

lved into

maternal health, or it may speak to principles like gender equity or partnership. International NGOs play this role best when they are deliberate about being a transmission channel and facilitator, and not as the owner of the knowledge or the initiator of the innovation. By adopting and refining approaches that they absorbed from working in thousands of poor communities, international NGOs have helped to establish values like community participation, gender equity and local ownership as cornerstones of good development practice. International NGOs have helped bring more people-centered and rights-based approaches into the mainstream of development thinking.

Example: Microfinance innovations in Bangladesh, spearheaded by Grameen Bank, BRAC and others, were absorbed by international NGOs, and then adapted and advanced around the world, bringing financial services to millions of poor people, especially women.

5. International NGOs raise substantial private resources that might otherwise not go to relief and development efforts, and enable their supporters to express solidarity with people in some of the poorest communities in the world.

International NGOs have cultivated an expanding set of donors and supporters, engaging them in caring about poverty as a moral issue (and, in the case of faith-based groups, as a spiritual issue). This engagement has resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars being raised for development and

and this gives them considerable flexibility and agility. NGO leaders argue that their independence, combined with their expertise and track record, give them legitimacy and credibility.

Partnerships with local organizations

International NGOs partner with local actors, including community-based groups. In addition to channeling funds and providing technical support to local actors, international NGOs seek to represent and amplify their voices in policy arenas.

Diversity of funds International NGOs can raise and steward funds from diverse sources,

the issues they address require long-term (e.g. 5-10 years) commitments that leverage systemic change (far beyond projects) and depend on local ownership. This puts international NGOs in constant grant-seeking mode, which distracts from a long-term mindset, and hampers their ability to be strategic and focus on deep impact.

- International NGOs operate in contexts in which military operations are taking place (and where therefore, is politicized. Despite concerted efforts, international NGOs have not been able to develop rules of engagement that sufficiently secure independence, security and effectiveness.
- International NGOs are not sufficiently global. The power within these organizations tends to voice or representation in the governance of the organization. Their accountability systems

- The funding model of many international NGOs is significantly dependent on official development assistance (ODA), which propagates short-term project approaches, while their missions and visions point to the need to have deeper, broader impacts on long-term challenges.
- ODA, which now consists of only 10 percent of investments flowing to developing countries, is a diminishing driver of development. However, the funding and operating models of most international NGOs are tied to ODA. This links them to a paradigm of development that is waning. To be relevant in the future, international NGOs must become comfortable engaging with the multiple factors driving development, including aid, trade, remittances, climate change, etc.
- International NGOs tend to perceive their own growth as a validation of their worth. Indeed, many international NGOs have achieved significant growth in the past decade. However, larger organizations are not necessarily more effective at contributing to social change in ways that make greater and more lasting contributions to fighting poverty.
- Being large organizations occupying a very competitive sphere (the competitiveness is related to funding), international NGOs are concerned about building their brand, maintaining a distinct identity and preserving their institutional strengths. This can sometimes be in conflict with their intention to be a partner, facilitator, connector and catalyst for local action.
- International NGOs have helped raise awareness of the consequences of poverty and conflict, and have generated enthusiasm for personal engagement in developing countries. At the same time, international NGOs have become increasingly professionalized and less able to

ability to tap into the growing desire, especially of young people, to personally connect with poor communities and give of themselves for the cause of fighting poverty.
-

