

Editorial

Role of Non-Governmental Organizations as Developmental Partners in Health Care

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NGOs, or non-governmental organizations, are a kind of non-profit private sector provider of the health system. Global health issues include health inequity. Inequity exists in healthcare, vaccinations, and research for developing nations. There are disparities in healthcare access even between nations. NGOs typically focus on underprivileged groups or specific diseases that the government sector frequently ignores. But maintaining financial stability is a significant problem for NGOs. Donors account for the majority of an NGO's funding. The availability of health care can be expanded through NGOs. By 2030, the World Health Organization hopes to have universal health coverage. NGOs can make a significant contribution to that. Public-private partnerships between NGOs and the public sector allow for the better utilization of NGOs' knowledge and the possibility of public funding to increase population access to health services.^{1,2}

NGOs promote advocacy for resources and policies at the national, regional, and international levels, strengthen the voices of vulnerable populations, keep an eye on service availability, hold governments and other actors accountable for living up to their commitments, carry out programs, conduct research, and offer technical assistance. NGOs can provide communities with the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to handle health challenges and tasks that help the community gain empowerment and finally achieve sustainable development.³

NGOs in Pakistan contribute to research, advocacy, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services as well as health promotion. The Akhuwat Foundation promotes social mobilization and zero poverty.⁴ The Prevention of Blindness Trust works to decrease

blindness that is avoidable. The CARE foundation works in a variety of fields, such as emergency preparedness, water and sanitation, climate change, and health. Numerous groups have promoted maternity and child health due to the severely poor maternal and child health indicators in this country. HOPE, or health-oriented preventive education, focuses on women and children. Through behavior change communication, Population Services International aims to improve reproductive health, child survival, HIV, and malaria. Children with physical and mental disabilities can receive special education at Rising Sun Institute in Lahore. A very well-known charity called the Edhi foundation offers services for patient transportation, medical care, post-disaster care, and even drug treatment for addicts. Indus Hospital and Shaukat Khanum are tertiary care hospitals trying to provide services to this country for curative and rehabilitative purposes.^{5,6}

To attain health for all, Pakistan's public sector lacks the resources, knowledge, and governance. The private sector, in particular NGOs, is a crucial partner in enhancing access, offering technical know-how, and focusing on novel interventions and methods for effective and high-quality health services. Partnerships might focus on vulnerable populations and difficult-to-reach places to increase everyone's access to and coverage of health care. NGOs are also bringing attention to specific community health issues, engaging in the strongest possible advocacy work, and influencing policy decisions. National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases and Leprosy Control Program are exemplary initiatives for the people of Pakistan in which NGOs have contributed along with

the government to solve the public health problems of communicable and non-communicable diseases.⁷

Pakistan's healthcare system is mixed involving both public and private sectors. NGOs are influencing the health system at both the micro and macro levels. Health systems are meant to enhance health, respond quickly, and provide excellent care. Involving NGOs in efforts to develop the healthcare system may ultimately help to establish a system that reflects improved efficiency, greater equity, and sound governance. The public sector and NGOs have partnered to execute numerous successful programs.

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