and head; daily living activities for children with intellectual disability, mobility training and orientation for blind children basic sign language and Braille literacy skills, psycho-social support, medical follow-up, and awareness-raising programs are among the major activities performed through the home-based rehabilitation programs to improve the children's functionality to join the school. This is in line with the recommendation by UNCRPD, which states that comprehensive rehabilitation services may be preferred to isolated interventions for persons with disabilities [2].

Data from interviewed parent-beneficiary revealed that *"VCBRA's field workers make a follow-up program once in two months to check the children's situation and provide*

(a)   (b)

Figure 2.
Boy with clubfoot before and after the intervention. (a) before getting intervention, and (b) after getting intervention under referral by VCBRA.

technical support for families as needed". Similarly, the manager disclosed that *"The duration of home-to-home intervention may take from 4 months to 4 years and VCBRA's field workers visit 1-4 times in a week depending on the nature and intensity of the child problem."*

VCBRA Rehabilitation Center: VCBRA rehabilitation center is located in Ambo town to provide medical and rehabilitation services to children with cerebral palsy, developmental delay, and clubfeet, people who have a stroke and spinal cord injury, and people with a wide range of disabilities (VCBRA Annual Report, 2021/22) (**Figure 3**).

Awareness raising activities: In order to create awareness on disability, VCBRA used multiple strategies, such as community sensitization programs on disability during coffee ceremony, organizing disability awareness clubs at schools, child-to-child programs, such as telling oral traditions on disabilities, and song, community conversation programs at the community meeting and at Idir, and celebration of international day of PwDs with the office of social affairs and Ambo University (VCBRA annual report, 2021/22). Further, the annual report of the association (2019/20) showed that training has been conducted for 13 CBR workers on assisting children with disabilities at home-based and center-based rehabilitation services.

The International Disability Day was celebrated with the aim of increasing awareness of disability and promoting an inclusive environment. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities was celebrated in Woliso and Ambo towns as the Oromia region is celebrating the day for the 20th time (VCBRA annual report, 2021/22) (**Figure 4**).

According to the VCBRA report, 150 awareness-raising sessions were conducted in the community. In reference to the report, in 2019/20, around 11283 individuals (4198 male and 7085 female) and in (2021/22) 8981 persons (3697 male and 5284 female) were benefited from these sessions. Similarly, the manager reported that *the awareness-raising sessions were organized within families of children with disability, at schools, at health centers, and other places where there are public gatherings mainly focusing on the topics chosen by the community members.*

VCBRA also conducted awareness-raising activities on the prevention of COVID-19 and adhere to health measures to stop the pandemic's spread. Proper use of mask, hand washing, use of hand sanitizer, and maintaining social distancing was among the topics communicated (VCBRA Annual Report, 2021/22). The interview with director indicates as VCBRA is working by giving priority to promoting both

(a)   (b)

Figure 3.
(a) VCBRA's institution based physiotherapy out of the room, and (b) VCBRA's institution based physiotherapy in the room.

Figure 4.
Awareness raising workshop on Disability: VCBRA in collaboration with Ambo University.

center-based and community-based rehabilitation services, inclusive education, and social inclusion interventions for PWD in Oromia region, Ethiopia.

Further, parents of children with disabilities are key rehabilitation actors to bring change to the disability situations of their children with disability. In relation to this, the manager stated that "*Though parent's role is significant, there is a high knowledge gap on rehabilitation skills, particularly with those who have a child with severe disabilities.*" To fill this gap VCBRA has organized training for 60 parents of children with disabilities on disability management and rehabilitation skill (Annual Report of VCBRA, 2019/20). A manager reported that "*At this time some parents are supporting their children with disability and they are taking part in the rehabilitation process of their kids.*"

3.4 Education

The education component of the matrix has a goal to provide access to education and lifelong for people with disabilities, leading to the fulfillment of their potential, a sense of dignity and self-worth, and effective participation in society. It includes formal and non-formal education as well as life-long learning [12].

Participants were requested to assess the extent to which VCBRA's education intervention programs are effective. The observed mean score for "education intervention" was found to be 2.4 that is greater than the expected mean of 2. This indicates that VCBRA's education intervention programs are effective in the study area (**Table 3**).

In delivering intervention for education, VCBRA	N	Mean
provision of training for caregivers on early childhood intervention	18	1.94
advocating the children's rights to education	18	2.78
delivering awareness-raising training on inclusive education	18	2.72
provision of home-based learning to children	18	2.56
motivate adults to continue learning through sharing information	18	1.78
Grand Mean		2.356

Table 3.
Education component.

VCBRA as an association, is dealing with children and youth with disabilities following CBR as a strategy and promote educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Educational materials supported were to children with disabilities, including exercise books, pen and pencil, facemask, sanitizer, and school uniforms Ambo Awaro, and Addisketema schools. One of the association management noted that "*The education materials provided by VCBRA helped the students with disabilities to remain in the school and continue their education.*"

Similarly, VCBRA's director and program manager indicated that the main strategy to bring children with disability to school is through home-to-home visitation. They also explained that the coffee ceremony and community meetings have helped them to get an opportunity to discuss with the community and to create awareness about the causes of disability and the right to education for all (**Figure 4**).

Further, the manager mentioned, "*Following the awareness raising program, the association starts to give educational support at home, center and school level according to the degree and type of disabilities.*"

As displayed in the **Figure 5a** and **b** below, these boys have amputations in both hands. During the interview, the program manager indicates (**Figure 6**):

> *Because of VCBRA interventions of training and physiotherapy, two boys are able to write, dress themselves, eat and drink using their toes. These children joined the surrounding primary schools and started to learn along with their peers. In addition, VCBRA provided a special chair prepared in its workshop so that they can use adapted chairs at home and in the classroom.*

Intellectual disability: According to the data obtained from the manager during the interview, "*children with intellectual disability were identified by VCBRA and a special classroom was organized for children with intellectual disabilities in Awaro primary school in collaboration with Ambo town education officers.*"

Figure 6 illustrates the educational intervention provided for the boy in the early intervention program.

Capacity Development: According to VCBRA's annual report document (2021/22), the training has been given to several participants, such as VCBRA staff, teachers in primary and secondary school, social workers, and community members on different topics: disability, child rights, and inclusive education; sign language, and rehabilitation skills. Specifically, the annual report, (2019/20) indicates the training organized

(a)   (b)

Figure 5.
(a) Boy writing by leg, and (b) Self–feed by the leg.

Figure 6.
A special class organized for children with intellectual disabilities by VCBRA.

at different times on the topic of inclusive education for 30 primary school teachers. Further, one of the parent beneficiaries reported that "*the association provides training and appropriate devices for their children with disabilities before bringing their children to school.*"

Inclusive Resource Center: Establishing an inclusive resource center is a key to enhance the education of children with disabilities in schools. Ministry of Education of Ethiopia stated in its ESDP VI to "strengthen and expand inclusive education resource centers." ([13], p. 89). In line with this, the VCBRA report (2019/20) showed that various materials and equipment have been purchased to the strengthened inclusive resource center and support of children with disability in selected primary schools of Ambo town. The center is equipped with the materials like computers, television, sign language books, audio, play, practical, pictorial, and other educational materials (VCBRA Annual Report, 2019/20) (**Figure 7**).

Accessibility of the School Environment: The data obtained from the interview noted that VCBRA worked a lot to make educational environments accessible to children with disabilities. The participant notified as an example, "*the dormitory, playground, ramps and toilets were adapted by VCBRA for students with disabilities in Ambo University.*" Similarly, figure taken from a photo gallery showed that walkways were built in some primary schools so that wheelchair users and other people with disabilities can move around in the school compound (**Figure 8**).

Figure 7.
Disability resource center established by VCBRA.

Figure 8.
Ramps were built in primary schools.

Thus, based on the presented data above, this result is supporting the Ethiopian building proclamation no 624/2009, Article 36 that states the design and construction of public buildings should be accessible for people with disability [14].

Provision of Assistive Materials: Data from the document review annual report (2019/20) revealed that different assistive materials are purchased (**Figure 9a**) or were prepared in VCBRA's mini workshop (**Figure 9b**) and provided to children with disabilities. The same document reported that in collaborations with other rehabilitation centers, VCBRA has purchased materials like treatment beds, therapy materials, various exercise tools, small therapy machines, stimulation, and play equipment that are important for establishing a rehabilitation center at Ambo town.

In addition, VCBRA provided different supportive devices, such as optic glasses (spectacles), hearing aids, orthopedic shoes, crutches, wheelchairs, special chairs, artificial legs, walking frames, toilet chairs, guide canes, hand blocks and to children with disabilities in the community (VCBRA Annual Report, 2019/20). Similarly, the selected photos from the collection showed that several materials have been produced

(a)   (b)

Figure 9.
(a) The adapted chair produced in the VCBRA workshop, and (b) VCBRA purchased a special wheelchair for a child.

in VCBRA mini workshop and provided to the local community to support children with physical disabilities. For instance, children with physical disabilities who have moving difficulty access assistive chairs from VCBRA (**Figure 9a**).

Further, VCBRA has been providing educational material support to integrate children with disabilities in schools. For instance, school uniform, Braille paper, slate, stylus, sign language books, and voice recorder have been provided to special classes found in Woliso Liban, Ambo Awaro, and Addis Ketema primary schools (Annual Report, 2021/22).

The data gained from document analyzes showed that VCBRA distributed more than 30,000 washable and reusable face masks for nearly 14,500 students with disabilities in five regions of the country, such as Addis Ababa, Oromia, Amhara, and Sidama in order to protect the expansion of COVID-19 (Annual Report of 2021/22).

3.5 Livelihood

Livelihood is one of the five vital components of the CBR strategy in which people with disabilities can earn enough income to lead dignified lives and contribute economically to their families and communities that include skills development, self-employment, wage employment, financial services, and social protection [15].

In relation to this study, participants were requested to assess the extent VCBRA's livelihood intervention programs are effective. The observed mean score for "livelihood intervention" was found to be 2.4 that is greater than the expected mean 2. This indicates that VCBRA's livelihood intervention programs are effective in the study area (**Table 4**).

In the livelihood domain, the CBR services provided in VCBRA focus on providing financial services, skill development, and self-empowerment services by establishing micro-finance enterprises. Specifically, for purpose of economic empowerment of PWDs, VCBRA recruited and established a group of children with disabilities and their families who have an interest in being a member of the saving and lending association in their local areas (Annual Report, 2021/22).

In relation to this, the VCBRA manager noted through his interview that PWD was trained in different activities to improve their livelihoods. He said, "*VCBRA facilitate vocational training for the individual with a disability in Ambo technical and vocational training centers to help them get training on wood and metal works, salon, shopping, tailoring, decoration, and ICT skills.*" After the training, VCBRA provided PWD with the starting capital or seed money for PWD to organize into groups to help them start up their business. Further, VCBRA link PWD with existing micro-finance institutions to make them active in the system and as a result more than

In the Livelihood intervention delivery, VCBRA	N	Mean
facilitation of vocational skills training for marginalized groups	18	2.56
supporting marginalized groups to start up their business	18	2.67
linking marginalized groups to micro business to get a loan for their business	18	2.5
advocating for employers to give job opportunities for PWD	18	1.61
advocating to improve the lives of children with disabilities	18	2.67
Grand Mean		2.402

Table 4.
Livelihood component.

16 parents of CWDs and 61 children with disabilities benefited from the services (Annual Report of VCBRA, 2021/22).

On the hand, VCBRA in collaboration with Ambo University, provides economic support for children with physical disabilities. The university donated a cow of foreign Creole with a calf. This cow gives about 15 liters per day. The boy got enough milk to drink and rent the excess. His family earns money from milk rent and improved economically. These are the livelihood and social components that endeavored for this boy, said the program manager and one of the social workers of VCBRA (**Figure 10**). This boy is now happy and said that "Thanks to God and to those who saw me and treated me well, my legs serve me both as legs and hands" (**Figure 5**).

3.6 Empowerment

The empowerment component of the matrix is a cross-cutting theme of the CBR program with the goal to allow people with disabilities to make their own decisions and take responsibility for changing their lives. It includes advocacy, political participation, establishing self-help groups and organizations for peoples with disabilities, and claiming their right to equity, justice, and inclusion in society [16].

To this end, the study participants were requested to assess the extent to which VCBRA's empowerment intervention programs are effective. The observed mean score for "empowerment intervention" was found to be 2 that is equal to the expected mean 2. This indicates that participants were not sure about the effectiveness of VCBRA's empowerment intervention programs (**Table 5**).

On the other hand, VCBRA establishes networking between disability organizations and governmental bureaus, such as health bureau, social affairs bureau, and women and children issue bureau, in Ambo town (Annual Report, 2021/22). In addition, the VCBRA's annual report document (2021/22) the most effective way to change community attitudes toward people with disabilities, should focus on the training and empowerment of PWD. Similarly, the report indicates that VCBRA organized the training for 27 PWD selected from the organization of persons with disabilities (Annual Report, 2019/20).

Figure 10.
The gift to the boy by Ambo University President in collaboration with VCBRA.

In delivering empowerment intervention, VCBRA ...	N	Mean
deliver counseling services for PWD	18	1.78
giving training to family members on how to support PWD	18	2.17
encouraging PWD to participate in social activities	18	2.33
organizing inclusive sports activities	18	2
supporting PWD to access legal assistance service	18	1.83
Grand Mean		2.022

Table 5.
Empowerment component.

3.7 Social

The social component aims for people with disabilities to have meaningful social roles and responsibilities in their families and communities, and be treated as equal members of society. Hence, children with disabilities have a right to participate in the community's culture, religion, art, sport, recreation, and access to justice [17].

Accordingly, the study participants were requested to assess the extent to which VCBRA's social intervention programs are effective. The observed mean score for 'Social intervention' was found to be 2.4 that is greater than the expected mean 2. This indicates that VCBRA's social intervention programs seem to be effective (**Table 6**).

This finding is similar to the findings from the picture collection. Accordingly, VCBRA worked only on inclusive sports (Source: photo collection of VCBRA) (**Figure 11**).

This depicts the inclusive sport in which boys with physical disabilities play football with children without physical disabilities. From this figure, it is possible to observe that VCBRA is working to improve the situation of children with disabilities to have meaningful social participation in sports activities in the community.

3.8 Challenges of VCBRA's intervention programs

By reviewing relevant documents of VCBRA and data gained from the interview, the major challenges encountered during the VCBRA's early intervention programs were identified and presented as follows. Some of the major challenges include:

In delivering the social intervention, VCBRA ...	N	Mean
provide training on communication skills for PWDs	18	2.28
encourage PWD to participate in the social issue	18	2.22
provide training to develop self-help skills for needy group	18	2.72
mobilize resources to empower PWDs	18	2.28
build the capacity of district disabled people's organizations (DPOs)	18	2.56
Grand Mean		2.412

Table 6.
Social component.

Figure 11.
Inclusive sport.

Lack of coordination among stakeholders: There was weak partner institutional among different stakeholders, which resulted in program postponements and delays (Annual Report, 2021/22). The manager highlighted in his interview that coordination amongst stakeholders presented one of the critical challenges for early intervention programs. Governmental offices of the concerned body are not supportive as expected and some of them are reluctant to work for effective early intervention. On the other hand, literature depicted that organizations of person with disability have the roles in promoting the education of children with disability, for example, by "encouraging parents to send their children to school and become involved in their children's education, providing role models, and campaigning for inclusive education." ([1], p. 125)

Lack of professional staff: Staff noted that one of the biggest challenges faced in the early intervention program had been the absence of trained and professionally diversified staff (Annual Report, 2021/22). The manager reported the low capacity of parents, teachers, and school staff to screen children with disabilities and implement early intervention programs were also identified as the major challenges.

Budget constraints: The annual report stated that due to the lack of budget constraints, VCBRA was not able to address the needs of a large number of children with disabilities migrating from rural areas to the towns. For example, assistive devices are a major unfilled gap in Ethiopia (Annual Report, 2019/21). This finding is consistent with the research report indicating that the intervention program was highly dependent on external funds [18].

Low involvements of parents: The duration of the intervention depends on the type, intensity of the problem, and parents' involvement level. The manager notified that some parents are reluctant to play their role and make the intervention program ineffective. This is one of the challenges field workers encountered and forced to stop intervention. He contended that "*parents ... rather than playing their role as they sign agreement with VCBRA to deal with intervention programs, some parents wait for payable money from VCBRA in order to provide support service for their own children.*" This finding is not similar to the roles of parents identified by the World Report on

Disability (2011) [1] serving as the first source of information for a child and creating educational opportunities for their children at home.

COVID-19 as a challenge: Finally, the various challenges and restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted and reduced the VCBRA's intervention program activities (said the Director).

In relation to this, all the above, identified challenges were consistent with the challenges of intervention programs reported by MOLSA [3], such as limited number of community-based rehabilitation programs, inadequate or nonexistent specialized medical rehabilitation services, and lack of availability of affordable assistive aids and devices.

4. Conclusion

The effectiveness of VCBRA intervention programs was assessed using the CBR matrix. It is possible to conclude that VCBRA worked mainly on three components of CBR: health, education, and livelihood components of rehabilitation services intervention programs for children with disability. The health, education, and livelihood components gained high emphasis from VCBRA, while empowerment and social components of rehabilitation programs were less focused. In addition, children and youths with different disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, poor families, employees of the association, and the community at large are beneficiaries of VCBRA intervention programs.

VCBRA has faced challenges, such as lack of trained and diversified staff, lack of financial resources, low parent involvement, and the negative impact of COVID-19, were identified as the main challenges hindering the implementation of early intervention programs provided by the association.

5. Implications

Early intervention is essential, cost-effective, and more successful if it is done at the early years for children with disabilities. In the early intervention program it is better to focus on the child's abilities (what he/she can) rather than the child's disabilities (what he/she can't). The interventions by VCBRA were focusing on emphasizing the child's ability than disability. For more achievements, VCBRA shall work to employ skilled and professionally diverse staff to provide comprehensive services. There should be a strategy to increase the involvement and collaborations with parents and other stakeholders, search for more financial resources, and strengthen the identification and support centers for children with various disabilities. Moreover, VCBRA should work more on its coverage and expansion of the rehabilitation services throughout the region and at the national level in order to address a large number of marginalized children in the community through early intervention programs. Finally, there is a need to improve, expand and standardize the CBR services [3].

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Chapter 6

The Role of NGOs in Protecting and Preserving Cultural Heritage in the EU: The Case of Slovenia-Austria Cross-Border Program

Vito Bobek, Manuela Slanovc and Tatjana Horvat

Abstract

The core part of this chapter is an analysis of how is the cultural heritage present in the EU Policies and in the Slovenia-Austria Interreg V Program in the previous and present multi-annual financial framework (2014–2020 and 2021–2027). The special focus is on the role of NGOs in protecting and preserving cultural heritage at the level of Slovenia. The final section identifies an example of a project idea titled HEGIRA-Heritage in Your Hands where NGOs in the field of cultural heritage are accepted as project partners. A historic forge in Bad Eisenkappel (Austria) serves as an authentic location to establish a "Centre for Forgotten Arts" where NGOs could play a distinctive role. Due to its strategically beneficial position, the center will serve as a gateway to Slovenia and bundle cross-border intangible cultural heritage offers. The implementation of the "Craftsmen in Residence" workshop series—aimed at schools, tourists, and interested citizens—will facilitate knowledge transfer and contribute to safeguarding traditional craftsmanship. HEGIRA builds capacity by connecting actors and institutions to develop an integrated cross-border tourist product, which will serve as a role model and can be transferred to other regions with similar territorial challenges and opportunities.

Keywords: EU, cultural heritage, policy, cross-border cooperation, project, NGOs

1. Introduction

An over 300-year-old forge in the south of Carinthia serves as an authentic location to establish a "Centre for Forgotten Arts" embedded in a cross-border EU project. For the project, it is assumed that a nonprofit association, dedicated to the preservation of traditional handicrafts and the revitalization of the forge as a unique local cultural heritage site, has already been founded. This is not the case at the current stage. It is further assumed that this association will act as a Lead Partner. The project partners

were chosen by the authors based on their adequateness to meet the criteria of the EU Funding Program and the project objectives.

As cross-border regions, South of Carinthia and Upper Slovenia have a common handicraft culture and history, the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Program INTERREG V-A-SI-AT with its Investment Priority 6(c) "Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage" is chosen for this case. The authors see sustainable regional development as a holistic concept, not limited to national borders. It must be understood in regions that make use of the strength of common resources. Based on that credo, this specific ETC Program is chosen.

The chosen funding program INTERREG V-A-Slovenia-Austria is part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which further is part of the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds. The European Territorial Cooperation Program, better known as INTERREG, is built around three strands of cooperation [1]:

- cross-border cooperation (INTERREG V A), where Austria takes part in seven Programs, which are Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein (ABH), Austria-Germany/Bavaria (AT-DE), Austria-Czech Republic (AT- CZ), Slovakia-Austria (SK-AT), Austria-Hungary (AT-HU), Slovenia-Austria (SI-AT), and Italy-Austria (IT-AT).

- transnational cooperation (INTERREG B); where Austria takes part in three Programs, namely Danube Area, Alpine Space, and Central Europe.

- interregional cooperation (INTERREG C); where Austria takes part in four Programs, which are INTERREG EUROPE, INTERACT III, ESPON 2020, and URBACT III.

ETC is one of the two goals of Cohesion Policy (the other one being an investment for growth and jobs) and fosters joint actions and policy exchanges between national, regional, and local stakeholders from the different Member States. Its main objective is "to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the union as a whole" [2].

Concerning the historical and legal background of the ESI funds, it can be stated that one of the primary objectives of the EU is to assure equal income standards and economic development among the Member States and regions. Under this objective, the Union introduced in several stages its Regional and Cohesion Policy, implemented through the EU Structural Funds. In 1975, following the first EU enlargement, the main instrument of EU Regional Policy was established with the creation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which was meant to address the increasing problem of regional imbalances. In 1986, a common Regional Policy was created in the context of the Single Market Program and enshrined in the Community treaties with the Single European Act (SEA). The reform of the Structural Funds in 1988 established the main policy guidelines of EU Regional Policy, which are still valid today [3].

Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) defines strengthening the economic, social, and territorial cohesion, reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions, and supporting the least favored regions (e.g., rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, regions that suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps). Article 175 requires that the Union is to support the achievements of these objectives through special funds [4].

There are still high regional economic disparities at the EU level. The highest value of GDP per head is five times the EU average, and the lowest value is about one-third of the EU average. More than a quarter of the EU regions are less developed ones (especially the Eastern-European Member States), where the GDP per head is below 75% of the EU average [5].

Particularly noteworthy is that information about the beneficiaries of EU funding is public. The Financial Transparency System (FTS) website can be found under the link http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm and provides search mechanisms and lists the names of the beneficiaries of the funds managed directly by the EC and their amounts received.

For funding managed by the Member States, publication of the names of beneficiaries is also mandatory and must be published on national websites. Equal treatment, equal access, and transparency are basic principles of EU funding. A listing of the transparency websites of the Austrian ESI Fund beneficiaries can be found on the ÖROK website [6]:

- ERDF:https://www.efre.gv.at/projekte/projektlandkarte INTERREG: https://www.keep.eu/ and Program websites

- ESF: https://www.esf.at/projekte/liste-der-vorhaben/

- EAFRD: https://www.transparenzdatenbank.at/

- EMFF: at the moment no platform installed

- ÖROK Project Database: https://www.projektdatenbank-oerok.at/ (selected projects, which contribute to relevant national strategies such as the Austrian Climate and Energy Strategy)

Traditional handicraft skills are a critically endangered intangible cultural heritage asset and therefore need safeguarding for future generations. The Austrian Commission for UNESCO warns in there in 2016 published study on "Traditional craftsmanship as an ICH and economic factor in Austria" that traditional crafts need more public awareness to be preserved. Entire professions and the associated knowledge and skills are threatened with disappearance. The Commission demands that it is time to counteract these negative tendencies. Not only as a sustainable response to the mass production of global markets and overflowing consumption but also to provide meaningful and promising education and training for future generations [7]. The CP also underlines the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage as a fundamental pillar for the improved regional tourist offer and sees a clear intervention need [8].

The focus of the project will be on former crafts directly linked to the mountain farming regions of Carinthia and Upper Slovenia. The thematic categorization of the traditional skills is based on the book "The forgotten Arts" [9]. For the selected project, the following crafts form a selection base:

- Woodland crafts (hurdle making, rake making, fork making, besom making, ladder making, charcoal burning, basket making)

- Building crafts (wooden buildings, walling)

- Crafts of the field (dry stone walling, making stiles, well digging)

- Workshop crafts (chair making, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, coppering, sled making, crooks making, potting, brickmaking)

- Textiles and home crafts (spinning, wool craft, dyeing, candle making, soap making, traditional herbal medicine)

This chapter aims to embed the project into EU cultural heritage policies, EU cross-border cooperation, and the role NGOs could play in the realization of this project.

2. Cultural heritage in the EU policies

The EC's survey in 2007 on the importance of cultural values among EU citizens has shown that 40–50% declare to visit historical monuments and museums [10]. Another noteworthy fact is that nearly half of the cultural heritage sites are situated in Europe. Italy comes first, followed by France, Germany, and Spain. Furthermore, nearly a quarter of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage is "located" in the EU [10].

The EP states that cultural heritage has multiple positive effects such as economic effects (e.g., positive impact on job creation, tourist attraction), social effects (e.g., as an identity factor favoring integration, cohesion, and participation), and also environmental effects (e.g., sustainable development of landscapes) [10].

Although the European Parliament points to the fact that cultural policy and care for cultural heritage are the sole responsibility of the Member States, Article 3(3) of the Treaty on EU states that the Union "shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced." Furthermore, the importance of cultural heritage is mentioned in the TFEU under Article 167, where it is stated that the EU "should encourage cooperation between the Member States" and support (i) the improvement of knowledge and dissemination of culture and history of European people and (ii) the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance [10].

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe issued a recommendation for a European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the twenty-first century, which is based on the following three components: promotion of social participation and good governance, territorial and economic development on a sustainable basis, and knowledge and education with the contribution of research and training [11].

The European Commission stated in the press release on December 7th, 2018 that during the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018, over 6.2 million people took part in more than 11,700 events organized across 37 countries. To ensure a sustainable impact beyond 2018, the Commission introduced five new actions, prepared through exchanges with the Member States, the European Parliament, civil society, cultural operators, and international organizations such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO to protect and promote Europe's rich cultural heritage [12]:

- Cultural heritage for an inclusive Europe: participation and access for all (e.g. initiative #WeareEuropeForCulture will fund pop-up exhibitions in public spaces)

- Cultural heritage for a sustainable Europe: smart solutions for a cohesive and sustainable future (e.g., European Capital of Smart Tourism, in 2019 Helsinki and Lyon was awarded the title)

• Cultural heritage for a resilient Europe: safeguarding endangered heritage (e.g., iRESIST+ project, which will help increase the capacity of historical buildings to resist earthquakes)

• Cultural heritage for an innovative Europe: mobilizing knowledge and research (e.g., knowledge transfer through Erasmus+ Program, map skills at risk, develop frameworks for raising awareness and attracting young people to heritage professions)

• Cultural heritage for stronger global partnerships: reinforcing international cooperation (e.g., international network for cultural heritage innovation and diplomacy under Horizon 2020).

The EU supports numerous cultural heritage actions and networks. The EU initiative European Capitals of Culture, for example, was launched already in 1985. European cities can apply under the Creative Europe Program to promote their cultural heritage and benefit from 1.5 million Euros funding (e.g., Melina Mercouri Prize). Another initiative is the European Heritage Label, which was launched in 2013. So far it has been awarded to 38 sites in the EU for their value as symbols of European ideas, history, and integration. The European digital library Europeana, which is funded through the Connecting Europe Facility Program, counts over 51 million items from across all Member States and is searchable in all EU official languages [10].

The European Heritage Days are a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. It is the most widely celebrated participatory cultural event in Europe with over 50,000 events organized every year in 50 European States with 30 million visitors. Furthermore, the Call for European Stories, which was launched as an activity of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, will continue to support the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, adopted in December 2018 to secure the long-term impact of the European Year of Cultural Heritage [13].

Through the European Cultural Routes program, the Council of Europe offers a model for transnational networks working on European heritage promotion. The Cultural Routes bring together heritage sites, universities, national, and regional authorities, SMEs, and tour operators. The European Cultural Routes counted 38 routes in 2019, for example, European Route of Historic Thermal Towns, Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes, European Route of Industrial Heritage, European Route of Ceramics, Viking Route [14].

The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage better known as Europa Nostra Awards was launched in 2002 by the EC and promotes best practices related to heritage conservation, management, research, education, and communication. Furthermore, the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN) 2019 has announced the award for destinations of sustainable cultural tourism under the special theme "Culture and Heritage for Responsible Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions" [15].

Supporting culture initiatives can bring many benefits to cities and regions, as demonstrated, for example, through the European Capital of Culture Label. Cultural events create significant social and economic impact, particularly if they are embedded into a long-term culture- and creativity-led development strategy. Moreover, cultural initiatives may contribute to social inclusion and poverty reduction. It is, however, stressed by the EC that ESI Funds cannot replace national budgets in terms of maintenance of cultural heritage [16].

Culture is not directly mentioned among the Thematic Objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy as they constitute means rather than objectives. However, there is one slight reference under the flagship initiative "A Digital Agenda for Europe" where it is stated that the European Commission will work to create a single market for online content to support the digitalization of Europe's rich cultural heritage [17].

Investments in the renovation of historical buildings or building/renovation of cultural institutions are stated to be eligible if they are part of an overall economic development strategy for a specific territory and/or foster the socioeconomic integration of minorities through valorizing their cultural background. Cultural projects could also be a part of the ERDF support if they contribute to creating and safeguarding sustainable jobs through investments in SMEs [16].

3. Cultural heritage in the Slovenia-Austria Interreg V Program

3.1 The multi-annual financial framework 2014–2020

While cultural and creative industries are somewhat implicit to the Thematic Objectives regarding innovation and SME competitiveness, the conservation, protection, promotion, and development of cultural heritage are referred to under investment priority 6(c) under Thematic Objective 6 [16].

According to the "EC Guidance for desk officers: Support to culture-related investments" [16], particularly the following Thematic Objectives (TO) apply:

- TO 1 – Strengthening research, technological development, and innovation (including service innovation and clusters)

- TO 2 – Enhancing access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICT) including e-culture applications and services

- TO 3 – Enhancing growth and competitiveness of SMEs

- TO 6 – Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (by protecting, promoting, and developing cultural and natural heritage)

- TO 8 – Promoting employment and supporting labor mobility (by enhancing accessibility to, and development of, specific natural and cultural resources as part of a territorial strategy for specific areas)

- TO 9 – Promoting social inclusion through improved access to social, cultural, and recreational services (as part of urban regeneration schemes)

- TO 10 – Investing in education, training, and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure.

3.2 The multi-annual financial framework 2021–2027

The Cohesion Policy for the current period 2021–2027 focuses only on five Thematic Objectives. Regional development investments strongly focus on two objectives, where 65–85% of the resources will be allocated to. The first objective is a smarter Europe through innovation, digitalization, economic transformation, and

support to SMEs, the second one is a greener, carbon-free Europe through investing in energy transition, renewables, and climate change actions. Further objectives are a more connected Europe with strategic transport and digital networks, a more social Europe supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion, and equal access to healthcare, and a Europe closer to citizens by supporting locally led development strategies and sustainable urban development (EU Budget for the future. European Commission, 2018a). The European Commission stated in the press release on May 29th, 2018 that the overall goal of the modernized Cohesion Policy is to "drive up economic and social convergence while helping regions harness fully globalization and equipping them with the right tools for robust and lasting growth" [12].

The allocation method for the funds is still based on the GDP per head, whereas new criteria, for example, youth unemployment or integration of migrants are added. The new Cohesion Policy still follows the principle of shared management and is calculated based on three categories (less-developed, transition, and more-developed regions). The European Commission also announced administrative simplifications, for example, more flexibility to cope with unforeseen events and a single rule book for seven funds (ERDF, CF, ESF+, EMFF, the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Internal Security Fund, and the Border Management and Visa Instrument). Interregional Innovation Investments supports pan-European smart specialization strategies. The Seal of Excellence allows projects successfully evaluated under Horizon Europe to be funded by Cohesion Policy without having to pass another selection process. The centrally managed InvestEU fund addresses investment gaps using combining grants and financial instruments. This fund includes also special provisions to attract more private capital [18].

Support to Cultural Heritage beyond 2020 can be allocated especially to the fifth objective—Europe closer to citizens by supporting community-led local development strategies and sustainable urban development.

The new generation of interregional and cross-border cooperation Interreg VI removes cross-border obstacles and supports interregional innovation cooperation projects in the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2021–2027. This means regions can collaborate with other regions anywhere in Europe. This new approach aims to facilitate joint services and harmonize legal frameworks. The Commission proposes moreover to create Interregional Innovative Investments and states "Regions with matching 'smart specialization' assets will be given more support to build pan-European clusters in priority sectors such as big data, circular economy, advanced manufacturing or cybersecurity" (European Commission, 2020c). But there is one negative news to report. The opinion paper of the European Committee of the regions on the new ETC beyond 2020 states with regret that EU co-financing rates will decrease from 85–70% [19].

The European Council's new strategic Agenda 2019–2024 focuses on four main priorities: (i) protecting citizens and freedom; (ii) developing a strong and vibrant economic base; and (iii) building a climate-neutral, green, fair, and social Europe; and (iv) promoting European interests and values on the global stage [20].

The authors aim to submit the HEGIRA project proposal (or parts of it) in this funding period. To enhance the competitiveness of the potential future project proposal, the authors suggest considering the following strategical adaptions [21]:

• Involvement of natural heritage project partners (e.g., Geopark Karawanken, Mountain farmers association Coppla Casa)

• Integration of research components to contribute to all dimensions of safeguarding as defined by UNESCO

- Embedding of the project in a wider regional development strategy (e.g., collect Letters of Intend to demonstrate this)

- Enhancement of overall attractiveness of the project proposal through elaboration on the common history of the CROSS-BORDER regions (e.g., additional work package on the historical iron trading route, themed path "Iron Route")

- Extension of ICH digitalization components in the project to improve contribution to the EU's Digital Agenda (e.g., Edutech, Gamification) following the example of the i-Treasures EU project, where the capture of ICH performances is based on the use of multi-sensing technologies (European Commission, 2016b).

- Facilitation of interregional partnerships with schools, build on the results of UNESCO Pilot Project "Teaching and learning with living heritage," which already demonstrated how living heritage can be creatively integrated into various school subjects such as mathematics, physics, or even languages.

Without the facilitation of knowledge transfer and safeguarding measures, the valuable intangible cultural heritage of traditional craftsmanship will get lost in the region of Unterkärnten. There are no similar projects in this area addressing this challenge, thus there is an urgent need for initiatives—HEGIRA can be one of them.

Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage for future generations and transmitting the knowledge of traditional handicraft skills will not be an easy mission, but the following quote gives hope that EU funding will continue for initiatives in this area: "We will invest in culture and our cultural heritage, which is at the heart of our European identity" [20].

4. The role of NGOs in protecting and preserving cultural heritage: the Case of Slovenia

The Cultural Heritage Protection Act [22] stipulates that a non-governmental organization whose activities make an important contribution to the protection, the development of heritage awareness, the expansion of knowledge and skills related to heritage, and training and lifelong learning may acquire the status of a non-governmental organization, in the field of cultural heritage for the public benefit. The status is acquired based on the law governing the realization of the public interest in culture and with the reasonable application of regulations governing the operation of associations.

Under the same conditions, a church or other religious community may acquire the status of a non-governmental organization working in the field of cultural heritage for the public benefit if it has its legal personality.

A person who has the status of a non-governmental organization working in the field of heritage protection for the public benefit has the right to:

- giving opinions and proposing solutions to individual protection issues,

- participation in advisory bodies of the Ministry, provinces, and municipalities,

- participation in the procedures for the preparation of strategies from and other strategic documents of the state, provinces, and municipalities concerning the protection and preservation of heritage,

• performing other tasks in the field of protection based on public tenders.

A person who is also the owner of inheritance has the right to participate in matters of protection concerning that particular heritage, provided that there is no conflict of interest between his role as owner and the non-governmental organization.

The Strategy of cultural heritage mentions the following areas among development orientations and measures, where it determines the role of NGOs [23]:

• Promoting quality and continuous public information on heritage.
  Awareness of all the people of Slovenia about the importance of heritage for humanity, for the modern society and the individual, and the duties and rights related to its preservation in the original environment must be improved. This can be achieved by promoting heritage interpretation, quality media reporting, and supporting the efforts of all stakeholders in developing public awareness of the importance, vulnerability, and uniqueness of heritage in its original environment. NGOs can participate in increasing the diversity of approaches to developing public awareness of the value of heritage for society and in supporting joint promotional projects involving cultural operators, NGOs, and heritage communities. The set of possible activities for NGOs includes:

  o Public calls and tenders coordinated between stakeholders aimed at media promotion of heritage in public. Public tenders for non-governmental organizations in the field of heritage and informal heritage communities, promote new approaches to the recognition of heritage values.

  o Complement public calls for public protection service providers by giving priority to joint and innovative promotional projects on selected heritage themes.

  o Define in the media strategy the promotion of quality and continuous presentations of heritage content in the media.

• Encouraging individuals and heritage communities to inter/multigenerational and intercultural integration in heritage revitalization.
  The active involvement of different generations and groups in heritage activities needs to be improved in collaboration with heritage experts and heritage lovers. We expect the creation of new ways of connecting and a new division of roles and responsibilities within civil society. The measure, in which NGOs can participate, envisages the promotion of heritage communities and non-governmental organizations to inter/multigenerational and intercultural dialog in heritage revitalization.

• Encouraging individuals and heritage communities to inter/multigenerational and intercultural integration in heritage revitalization. The active involvement of different generations and groups in heritage activities needs to be improved in collaboration with heritage experts and heritage lovers. We expect the creation of new ways of connecting and a new division of roles and responsibilities within civil society. The measure, in which NGOs can participate, envisages the promotion of heritage communities and non-governmental organizations to inter/multigenerational and intercultural dialog in heritage revitalization. The set of possible activities for NGOs includes:

o Agreement on a cross-sectoral program to encourage NGOs and heritage communities to inter/multigenerational and intercultural cooperation and to activate groups from different social backgrounds in heritage projects, in organizing activities and events on the topic of heritage.

o Calls for tenders for the implementation of this program.

o Complement public calls for cultural operators in ways that enable joint education projects accessible to older people and other vulnerable groups on heritage.

o Upgrade and support the networking of institutions operating in the field of inter/multigenerational cooperation and include heritage content.

- Ensuring access to heritage for all. Accessibility in all areas of heritage needs to be improved to ensure a responsible attitude of individuals and communities toward it. Physical, intellectual, informational, technologically supported, and user-friendly accessibility cannot be ensured without the planned development of expertise. The measure, in which NGOs can participate, envisages increasing the diversity of accessibility tailored to individual target groups, including vulnerable groups, and increasing the scope of these activities. The set of possible activities for NGOs includes:

o Preparation of a recommendation to improve different forms of accessibility for individual target groups.

o Complement public calls for public care providers by promoting access to heritage for vulnerable groups.

o Extend public calls for scholarships to allow more integration of scarce professions in the field of heritage protection into international training programs to improve heritage accessibility.

o Audit of physical accessibility in buildings and premises in the field of heritage and development of improvement plans.

- Developing and disseminating knowledge and good practices for the transmission of heritage values. The task of all stakeholders is to promote and promote good practices that increase the understanding of the social role of heritage and indirectly promote economic growth. The measure, in which NGOs can participate, envisages the promotion of quality interpretation and presentation of heritage for tourism and other purposes, as well as the planned development of expertise for the interpretation of heritage values and their presentation to the public. The set of possible activities for NGOs includes:

o Preparation of recommendations for the interpretation of heritage for tourism and other purposes.

o Agreement on a cross-sectoral program of education in the field of interpretation and transmission of heritage values.

      ○ Implementation of such a program.

      ○ Involvement of heritage communities in the interpretation and presentation of heritage.

- Strengthening the role of heritage sites as a crossroads of modern society and active living and enrichment of free time. Heritage is a common good and a value of the living environment. It is therefore an important component of the public space of cities and other environments. By reviving it, we are increasing the value of common spaces intended for all citizens and visitors. This also promotes public dialog, which must be based on the "right to heritage" and include heritage content at all levels in spatial planning, renovation, urban planning, and maintenance. The measure, in which NGOs can participate, envisages support for initiatives for the integration of heritage into open public spaces and publicly accessible parts of buildings (integration with the implementation of architectural policy).

In the calls for financing from the cross-border cooperation program till November 2020 [24]: 82 successful applicants were from business organizations of different kinds, 76 successful applicants were from municipalities and regional administration, 71 successful applicants were from development agencies, 68 successful applicants were knowledge institutions, 33 successful applicants were chambers, unions, and similar associations, 28 successful applicants were national authorities, ministries with agencies and similar institutions, 25 successful applicants were clusters and business support institutions, 14 successful applicants were NGOs, 15 successful applicants were nature parks and their organizations, 15 successful applicants were tourism organizations and museums, 6 successful applicants were hospitals.

Types of beneficiaries supported under the investment priority are among others institutions, organizations, associations, and NGOs in the field of nature protection and conservation, environment, spatial planning, public transport, culture, and tourism.

5. An example of a project idea titled HEGIRA: heritage in Your Hands

Numerous private efforts have been undertaken to renovate and revitalize the over 300-year-old forge in the center of the small village of Bad Eisenkappel in the South of Carinthia. It is one of the last surviving examples of local history there, and the first recorded mention of it is in 1727 [25]. One coauthor's family and a family friend saved the forge from demolition and purchased it by auction in 2008. All machines in the forge are driven by waterpower, the Francis Turbine, built-in 1920, was put back into operation and supplies also energy for the adjacent residential area. The forge was first publicly accessible on the September 26th in 2010 on the "Day of the Monument," which is an initiative embedded within the "European Heritage Days." In this yearly event, privately owned monuments can participate and are accessible to the public free of admission. The event is organized in Austria by the Austrian Federal Monuments Office (BDA). Furthermore, the historic forge has already been declared particularly worthy of protection by the BDA.

Over the last 10 years, a large amount of private money has been invested into the site, and no further progress is possible without public support. From the authors' perspective, the cultural value of this historic object needs to be preserved for future generations. The project vision of the authors is to transform the spacious property

of the old forge into a "Centre for Forgotten Arts," where old traditional handicrafts can be experienced in an authentic environment. The garden area would be suitable for events, and the old farmstead could accommodate craftsmen. Moreover, an exhibition area and seminar facilities could be constructed in the old stable. For the implementation of this project vision, a nonprofit association or a foundation must be established, and the necessity of transferring the property to it must be examined.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines cultural heritage as "the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present, and bestowed for the benefit of future generations" and sub-categorizes into [10]:

- tangible heritage composed of movable heritage (sculptures, paintings, coins, and manuscripts), immovable monuments (including archeological sites), and underwater cultural heritage (shipwrecks, underwater ruins, and cities)

- intangible heritage (oral traditions, performing arts, crafts, and rituals)

- natural heritage (cultural landscapes, geological, biological, and physical formations)

- cultural heritage endangered by destruction and looting in armed conflict.

It can be stated that the project thus addresses two cultural heritage aspects. On the one hand, the traditional handicrafts (intangible cultural heritage), and on the other hand, it embeds the implementation idea in the authentic environment of the forge (tangible heritage monument).

According to the Cooperation Program INTERREG V-A Austria-Slovenia, it can be stated that the project location Bad Eisenkappel (in Slovenian Železna Kapla) is within the eligible Program area and belongs to the territorial unit NUTS 3 Unterkärnten [8]. Not far from Bad Eisenkappel there are two routes (border crossings) to Slovenia. The pass Seebergsattel (in Slovenian Jezerski vrh) is 16 kilometers away and leads to the Slovenian region Savinjska, and the pass Paulitschsattel (in Slovenian Pavličevo sedlo) is 17 kilometers distance and leads to the Slovenian region of Gorenjska. In early times, the Seebergsattel was an important trade route for iron transport from Eisenkappel to Kranj in Slovenia. Records show that the roars of the hammer mills in Eisenkappel, which were built on the shore of the river Vellach (in Slovenian Bela), were heard from afar. Columns of smoke from the lead smelters rose, their ores being extracted below the summit of the Obir. The much younger Paulitschsattel was constructed during the nineteenth century and the nearby historical border crossing above the Leonhard Church fell into oblivion. Due to the common history and the geographical proximity, these two regions are selected as locations for the project partners with the premise of having a clear background in local cultural heritage. Moreover, it is an essential precondition that these partners operate established museums to enable knowledge transfer to the planned "Centre for Forgotten Arts." As outlined in the Cooperation Program, both Slovenian regions are within the eligible Program area [8].

The data of Statistic Austria show that population development is decreasing in Bad Eisenkappel [26]. Also, the Cooperation Program [8] refers on page 9 to statistical data of EUROSTAT 2014 and a population decrease in Unterkärnten of minus 3%. Additionally, the number of overnight stays is significantly lower in comparison to

the years before 2013. It can also be seen that the overnight stays in Bad Eisenkappel remain low during the summer months, whereas the average number in the province (Bezirk) rises remarkably [27].

Similar territorial challenges can be observed in the Slovenian regions. The Cooperation Program [8] states on page 9 that all regions show employment rates of elderly people (aged 55–64) below the EU-28 average of 50.1% in 2013. It is furthermore mentioned that the need for network activities and knowledge transfer among the actors is getting more and more important.

Traditional handicraft skills are a critically endangered ICH asset and therefore need safeguarding for future generations. The Austrian Commission for UNESCO warns in there in 2016 published study on "Traditional craftsmanship as an ICH and economic factor in Austria" that traditional crafts need more public awareness to be preserved. Entire professions and the associated knowledge and skills are threatened with disappearance. The Commission demands that it is time to counteract these negative tendencies. Not only as a sustainable response to the mass production of global markets and overflowing consumption but also to provide meaningful and promising education and training for future generations [28]. The Cooperation Program [8] also underlines the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage as a fundamental pillar for the improved regional tourist offer and sees a clear intervention need.

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- Workshop crafts (chair making, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, coppering, sled making, crooks making, potting, brickmaking)

- Textiles and home crafts (spinning, wool craft, dyeing, candle making, soap making, traditional herbal medicine)

It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by Intangible Cultural heritage. This chapter uses the following definition of Intangible Cultural heritage suggested by UNESCO [28]: "Intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity."

Intangible Cultural heritage as defined above is manifested in the following domains [29]: (i) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; (ii) performing arts; (iii) social practices, rituals, and

festive events; (iv) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and (v) traditional craftsmanship.

This chapter uses the following definition of "safeguarding" suggested by UNESCO [29]: "Safeguarding means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage."

Former case-relevant EU projects with synergies to the present project idea exist. Learnings will be taken from their outcomes and potential future partnerships might be established.

- EUREVITA (ongoing, Interreg AT-SLO 14–20). The project aims to develop a sustainable cross-border labor economy structure to revitalize cultural heritage and rare crafts. The project aims to revitalize old crafts through innovative cross-border training and networking measures. The project is funded under the thematic objective (TO) 11, which is "better public administration" [30].

- EUREVITA PANNONIA (ongoing, Interreg AT-HU 14–20) is the equivalent of the EUREVITA project within the ETC between Austria and Hungary [31].

- CRAFTS (2002–2005, Interreg IIIB Alpine Space). The pilot project aimed to create synergies between the craft and tourism sectors. CROSS-BORDER actions, for example, between Slovenia and Carinthia were announced to be developed. The project consortium consisted of 12 project partners. The project's results were inter alia the display and sale of products under the management of local traders, the design of a hemp route and an eco-museum, an international wood exhibition, and a tourist route to rediscover the industrial traditions of the area [32].

- RURITAGE (Horizon 2020). The project focuses on cultural heritage as a driver for sustainable growth. So-called "Replicators" learn from role models and a set of tools will be available for knowledge building. Heritage-led rural regeneration strategies are developed in a co-creation process involving stakeholders and the local community in Local Rural Heritage Hubs [33].

- ARTISTIC (2017–2020, Interreg Central Europe) is developing a model for improving the marketing skills of those involved in ICH and is testing crowdfunding as an alternative financing option for local ICH projects in pilot regions [34].

- CRAFTS 3.0 (2017–2020, Erasmus+) is supporting the transition of handicraft teachers and trainers to the Digital Age and consists of a consortium from seven countries. In a co-creation process, innovative digital educational methods will be designed for teaching crafts and a guide for the craft sector in Europe will be published [35].

- MADE IN (2018–2020, Creative Europe) is a cooperation project between numerous institutions with a broad artist network and has a craft research and design focus. Workshop visits, residency programs, seminars, and traveling exhibitions are part of the work program [36].

- FORGET HERITAGE (2016–2019, Interreg Central Europe) identified innovative replicable sustainable private-public cooperation management models of abandoned historical sites. The development of management tools to influence national policies, develop human resources, and strengthen local systems including an analysis of transferable elements in good practices of cultural heritage management were key assets of the project [37].

6. Conclusion

Cultural heritage is recognized to have a high value for individuals, communities, and societies. As an identity factor, it fosters social cohesion, and as an economic driver, it contributes to job creation in the cultural sector as well as in related sectors such as gastronomy and hotel businesses. Moreover, regions with a rich cultural heritage can benefit from various environmental effects, such as the enhancement of the uniqueness of the place.

The EC's survey in 2007 on the importance of cultural values among EU citizens has shown that 40–50% declare to visit historical monuments and museums [10]. The European Year of Cultural Heritage, which was launched in 2018, illustrates the valorization of cultural heritage on a high policy level. The creation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, signed in 2003, underscores the necessity for the preservation of i.a. oral expressions such as languages, performing arts, festive events, practices concerning nature, and traditional craftsmanship [38]. Safeguarding ICH is a shared responsibility between different actors ranging from policymakers to stakeholders and other societal actors. Although Culture is not directly mentioned among the Thematic objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, there is one slight reference under the flagship initiative "A Digital Agenda for Europe" where it is stated that the EC will work to create a single market for online content to support the digitalization of Europe's rich cultural heritage [17]. The most obvious finding to emerge from the "EC Guidance for desk officers: Support to culture-related investments" [16] is that it is indispensable to embed the project proposal in a wide regional development strategy with a broad network of regional cooperation partners. This is a crucial factor for eligibility and increases the opportunities for a positive EU funding commitment.

Such contribution to safeguarding and preserving cultural heritage is a project proposal within the ETC Program Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria titled HEGIRA – HEritaGe In youR Hands where NGOs in the field of cultural heritage are accepted as project partners. The 3-year project will safeguard the rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the cross-border regions and contribute to sustainable tourism development across borders, which is one of the Program objectives.

A historic forge in Bad Eisenkappel serves as an authentic location to establish a "Centre for Forgotten Arts" facilitated by a co-creation process with the involvement of key stakeholders. Due to its strategically beneficial position, the center will serve as a gateway to Slovenia and bundle cross-border and cross-regional intangible cultural heritage offers, thus enabling capacity building and the enhanced use of synergies. The joint development and implementation of the Craftsmen in Residence workshop series aimed at schools, tourists, and interested citizens (knowledge seekers) will facilitate know-how transfer between knowledge providers (craftsmen) and the knowledge seekers. This will increase the recognition and contribute to the knowledge transfer of traditional handicraft skills and their safeguarding for future generations. The creation of innovative digital learning material and events such as the Forgotten

Arts Summer Festival and Christmas Markets are further core aspects of the project and will enhance the visibility of traditional craftsmanship. Unique about HEGIRA is the combination of the abovementioned measures and activities while revitalizing the last surviving example of local history in Bad Eisenkappel. HEGIRA builds capacity by connecting Intangible cultural heritage actors and institutions to develop an integrated CROSS-BORDER tourist product, which will serve as a role model and can be transferred to other regions with similar territorial challenges and opportunities.

This approach is especially relevant for rural regions, which on the one hand are often the last resort for endangered traditional handicrafts and their related build artifacts and on the other hand face territorial challenges, such as unemployment of elderly people or rural depopulation. The preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage can serve as a nucleus to address and transform the challenges into opportunities for these rural regions.

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Chapter 7

Tracing the Roots of Anti-Chinese Sentiments in US History

Mimi Yang

Abstract

To understand and confront the ongoing Asian/Chinese hate in the USA as another pandemic virus, this article digs into the root cause in history, as anti-Chinese sentiments are nothing new but invariably in a new context and with a new trigger. A close examination of how a racial hierarchy was constructed by the dominant group sets the stage for the study. The paradoxical relationship between the American ideal of equality and the racial hierarchy is discussed in depth. In doing so, we focus on the Chinese experience in the nineteenth century—the construction of the Transcontinental Rails and the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882–1943)—to argue that the roots of anti-Chinese sentiments rest in the racial hierarchy as well as its coexistence with the lofty ideal of freedom and equality.

Keywords: anti-Chinese, the WASPs, a city upon a hill, the Empire of Liberty, racial hierarchy, freedom and equality, transcontinental rails, the Chinese Exclusion Act, pandemic

1. Introduction

Chinese hate in a macro context: This is a study in the field of cultural and historical studies and squarely fits in the NGO category. The intended audience is historians, cultural studies scholars, students, teachers, researchers, and citizens in general. They are independent of government organizations. As an NGO project, the article is expected to reach out to an across-the-board audience and achieve its goal to contribute to the Asian/Chinese-American platform.

Studying the past is to understand the present and prepare for the future. The ideal of "E Pluribus Unum" (from Many, one) shakes and shapes an immigrant, multiracial, and multicultural America. Since the inception of the nation, at different historical moments and with different immigration waves, individuals across racial and ethnic backgrounds from the four corners of the world have gravitated to the American Dream that was born from "E Pluribus Unum." As we approach the 250th anniversary of the USA, the questions are still hanging in the air: by now, is every American included and accepted equally in the land of the free and at the home of the brave? As a nation, have we achieved oneness from many and unity from diversity?

Over the past 3 years, the global-scaled pandemic has unleashed coronavirus in its original version and in its vicious variants; it has killed more than 6 million

deaths, paralyzed the economy, and wreaked havoc with many aspects of our daily life. While the world is facing and dealing with the pandemic-caused damage and destruction, the pandemic has brought upon the Asian-American community another type of virus, that is, anti-Asian virus. In the United States, hatred, discrimination, and violence particularly against Chinese immigrants and East-Asian looking individuals have been on the rise and spiked. Once again, the Chinese are perceived as "Yellow Peril," a threat mixed of the health with the politics. Fueled by President Trump's racially charged epithets "China Virus" or "Kung flu," from the West to East coasts, hate crimes have been become daily news. Fellow Americans assault Chinese/East Asian Americans just because of physical looks and racial profiling. The words of the leader of the free world do matter. When Trump spews the lie that the Chinese have created and spread the virus, certain groups of the population are incited to commit hate crimes. Restaurants in China Towns are vandalized, East-Asian looking frontline doctors and nurses are harassed, children of Chinese descent are bullied at school, and passengers in public transportation are verbally abused and, in some instances, physically attacked. This reopens historical wounds, lacerated by the blade of the "Yellow Peril," and adds the latest chapter to a long anti-Chinese/Asian history.

The repeatedly wounded experience of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders, aka, the AAPI, is one of many racially charged phenomena throughout US history. The result? In 2022, the Chinese-Americans, and AAPI citizens in general still do not wield enough political presence to stop fellow citizens from deploying racist ideas and practices. Their invisibility and silence render the AAPI individuals unimportant and even non-existent, and at the same time, perpetuate the portrayal of foreignness, and peddle the myth of Asian-Americans' unassimilatedness in the American Melting Pot.

Addressing the current cultural landscape that conceals some minefields for Asians and particularly for Chinese-Americans, this essay traces the historical roots of discrimination against Chinese Americans. It focuses on two aspects: one is the historical and cultural context of a racial hierarchy, and the other, the hurdles for the Chinese-Americans, like other marginalized races, to move up on such a racial and power hierarchy. We revisit the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad, the Chinese Exclusion Act. These events coincide with the timeframe of the formation of the nation, thus drawing a blueprint of anti-Chinese sentiments.

2. Tracing the roots of anti-Chinese sentiments in US history

In the American Melting Pot dwell people from the four corners of the world. Asians were not exempt from being "properly" placed where they "belong." The term "Asian" can "spark a full range of reactions in the USA, from being represented or misrepresented to being celebrated or denigrated" [1]. Immigrants of Asian descent can trace back their origins in "more than twenty countries in East, Southeast, and South Asia, across the Pacific and Indian Oceans" [1]. They are the largest Asian origin group, "making up 24% of the Asian population, or 5.4 million people" (According to the 2021 Census Bureau population estimate. My quote is from https://www.google.com/search?q=the+percentage+of+Chinese+Americans+in+Asian+Americans&rlz=1C1CHBF_enUS715US715&oq=the+percentage+of+Chinese+Americans+in+Asian+Americans&aqs=chrome..69i57.13264j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) and bearing the brunt of shared racism and discrimination. For an in-depth understanding of how the notion of Asian racial inferiority was constructed in US

history, this article focuses on the Chinese-Americans, instead of covering the vast inner-Asian-group diversity.

With the slowly increased visibility of the AAPI community in US society and the progress of civil rights, anti-Asian sentiments have taken up less crude and less institutionalized forms when compared with the ones during the Chinese Exclusion Era, 1882–1943. However, the twenty-first century US still perpetuates these sentiments on multiple fronts, and Asian hate oozes from wherever there is a porous surface. Like discrimination and racism experienced by other racial and ethnic groups, anti-Asian sentiments are multi-dimensional, interweaving historical, cultural, and social origins with a myriad of covert and overt acts in the present day. First, we take a close look at the historical and cultural context that conceives the seed and grows a racial hierarchy. Then, we locate where the Chinese have been situated on the racial hierarchy. Navigating through historical knowledge and cultural understanding, we underscore that the Chinese-American experience is an inherent and integral part of the American experience, and for the Chinese-Americans, the road to equality and inalienable rights has been longer and more treacherous than the one for the White and some non-White Americans.

2.1 A racial hierarchy built in "the city upon a hill" and "the Empire of Liberty"

This notion of racial inferiority has hit Chinese Americans throughout history. It speaks of the cultural roots of anti-Asianism in the USA. The global-scaled pandemic has unleashed coronavirus but also anti-Asian virus. In recent years, we have been witnessing a steep surge of hate crimes and violence in the USA, correlating with the Asian American Pacific Islander group in ways that reinforce the effects of past, then-lawful discrimination. Anti-Asian sentiments are nothing new in US history since the mid-nineteenth century with the first wave of East Asian immigrants and the notorious Chinese Exclusion Act (1882–1943). At a time when historical wounds are cut (re)open, and the lingering pandemic continues to expose the racial profiling of the "Yellow Peril," Asian-Americans, particularly those who look like Chinese, find themselves as a perennial target for hatred, distrust, and violence. Race relation in the US often refers to a Black-and-White binary. The pandemic-related racial profiling however reminds us once again that race relation goes beyond a binary; it stretches to and intersects with what surfaces nearby the black-and-white binary. The Chinese, not black and not white, are interwoven into a colossal racial web that, at a given moment, includes while excluding, elevates certain racial groups while lowering or simply stepping on other ones, and protects freedom and equality of some while depriving these unalienable rights form others. The paradoxical duality struggles to define patriotism and nationalism, so much so that American cultural values since the inception conceived a vertical racial hierarchy inextricably associated with the lofty ideals of freedom and equality.

These cultural paradoxes, once built into the very foundation of the nation, can be traced to the very beginning when the British explored and settled in North America in the seventeenth century, and throughout the heyday of the first British empire in the eighteenth century across the Atlantic. America exerted fascination and idealization in such a way that puritan settlers regarded it as a promised land where they were destined to build a model city for the world to see. As a self-proclaimed builder, John Winthrop preached a sermon "A Model City of Christian Charity" in 1630 [2]. Since then, "a city upon a hill" has grown out of biblical pages to become a blueprint for a budding culture to grow and for a national psyche to develop. To pursue a life

of freedom, happiness, and equality is thus intimately aligned with the aspirations and nature of "a city upon a hill." Most importantly, the belief in a "beacon of hope" to illuminate the four corners of the world [2] drove the early puritan settlers to view this model city as a providential mission and themselves as chosen builders. Thus, a corresponding historical, religious, and sociopolitical order must be established to carry out such a mission and deliver such a belief. When adhering themselves to the qualities and attributes of the chosen people in the model city, the Anglo-Saxon puritans' sense of superiority and exclusivity immediately sparked and took roots in America; it quickly found its way into the foundation of the culture and the psyche of a nation-to-be. As this happened, the seeds of a racial hierarchy were planted in the "city" and the "beacon of hope" had its light ensconced from a chosen angle by the chosen holders. The ideal of freedom and equality was unwittingly thrown to a test that would write US history.

The racial hierarchy in US history was not erected overnight. Once regarding themselves as builders of a shining and model city upon the hill, as preached by Winthrop, the early puritan settlers took no time to build an Anglo-centered power base in the new world and position themselves as its protagonist. "The shining city" thus encapsulated an inherently Anglo space in the unfolding landscape of race relations and cultural characters. Native Americans bore no relevance to "the shining city," as in the minds of the early Anglo Protestants, the two worlds were not designed to merge. As the original owners and dwellers of American land, the Native Americans on one hand were not accounted for, in fact, entirely discarded from the history-making and culture-shaping project of building a model city. On the other hand, because of the political/religious and economic interests of this shining city project, native territories were encroached on, tribal political sovereignty was violated, and the indigenous way of life was ruined. All this was done to accommodate the building of the model city and to make the builders, aka, the group of the chosen people, possible to carry out their destined American Project of a shining model city.

When it comes to the definition of America and its cultural characteristics, the Anglo builders had no intention to include anyone who looked different from them. The advantage to be the first cross-Atlantic to lay out the rules and set up governing bodies in the new world unapologetically secured the early English-speaking settlers a ruling station at the very top of a hierarchy of power. On the highest tier of the hierarchy, the Anglo Protestants rule over who got included or excluded from the model city. From the very beginning, the power to shape American culture and institutions has rested in the White-Anglo-Saxon Protestants' (the WASP) hands—an explicit WASP power base and an implicit WASP-dominated racial hierarchy. The early colonists, as chosen and superior individuals, inserted themselves on the top of the pecking order in the new world and perpetuated the consistently implied message of their superiority, authority, and power. Further, through successive periods of history, the English language, Christianity (Protestantism), and unbreakable British ties and institutions were inherited and embraced in America. Institutionally and culturally, the WASP values and interests were set up as the standards and the main definer for the new nation. A racial and cultural hierarchy was erected in the psyche of the nation. In fact, this hierarchy "has never been altered, in spite of the challenges of new cultural DNA pooled from the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement in particular" [2].

In inclusion and exclusion, the model city blueprinted a nation; the power hierarchy evolved into an architecture upon which a Euro-centric culture was sprouted like climbing vines. This is an architecture that supports a power hierarchy as well as a

racial hierarchy, with continuous inclusion and exclusion, revolving around the will, the need, and the interests of the WASPs. Behind the noble and humanistic ideal of freedom and equality, an underlying racial hierarchy was taking place, permeating the fabric of the society and infiltrating institutions, organizations, and systems.

The sense of moral superiority and the sense of a divine mission set the early WASPs free from persecution and injustice exercised in the old world. At the same time, these "common senses" tied them to a blithe proprietorship of righteousness and entitlement, dressed with the ideal of freedom and equality. In 1780, Thomas Jefferson used the phrase "Empire of Liberty" to describe the new nation in his letter to George Rogers Clark (http://wiki.monticello.org/mediawiki/index.php/ Empire_of_liberty). While the American Revolution was still being fought, Jefferson set his goal to create an imperial America that would extend westwards over the entire American continent. In 1804 right after the Louisiana Purchase 1803, he made his presidential intention explicit to duplicate "a government so free and economical as ours, as a great achievement to the mass of happiness which is to ensue" (Jefferson to Dr. Joseph Priestley, 29 January 1804 https://founders.archives.gov/documents/ Jefferson/01-42-02-0322). As the Empire of Liberty doubled in the territory, the model city in New England sent its builders to the American West and the Pacific shores. The WASP values and Anglo power hierarchy traveled throughout from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast. Interventionism and expansionism went hand in hand and were regarded as proactive and benevolent for America's visibility and influence in a new world order as well as for a power hierarchy and control in the newly doubled territory at home. The "Empire of Liberty" envisaged by Jefferson extended "the City upon a hill" Westwards over the American continent.

In the process of achieving happiness for the mass, the triangle slave trade— Africa to West Indies to North America—prospered and African slaves proved to be commodities, laying the economic foundation of "the Empire of Liberty." In the WASP-dominated racial hierarchy, the African slaves were placed on the bottom tier. Yes, they were part of the model city and the Empire of Liberty, dehumanized and exploited with no rights and no upward opportunities. For slave builders of the Empire of Liberty, the pursuit of freedom, happiness, and equality sounded like a cruel irony and a remote fantasy. Clearly, these grand pursuits were only intended for the WASPS, particularly the male WASPS. With the presence of African slaves staggered below Native Americans in social status, the new republic could not help but let a racial hierarchy take roots in its economy, market, and trade. Like Native Americans, African Americans found no dignified place for them in the model city or the Empire liberty, except at the very bottom of the racial hierarchy. As the nation was in the making, especially in the first 100 years of US history, a racial hierarchy was step by step contoured and configured. Skin colors became colors of power, control, access, and social status. Most significantly, the color line was drawn between those who belong to the shining, model city, by extension, the Empire of Liberty, and those who do not. Nation building built the racial hierarchy and the racial hierarchy became part of the nation.

2.2 Immigration and nativism: placing the Chinese on the racial hierarchy

Nativism stemmed from anti-immigration sentiments. In addition to Native Americans and African slaves, racial diversity encompasses immigrants in an immigrant country. This is particularly true when examining the Asian American experience. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw settlers coming to these shores for

personal freedom and relief from political and religious persecution. The nineteenth century witnessed massive immigrants to the USA, fleeing famine and crop failure, seeking land and job opportunities, and avoiding high taxes. The US was perceived as the land of economic opportunity, not unlike the present day. During the period of 1870–1900, the vast majority of immigrants were from Germany, Ireland, and England—the principal sources of immigration before the Civil War. Parallelly starting from the mid-nineteenth century, a relatively large group of Chinese immigrated to the United States. Back in China, the late 1880s can only be described as a chaotic society in the post-Opium War instability, consumed with poverty, famine, displacement and violence. Especially along the southern coastal areas like Guangdong and Hainan provinces and their seaport towns, starvation, destitution, and diseases went rampant. To escape the internal chaos and find a better life was a natural impetus for the southerners; the Chinese from Guangzno had the advantage of being closer to seaports than their inland countrymen. Macao, a southern China seaport colonized by the Portuguese, and Hong Kong, another port colonized by the British, thus became the West Africa in East Asia in recruiting, selling, and shipping Chinese labors, known as "coolies," meaning "heavy-duty" labors.

As a result of these historical circumstances, the mid-nineteenth century exodus of opportunity seekers from China crossed the Pacific with destinations in both North and South Americas. In the USA, the major influx of the Chinese immigrants landed in California during the gold rush 1849–1882, even when federal law stopped their immigration. Before landing in the Americas, the coolies were already second-class citizens at the disposal of their sellers and buyers in the labor market. "Even the willing immigrants did not leave as colonists to a new home. They desired to be sojourners—to earn money and then return to China" [3]. Those who were not recruited by European labor dealers, escaped from the two ports—Macao and Hong Kong—by whatever means. Most of the Chinese who came to the Americas were male farmers and villagers; they typically glued together in an unknown and often hostile environment. Many of them were from the same village or the same extended family. In the USA, they largely congregated in the West around San Francisco area.

From White American establishments' viewpoint, the Chinese was out of place and incongruent with the racial make-up in the American soil. The arrival of the Chinese stirred up a similar racial resentment. Historian Erica Lee points out, "American xenophobia came to focus more on race rather than on religion during the anti-Chinese movement" [4]. Immediately placed on one of the lowest tiers on the racial hierarchy, "the Chinese immigrants were a distinct people [...] whom nature has marked as inferior" [5]. At the same time, the Chinese immigration "was described as an invasion" [6]. San Francisco mayor Frank McCoppin described the Chinese as: "'[...] thoroughly antagonistic in every particular, in race, color, language, religion, civilization, and habits of life all together from our people.' Should Chinese immigration continue unchecked, he dramatically claimed, they would simply run over our land" [7].

It was a clearly anti-Chinese climate. As mentioned previously, in the nineteenth century and especially the second half, there was an unprecedented surge of immigration waves. Irish and German immigrants in the mid and late nineteenth century drove the statics. "Between 1800 and 1930, more than 4.5 million Irish immigrants came to the USA, including 1.5 million in the 1840s and 1850s" (https://www.google.com/search?q=immigration+in+the+19th+century+in+the+united+states&rlz=1C1CHBF_enUS715US715&oq=immigration+in+the+19th+century+in+&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j33i160l5j33i299j33i22i29i30l3.12031j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8).

While the Chinese started to find their way into the USA during the second half of the nineteenth century, Northern and Western Europeans including Great Britain never stopped their entries, and in fact, they accelerated immigration in numbers and frequency, overwhelming the number of the Chinese. Nearly 12 million immigrants arrived in the USA between 1870 and 1900. The absolute number of immigrants in the country rose from less than 2.5 million in 1850 to more than 13.5 million in 1910 [8]. That boosted immigrants as a share of the population to 15%, from 10%, over the period [8]. The anti-Chinese climate was well situated in the massive immigration backdrop. In the face of the "threat" of increased Catholic and other non-Protestant presence, the fear to take away native-born Americans' jobs and "pollute" American values overshadowed the sociopolitical and cultural landscape. In terms of the Chinese presence, fear towards them is an understatement. Because of the non-white race of the Chinese, their non-Christian way of life, and their non-alphabetic language, the Chinese experienced a multiply charged hatred and discrimination in comparison with their White European immigrant counterparts. Bearing no relevance to Native Americans, WAST-centered nativism subjugated all immigrants, whether of Euro-descent or Asian descent, to a racial and cultural hierarchy.

Nativism was the signature of the Know Nothing Party in the mid-1885, which was also known as the American Party, a significant third party in US history. At its height in the 1850s, "the Know Nothing party, included more than 100 elected congressmen, eight governors, a controlling share of half-a-dozen state legislatures from Massachusetts to California, and thousands of local politicians" [9]. The Know Nothing Party had its origin in the secret society, known as the Order of the Star Spangled Banner or OSSB [9]. The OSSB was:

> ... a pureblooded pedigree of Protestant Anglo-Saxon stock and the rejection of all Catholics. And above all, members of the secret society weren't allowed to talk about the secret society. If asked anything by outsiders, they would respond with, "I know nothing." [9].

"Party members supported deportation of foreign beggars and criminals; a 21-year naturalization period for immigrants; mandatory Bible reading in schools; and the elimination of all Catholics from public office" [9]. The Know Nothing party eventually pushed forward a nativist movement in defense of the exclusiveness and purity of the Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. In doing so, as Lorraine Boissoneault argues, the party members "wanted to restore their vision of what America should look like with temperance, Protestantism, self-reliance, with American nationality and work ethic enshrined as the nation's highest values" [9]. More than that, the nativist movement conveniently aligned the WASP core values with the sacred Star Spangled Banner and dictated that the WASPs were the only and pure Americans in blood and in faith. Anyone who deviated from the WASP version of America would be deemed undesirable and must be regarded as un-American and unfit for the Republic. Thus, inflamed xenophobia, conspiracy theories, and anti-immigration, coupled with racism and discrimination, erupted in tandem at the height of immigration waves in the mid-nineteenth century. All this created an intolerant, exclusive, and vertical culture as well as a power order, where the racial hierarchy took its firm hold.

To address nativism, historian John Higham (1920–2003) in his landmark book *Strangers in the land: patterns of American nativism, 1860–1925* [10] "makes clear in his account that he feels nativism was basically a variant of nationalism" especially during the period that he studied [11]. In his view, nativism acts "as a defensive type

of nationalism or an intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of the group's foreign connections" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nativism_(politics)). We argue that the intense nationalism adheres to the WASP values, associated with the model city upon a hill, its chosen builders, and ultimately, the Empire of Liberty; it became a racial nationalism. Higham also defines nativism as a set of attitudes or a state of mind and sets his work to "trace an emotionally charged impulse" rather than "an actual social process or condition" [12]. Whether socially and psychologically, it is the racial nationalism derived from nativism effectively situates the Chinese on one of the lowest tiers of the racial hierarchy. Further, it sparked and fueled anti-Chinese and anti-Asian sentiments at the early stage of the Republic.

2.3 The railroad construction and the Chinese exclusion act: constitutionalizing the racial hierarchy

In the second half of the nineteenth century, America, as an emerging world power about to enter the "Gilded Age." The country was in need of a lifeline linking the country from east to west; that lifeline was the Transcontinental Railroad. At the cheapest possible cost, who would be the hardworking and life-risking workers to construct America's lifeline through the most treacherous terrain on the West coast? The answer was clear, the Chinese. On one hand, the Yellow Peril disrupted the harmony of "the model city on the hill," and threatened its purity. Then, on the other hand, the cheap Chinese workers were much in need for the construction of the Union Pacific portion of the transcontinental railroad. They were needed in the building of an America that would become a superpower in the world.

Since the early nineteenth century, the arrival of the Chinese consistently stirred up racial resentment. They came first as merchants and sailors and then were bought or brought to American soil to construct railroads as cooli from the 1850s to 1860s. Racially inferior in American racial hierarchy, the work ethic, endurance, and irreplaceable contributions of the Chinese were unjustly erased from history. Instead, their physical attributes and the perceived threat to the "pure blood" of those on the top tier stood out as a national issue. "The Chinese immigrants were a distinct people […] whom nature has marked as inferior" [5]. The Chinese immigration "was described as an invasion" [6]. The previous section discussed the then San Francisco mayor Frank McCoppin's unvarnished racist, derisive, and threatened views on the Chinese; he represented the institutionalized mindset of the White establishment. To coexist with the Chinese posed the Yellow Peril to the White norms and Christian ways of life. The Chinese culture, with a foundation in Taoism, stresses the balance between the Yin and the Yang to maintain the Tao in the cycle of life and in harmony with nature's laws in any surroundings. However, their presence in the WASP's model city upon a hill certainly disrupted the WASP's order and disharmonized the White purity. The cultural and racial distance made the Chinese "unassimilable," "disharmonious," and perilous to the model city as well as to the Empire of Liberty.

In the 1860s, the Chinese were employed to build the Central Pacific portion of the First Transcontinental Railroad. It was when the joint forces of xenophobia and racism openly identified the Chinese as the Yellow Peril and fueled the creation of the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This only race-based law in the USA effectively banned further Chinese immigration as well as naturalization. The anti-Chinese line extended through the McCarthy era, the Cold War, and in the last four decades, the trade war and the competition in the global market. Not surprisingly, the anti-Chinese sentiments once again are of the closet in the present pandemic and post-pandemic time.

The racial element in the Sinophobia throughout American history and nation building sets it apart from other anti-immigration laws and policies. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Know Nothing Party waged an anti-Catholic, anti-Irish and anti-immigration movement. Scrutinizing the xenophobic framework of nativism, Lee discusses the particular Chinese racial element in Ref. to the Irish and Catholic "inferiority": "Although the Know Nothings had claimed that Irish belonged to the so-called Celtic race, the Irish had always remained white. The Chinese were different. They were unquestionably not white and would never be able to become 'American,' anti-Chinese activists argued" [13]. Once again, the racial hierarchy embraced by nativists reminded us that citizenship was based on one's religion, skin color and physical attributes.

White European immigrants were fragmented and hierarchized within themselves more in religion and social status than race. In the face of the Chinese presence, all of a sudden, the Euro-immigrants magically became cohesive and united because of the similarity of their skin color. The shared whiteness was too akin to be shattered once a drastically different presence irrupted on the scene—the distant Chinese alien embodying the Yellow Peril and contaminating the American landscape. Lee continues her analysis by quoting the statements made at the San Francisco meeting on the Chinese immigration, recorded in San Francisco Bulletin, April 17, 1876: "Instead, the Chinese" are of a distinct race, of a different and particular civilization,' one anti-Chinese resolution proclaimed at the San Francisco meeting. 'They do not speak our language, do not adopt our manners, customs or habits, are Pagan in belief.' The Chinese immigration, the organization committee, concluded, was "an evil of great present magnitude" [13]. Thus, the Chinese found themselves condemned to an invisible chain hooked tightly to the bottom of the racial hierarchy in the land of the free.

Anti-Chinese politicians and activists gave little thought to "African Americans, Mexican Americans, and the hundreds of indigenous nations who were already present in California" [14]. These individuals were not considered citizens or full citizens in the Republic, therefore, totally irrelevant to the American ideal of freedom and equality. Meanwhile, not without struggles, all European immigrants were successively admitted to the category of "our own people" [14]. In Lee's arguments, a multiple equation can be established: whiteness equals "our own people," "our own people" equals European descendants, European descendants equal good and noble, good and noble equal America, Americas equals the ideal of democracy and freedom. Therefore, whiteness is superior and the definition of America, and anything otherwise would logically be rendered as un-American or anti-American or simply evil. On the flip side, the "evil" of the Yellow Peril consists of the potential to make America impure of whiteness, English language, and Christianity/Protestantism; or even worse, to make America unrecognizable with the presence of a race that is so different in every possible way.

If the Chinese immigration is not curtailed and restricted, "Chinese would occupy the entire Pacific coast, build a colony, and wipe out the white population. The people of California had but one disposition upon this grave subject [...] and that is an open and pronounced demand upon the Federal Government for relief" [15]. Therefore, to exclude the Chinese from American society and rid the Chinese from American soil is an act of nationalism and patriotism, defending white men's power base and the "American" values. The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act "legalized xenophobia on an unprecedented scale" [4]. Sinophobia integrates xenophobia with racism; this gives constitutional green light to virulence and violence towards the Chinese.

In relation to the Chinese, the racial hierarchy was most visible and felt during the 1860s and 1870s, especially during the construction of the First Transcontinental Railroad in the 1860s, coinciding with the Civil War and Reconstruction. Transcontinental railroads were seen as a connecting line that would bring the nation together, economically, politically, and culturally. As lifelines integrating eastern and western markets, the rails were much-needed engines of growth and production but also of uniting a deeply divided nation. The Chinese experience was inserted in the construction of the Transcontinental Rails, which represented endless possibilities for the country's connections and integration. Symbolically, the project would bring Americans together and flatten race relations in the building of a connected nation. Nonetheless, this proved to be a two-decade prelude to the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.

The promoters of the Central Pacific, Southern Pacific and Union Pacific railroads had lucrative goals in mind before anything else. Chinese immigrants were cheap and handy laborers to be employed for the construction of the western portion of the railroad—the Central Pacific line that began in Sacramento. The transcontinental railroads were built in an environment with limited regulatory capacity. Historian Ronald Takaki addresses the racial inequity in that era, "Chinese laborers were paid thirty-one dollars each month, and while white workers were paid the same, they were also given room and board" [16]. Many of them did not speak English and kept the Chinese village/peasant way of life. The only goal for them was to make some money and send it back home. Poverty and desperation reduced them to endure inhuman conditions and treatments without a voice. Hardworking, handy, disciplined, diligent, and quiet, they made ideal workers in the field.

In time, the railroad construction employers realized the advantages of low waged Chinese workers, "Chinese labor proved to be Central Pacific's salvation" [17], and "was the most vital source for constructing the railroad" [18]. That Central Pacific covers treacherous terrain with the need for both low-skilled and skilled labor. Chinese immigrants proved to be the most vital source in the labor market, as they had exactly what was needed for the job. Fifty Cantonese emigrant workers were hired by the Central Pacific Railroad in February 1865 on a trial basis, and soon more and more Cantonese emigrants were hired [19]. As many as 20,000 Chinese workers helped build the treacherous western portion of the railroad, known as the Central Pacific. The Chinese workers distinguished themselves for obedience to the authority, endurance of hardship, diligence to carry out their duties, dexterity in manual work, inscrutability in their thinking and feelings, and the lack of the ability to command English language, to grasp Western cultural nuances and to file a complaint for unequal pay. All these incongruent characteristics played a double-edged sword in defining Chinese workers' cultural space in relation to the epic project of the Continental Railroad.

On May 10, 1869, the inauguration of the first Transcontinental Railroad in Promontory, Utah should have been a seminal and redeeming page in the history of the Chinese immigrants, but it turned out to be a historical moment of humiliation for the Chinese. When the authorities of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads came together to celebrate the joining the tracks, "[...] many of the workers who had built the railroad were all but invisible at the ceremony, and in its retelling for many years afterward. They included about 15,000 Chinese immigrants—up to 90 percent of the work force on the Central Pacific line—who were openly discriminated against, vilified and forgotten" [20].

The Transcontinental Railroad was a joint venture, carried out by both Chinese and Irish workers. One laid tracks eastward to build the Central Pacific line, and one created westward the other portion of the nation's lifeline—the Union Pacific line. Both raced to Promontory Summit, Utah to meet. Museums and libraries keep precious pictures from May 10, 1869, only to show Irish workers celebrating the joining of the tracks with the leaders of both lines. The Chinese workers were however conspicuously invisible, not in the picture, because they were "an inferior race," so determined California senator, business tycoon, and founder of Stanford University Mr. Leland Stanford. As a major investor in the Central Pacific line, Mr. Stanford had no intention to include the Chinese laborers in the pictures taken on that glorious day for the nation and thus they were purposefully discarded from history.

Transcontinental Railroad marked a transformation from a months-long journey to a-week travel across the country and re-conceptualized time and space in a revolutionary way. Chang and Fishkin state that "in the United States, the story of the transcontinental railroad is usually rendered within the parameters of the grand rise of the American nation" [21]. It boosted national pride and unity. Chang and Fishkin continue to expand the cultural meaning of the transcontinental railroads:

> *Begun in 1862 and completed in 1869, the first transcontinental line is celebrated in mainstream American life as well as in scholarship as one of the signal episodes of national life, elevated by some even to the level of importance of the Declaration of Independence. The railroad is honored as a "marvel" of American engineering and energy, as a "work of giants." It is presented as a physical and metaphoric bind that united the nation politically, economically, and socially. Linked to the recent end of the Civil War, the completion of the first transcontinental railroad is presented as a heroic contribution in over-coming the bloody division and in healing national wounds [22].*

While the nation was on the rise and in celebration, the Chinese sank into its bottom and vanished in obscurity in spite of their vital role in building the nation. To address the "Yellow Peril" and guard the "purity" of American values, on May 6th, 1882, President Chester A. Arthur signed into law the Chinese Exclusion Act. This piece of federal legislation was designed as never before to single out a particular race and nationality for exclusion—the Chinese. Barring those already here from citizenship and making it illegal for them to come to America for work. Only the Chinese who had been born in the USA or who came to the USA as merchants, students and tourists were allowed to enter [23]. Chinese laborers residing in California before 1880 were allowed to remain; once they left the United States, however, they could not return [23]. The Exclusion Act constitutionalized the racial hierarchy and made it clear how the nation defines who an American was and what being an American meant. By the Constitution, it sends the Chinese to the very bottom of the racial hierarchy. The particular exclusion of the Chinese remained intact and practically helpless from 1882 to 1943, when the law was finally repealed by the Magnuson Act.

3. Conclusion: the American experiment

As an immigrant country, the United States is a constellation of cultures, traditions, and people from the four corners of the world. The African-Americans, the Asian-Americans, the Hispanic-Americans, the Native Americans, and the White

Americans have been interacting with one another for almost 250 years since 1776 if we set the pre-1776 history aside. After a close examination of the Chinese experience and the roots of anti-Chinese sentiments in the USA, the term "melting pot" sounds like a cliché. The making of the USA has shown the "pot" was initially designed by the WASPs and did not necessarily fit everyone. The unavoidable coexistence of the fit and the unfit sparks the paradox of the ideal of equality and the racial hierarchy, both embedded in the Constitution, the sociopolitical systems, the cultural and religious institutions, and above all, in the psyche of the nation. The interactions among different racial groups have never been all roses and blue skies, but full of encounters, confrontations, negotiations, rejections, or at times, assimilations. In some cases, violence and bloodshed are the cost for freedom and racial justice. The Chinese-American experience testifies to how a racial hierarchy was built side by side with the building of the nation, how it can dehumanize and make certain race or ethnicity sink into hopeless darkness in the name of nationalism and patriotism.

Like the good and the evil on the same tree in the Garden of Eden, the WASPs' ideal for freedom and equality has indeed become a beacon to the world. It has and will continue to attract countless immigrants to these shores for the undying American Dream. Nonetheless, along the way, the WASPs and general White-establishments assigned democracy, freedom, and equality exclusively to themselves with no regard to groups and individuals of color. The irreconcilable duality of equality/discrimination, inclusion/exclusion, and acceptance/rejection among others coexisted in the Founding Fathers, White cultural thinkers and architects as well as in non-White communities. The American racial hierarchy was born from a sense of racial and cultural superiority because of the need to control, be in charge, and rule. Although not immediately explicit on the surface, the racial hierarchy permeates the fabric of our society. It has caused the darkest and unforgivable moments in history, traumatized people of color from generation to generation, divided the nation into unbridgeable tribes, and stirred up bitter cultural wars. Clearly, the Chinese-American experience is part of a much bigger American story. The Chinese had and still have to struggle for their place in the American narrative.

America has a destiny. More than three fourths of the world immigrants have ended up in these lands, where people find themselves in a kaleidoscope of races and ethnicities, religious backgrounds, and multi-languages. To achieve an integral and harmonious existence driven by equality, America has to be a colossal and cosmic experiment with a constellation of diversities. The Chinese experience is one test of the colossal American experiment to prove the uttermost ideal of freedom and equality and to overcome the racial hierarchy. Pulitzer prize winning-author Jill Lepore in her recent book *These Truths: A History of the United States* [24] dances back and forth between empirical history and intellectual history when examining the American experiment. To the author, American culture is a process of contested and tested truths (in plural), but to grasp the ultimate truth one has to deal with contradictory truths along the way:

> *The American experiment had not ended. A nation born in revolution will forever struggle against chaos. A nation founded on universal rights will wrestle against the forces of particularism. A nation toppled a hierarchy of birth only to erect a hierarchy of wealth will never know tranquility. A nation of immigrants cannot close its borders. And a nation born in contradiction, liberty in a land of slavery, sovereignty in a land of conquest, will fight, forever, over the meaning of history [25].*

Equality and racial hierarchy contradict one another. They must be the American Experiment, as history has shown there have always been two forces in competition: one subjects the Chinese to the racial hierarchy and one pushes the Chinese to fight for freedom and equality—the same American Dream embraced by the WASPs and non-WASPs. With the understanding of the anti-Chinese roots in history, the force that pulls the Chinese away from the racial hierarchy continues to do so in the present moment.

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Edited by Vito Bobek and Tatjana Horvat

This book provides a comprehensive overview of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including their development, structure, marketing, and challenges. It is divided into two sections: "Management Aspects of NGOs in the Area of Development, Marketing and Sourcing", and "Case Studies of NGOs". Chapters discuss the development of NGOs and present case studies of NGOs in various countries, including Ethiopia, Bangladesh, South Africa, and others. They also address such topics as NGOs in the healthcare sector, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the humanitarian supply chain, and how NGOs can protect and preserve cultural heritage.

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