

**CHAPTER VI**

**ROLE OF NGOs AND PANCHAYATS  
RAJ INSTITUTION (PRIs) IN CBFM**

# **ROLE OF NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOs) PANCHAYATS RAJ INSTITUTION (PRIs) IN CBFM**

## **6.1 Role of NGOs and Panchayats Raj Institutions (PRIs) :**

The Disaster Management Act, 2005 under its provisions clearly mentioned that the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) is an apex body for implementing for all disaster management related functions and activities. It has further clarified the role of PRIs and NGOs at District, Block and Grass-root level initiatives for flood management. The SDMA and DDMA has given due importance to their role and a results PRI and NGO representative are invited as special invitees, permanent invitees in all the meetings and matters relating to disaster managements. Member of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are the members of DDMA. Similarly persons representing Panchayat Ray Institutions at Block, G.P and Village level are also the member of their concerned disaster management forums. The good and well reputed are also selected for DDMA and others Government disaster management forums at Block and Grass-root level disaster management fuctions and activities. This initiative has provided a source of inspiration among PRIs and NGOs to work for the good cause of community based flood management. The functions of PRIs and NGOs include mitigation and preparedness measures alongside response, relief and rehabilitation. A key role has been assigned to the local authority for ensuring training of its officers and employees, maintenance of resources so that these are readily available for use in the event of a disaster. The local authority shall also carry out relief rehabilitation and reconstruction activities in the affected areas in consultation with PRIs and NGOs, conforming to the guidelines for mitigation and community based flood management activities. The present roadmap chalked out by Cachar DDMA intends to strengthen the disaster management activities in this district with the help of PRIs and NGOs.

According to flood vulnerable people in the study locations, the biggest failure in flood management is perhaps in arranging 'post-flood rehabilitation programme' in appropriate quantity and quality. They expressed a common concern that postflood relief should match the needs of the people and such activities should be launched

following a 'comprehensive community has been represented well in the PRAs, the need for post-flood crop production and rehabilitation was given high priority. Distribution of seedlings of dominant crops following a late receding flood appears to be the most important rehabilitation activity. The role of local NGO and representatives from PRIs play a crucial role in post flood management. The role of NGOs and PRI is quiet visible in pre and during flood situation but more role seemed to appeared in my study area after the flood as it collective endeavor. Farmers informed that they used to procure healthy seedlings from far away non-flooded areas, whereas the measure could have been greatly facilitated by developing a local seedling bank in raised lands by private owners. under the supervision of the Agriculture Officer people in Sonai Development Block informed that the seedlings received often in cooperation with local owners of high lands, and distributes these seedlings. However, they expressed their dissatisfaction regarding inadequacy of the measure. The people in the area never satisfied of such a measure, but they understand its importance towards managing post-flood agricultural rehabilitation.

People also recommended that, given the remainder of the post-flood season following a major flood event, the Block Supervisors should come forward with innovative technologies. Farmers expressed their reluctance to grow lesser-known crops, due to not having confidence in the market response. To them, subsistence appears to be the most important consideration in making choices for the postflood crops. farmers expressed that government should provide soft credits on 'easy terms'. Farmers are generally afraid of 'too much paper work', which is why they do not seek assistance from scheduled banks. People also expressed their needs for credit to mend their deteriorated dwellings, and to start other income generating activities such as rearing livestock, poultry etc.

People expect government's direct facilitation towards establishment of permanent flood shelters in their locality. They also expect that government would facilitate a community based flood management plan at Union levels, which may be implemented by the local government institutions. They also expect that a significant proportion of the fund needed to implement such a plan should be borne by the government. They expressed their willingness to contribute either in cash or in kind to implement such a plan.

In Assam, an appropriate flood management strategy evolved gradually during the decades of the fifties to seventies of the last century. It started with the National Policy on Floods in 1954 and culminated with the report of the National Commission on Floods in 1980. In between were the reports of the High Level Committee on Floods, 1957, the Ministers' Committee on Flood Control, 1964 and Ministers' Committee on Flood and Flood Relief, 1972. Discussions and reports since 1980 have veered round the knowledge base provided and the strategy indicated in the 1980 report. The researcher tried to outline the elements of the strategy which are relevant to the present work are briefly explained below. It is based on the study conducted in aforesaid four revenue villages with help of structured interview schedule, PRA, focused group discussion etc.

Flood management has to be viewed not in isolation but within the broad framework of economic and social development in society for obtaining the best possible utilization of its land and water resources. Management of floods should be a part of the overall plan for management of the water resources. The thrust, therefore, is towards an integrated approach to flood management.

The researcher found that there is a need for non-structural measures and need for a Community Approach. The inherent inability of embankments to provide complete protection against very severe floods in the research area coupled with dim prospects for the introduction of other structural measures in the next ten years implies that it is hard to provide complete immunity against floods as was demanded by people during my field visits to the study areas. People have to be told clearly that they have to live with floods.

Given the above reality, best possible efforts people are making to minimize people's sufferings and damages to their property and crops etc. through non-structural measures as (i) flood insurance, (ii) restructuring of cropping pattern, (iii) construction of community centres like schools or Panchayat Ghars on raised platforms for providing shelters to people during floods, (iv) timely deployment of adequate number of boats, (v) dissemination of flood forecasting and warning information etc. The efficacy of these measures has increased a community approach of flood management.

It is found that there is a need for a basin approach to flood management is emphasized since local approaches might conflict with the larger interests of the basin as a whole. For example, people living in a particular area would like to be provided complete protection against floods, unmindful of any adverse effects which might result elsewhere in the basin. Moreover, only a basin approach can take care of the predominantly inter-state or international nature of the flood problem in Assam. Establishment of effective basin authorities would require the Union Government to muster sufficient political courage to exercise the powers conferred on it by Entry 56 List I (Union List) of the Indian Constitution, for “regulation and development of inter-state rivers and river-valleys to the extent to which such regulation and development under the control of the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in public interest.” But the required political will has not been forthcoming so far.

The study and various institutes for Disaster Management, workshops held for community based flood management and training programmes held for community level flood management highlight the importance of the role of NGOs and Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the management of floods in flood affected areas of Assam. The basic objective of discussions was to discuss the role of these institutions in detail with knowledgeable groups in respective districts consisting of officials from district administration such as those in charge of Relief & Rehabilitation, Health Care, Animal Husbandry, Public Health, Agriculture, Irrigation and Flood Control departments, elected members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) at district, block and Panchayat levels, representatives of NGOs etc. At present, barring a few instances, people are totally dependant on government agencies for help during calamities. Given this culture of total dependence and the fact that to be self reliant in the face of calamities is not easy even in developed and affluent countries, the role of non government organizations (NGOs) and local bodies cannot be eliminated. The interaction of DDMA, BDMC and VDMC and other government machinery with NGOs and Panchayats will be mostly with block level administration which works directly under the district administration. In some cases, depending upon nature of activity, the interaction of NGOs and GPs can be with district level administration but passing through the block level administration only. At the same time, there should be due representation of CBOs in the district level flood management or

coordination committee operating in each flood prone district. The areas where people-government interface would continue to play a vital role can best be felt with the help of NGOs and Gram Panchayats. It indicates several areas of interface between government and NGOs receive their comments and suggestions with particular reference to the applicability of the community based flood management mechanisms under actual flood conditions. The idea behind the training programme of NGOs was to enhance the capabilities of the NGOs and panchayat functionaries as well as a large chunk of villagers (both male and female) of the study areas with respect to flood management specially in the fields of Agriculture, Health care and Sanitation, Veterinary care, Rescue and Relief operations.

## **6.2 Institutional Involvement in Community Based Flood**

### **Management (CBFM):**

Different agencies such as United Nations Development Programme(UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Resources Group(IRG) etc are involved in community based flood management activities. Although there are many agencies working in the field, coordination among them and joint planning are lacking. All of them work on ad-hoc basis. District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) have been formed under the chairmanship of District Magistrate/ Deputy Commissioner, including police, army as well as development oriented line departments/ agencies related to irrigation, agriculture, forest, housing and town development, banks and social organizations working in the area. Similarly, Block Disaster Management Committee (BDMC), was also found involved in the NGOs training works to train them in effective management of flood with the help and initiative of community people themselves. It was reported by the community that relief provided per head is usually not sufficient rehabilitation grant is ineffective and inefficient too. Coordination and cooperation seem lacking among the concerned agencies and sometimes duplication of relief fund is also reported. Thus the need for greater and continuous involvement of NGOs and Gram Panchayats shall not only improve the community based flood management system but will further widen its scope and sustainability.

### **6.3 National Disaster Management Guidelines for NGOs:**

Role of NGOs in Disaster Management be adopted and contextualized as a collective initiative, along with transparency and accountability principles to be institutionalized at all levels.

Action Points are:-

- 1) Geographic spread of NGOs Develop a database of NGOs at all levels working on disaster management focusing on geographic outreach and thematic capacities of the organisations (Action: DDMA with the help of NGOs)
- 2) Volume of support provided by NGOs Compile statistics on quantum of support provided by NGOs at all levels, both international and national (Action: NDMA, SDMA and DDMA)
- 3) Institutional mechanisms Establish meaningful engagement with concerned government bodies such as Planning Commission, Finance Commission, NDMA, nodal ministries, state level bodies, district level bodies, local level bodies and other stakeholders. (Action: National, State and District NGO Task Forces in DM).
- 4) Coordination Establishing inter agency mechanisms for coordination and networking activities (information and knowledge management, training and capacity building, collaborative advocacy, quality and accountability) at all levels (Action: NDMA, SDMA and DDMA)
- 5) Accessibility Establish protocols for cooperation and ensure access to the affected areas with support from government agencies at respective levels like NDRF and SDRF that have good logistics base to reach inaccessible areas (Action: NDMA, SDMA and DDMA)
- 6) Hazard and vulnerability based planning Conduct community centric hazard and vulnerability analysis at all levels, and develop disaster management plans in accordance (Action: NDMA, SDMA and DDMA)

- 7) Community participation Ensure community participation in assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring of activities at all levels (Action: NDMA, SDMAs and DDMAs)
- 8) Institutionalizing Knowledge Creation and Management: Consolidation of institutional learning processes and creation of a public domain knowledge bank as well as educational programmes will support long term improvements in capacities.
- 9) Mainstreaming of Disability Issues in DM Support the most vulnerable groups through mitigation activities as well as disaster preparedness and response, with a particular focus on the special needs of the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). (Action: NDMA, SDMAs and DDMAs)
- 10) Gender Mainstreaming Make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs such that inequalities between men and women are not perpetuated through the routine operations of DM. (Action: NDMA, SDMAs and DDMAs)
- 11) Focus on most vulnerable rather than only on epicenter National level: Advocate with all actors to reach out to gap areas State level: Coordinate among actors to identify gap areas at District and Local level: Ensure targeting with equity and outreach to all excluded areas (Action: National, State and District NGO Task Forces in DM)
- 12) Rural-urban diversity Develop the capacities of NGOs or specialised civil society agencies at all levels to manage urban as well as rural disasters and accordingly make investments (Action: NDMA, SDMAs and DDMAs)
- 13) Adherence to standards National level: Develop minimum standards for India State level: Develop minimum standards for the state District and Local level: Develop capacities for adherence to minimum standards through collective and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders (Action: NDMA, SDMAs and DDMAs)



- 14) Transparency and accountability Develop an agreed framework of accountability for all levels and mechanisms to bring in transparency (Action:NDMA, SDMAs and DDMAs)
- 15) Do No Harm Advocacy at all levels on Do No Harm through disaster response and development interventions (Action: National, State and District NGO Task Forces in DM)
- 16) Exit strategy Ensure that the NGO programmes have an exit strategy to link with long term recovery/rehab/development programs of other NGOs or the government (Action: National, State and District NGO Task Forces in DM).

#### **6.4 Role of NGOs and PRIs in The Study Area:**

Community approach to flood management, however, is a new concept which is different from the prevailing system characterized by total dependence of people on government and only bridge to minimize the gap were the PRI representative and NGOs owned by well to families or PRI representative themselves. The chances of irregularities and biasness were more. Transformation from the prevailing bureaucratic centric and privileged centric approach to the new community approach would, therefore, require creation of new community oriented institutions and changes in the role of the existing ones especially that of the government. Assam State Disaster Management Authority(ASDMA) is playing toward this direction where people can take their own decisions and get the help and the ASDMA are planning to use the inventories of resources available to Government, GNOs, PRI, Private Firms and Community at large so that community people can use them when they need them. Social Work professional has grater role to play. This would also require identification of the different types of tasks to be performed by the community and other institutions along with reasons for the same. Here the professional social worker can play a vital role. What are the institutions and tasks and what is the rationale behind them? How to bring sections of this chapter. Guidelines emerging from these issues form part of the study which is provided in the next chapters. The following

sections and the next chapter are, therefore, complementary and should preferably be read together.

Relief and rehabilitation become most important for pre, during, post floods situation. Field enquires made in Rangirghat and Sildubi villages found that CBOs/ NGOs are more useful for relief and rehabilitation than the government machinery. For example, distribution of relief through Panchayats in Rangirghat and Sildubi was much better than Government machineries. Garibh Mazdur Sangrami Sanstha in Rangirghat Village and Sidubi Dilphin Club, United Club in Sildubi Village are helping the people during the time of flood with cooked food mainly Khichadi. They generally supply it to the victims directly and the volunteers of these CBOs/ NGOs are found to be engaged in preparation and distribution of cooked food to the flood victims. The respondents of flood affected families informed that the NGOs generate fund from the communities itself and through SRAMDAN they dedicate themselves to help the flood affected people. They never bother about the Government help and collect the donations from the well to do families in cash or kind. Some families provide rice/ paddy, some shop keepers provide dal, salts, some help them in cash and thus they provide cooked foods to the flood victims. They also help in search & rescue and giving first aid to the flood victims. The NGO volunteers who are trained under DDMA/DDMC have the knowledge about first aid and how to purify flood water with the help of local resources and halogen tablets which is generally provided by the PHED of the Government.

Hence, the VDMC which has a community as well as NGO and Panchayat backup should undertake all post flood reconstruction and rehabilitation works on behalf of the community following the principle of bare necessities. These include a proper and realistic assessment of flood damages, preparation of list of beneficiaries for distribution of relief and rehabilitation materials in a scientific way, sharing of water for irrigation and desiltation of drainage etc. by involving local volunteers of NGOs and CBOs. There is also a strong need to keep surveillance over profiteering by a few unscrupulous businessmen who try to do so by creating scarcity during flood under the name of NGO/ CBO. VDMC can also play a positive role in settlement of insurance claims for damages to crops, cattle etc. due to floods. In order to reduce damage to houses in low lying areas, people should be aware from having fresh

constructions in low lying areas. Here the the of NGOs and Panchayats are in manifold. No doubt this is a difficult task but if DDMA, BDMC and VDMC takes the lead the problem can be sorted out to a considerable extent. There is also the need for designing houses with the help of trained volunteers of NGOS/ CBOs which are flood resistant to a greater extent. At the same time, advantage may be taken of several housing schemes for economically weaker sections implemented by the government. Practically all the economic activities remain suspended for a period ranging upto two months due to flood resulting in loss of people's earnings. The VDMC, therefore, should arrange specific training programmes and render such other help as may be needed, so that people sitting idle can utilise their time in pursuing gainful activities.

### **6.5 Need for Government , PRIs & NGO Coordination:**

At present, barring a few instances, people are totally dependant on government agencies for help during calamities. Given this culture of total dependence and the fact that to be self reliant in the face of calamities is not easy even in developed and affluent countries, The role of government, PRIs and local bodies cannot be eliminated. Now in Assam Government has made it mandatory to give sufficeient representation to PRIs and NGOs at the apex level both at State level SDMA and District level DDMA.The interaction of PRIs, NGOs with Government Machinery will be mostly with block level administration which works directly under the district administration/ DDMA which is chaied by Deputy Commissioner/ District Magistrate. In some cases, depending upon nature of activity, the interaction can be with district level administration but passing through the block level administration only.

All these steps of CBFM may not ensure completely the achievement of desired object. The object has to be protected against the future exigency so that the activity does not deviate from the set course of action. This technique of CBFM should be peoperly linked with the NGOs efforts. What was lacking was that Government did not put efforts to pre-test and find out ways so as to find out the pockets of deficiencies CBFM which can be esily eliminated with the help of NGOs and CBOs. Government may train the volunteers on ToT basis which in turn train the

villagers and thus CBFM can be made much more structured and result oriented. Thus the efforts of the Governments can be

minimised. Once Government could identify Good NGOs/ CBOs it should take suitable measures to engage them in Community based flood management. The blame of apathy and mis management with regards to flood on government machineries can also be minimized if we properly utilize the services of NGOs and in a professional manner.

It means that flood management is not only relevant to the government concerns but it has universal applicability among PRIs, NGOs and community. A Government cannot achieve its target in flood management unless it has a planned way to involve the PRIs, CBO and NGOs for the flood management activity.

## **6.6 Challenges and Opportunities for NGO in Community Based Flood Management:**

Key challenges and opportunities in flood management has been identified by the researcher and steps taken for building synergy among Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (GO-NGO).

- NGOs can play a very important role in mobilising communities and in linking ULBs with corporate sector entities for initiating DRR related activities.
- The strong linkages which NGOs have with grassroot communities can be effectively harnessed for creating greater public awareness on disaster risk and vulnerability, initiating appropriate strategies for strengthening the capacity of stakeholder groups to improve disaster preparedness, mitigation and improving the emergency response capacities of the stakeholders.
- In addressing the emerging concerns of climate change adaptation and mitigation, NGOs can play a very significant role in working with local communities and introducing innovative approaches based on the good practices followed in other countries.

- NGOs can bring in the financial resources from bi-lateral and multilateral donors for implementing pragmatic and innovative approaches to deal with flood risk and vulnerability, by effectively integrating and converging the various government programmes, schemes and projects to create the required synergy in transforming the lives of at-risk communities.

## **6.7 Role of Non Governmental Organisations and Gram Panchayats:**

- 1) In addressing the emerging concerns of climate change adaptation and mitigation, NGOs has provided training to local communities and thus sensitized them for global warming and climate change. It is mainly done by the NGO members of Sildubi Dolphin club who got the training at district and state level on disaster preparedness. They have tried to inculcate innovative approaches based on the good practices by planting tress which can reduce the impact of global warming and climate change and thus can reduce the incidence of flood.
- 2) NGOs often bring the financial resources from bi-lateral and multilateral donors for implementing pragmatic and innovative approaches to deal with flood risk and vulnerability, by effectively integrating and converging the various government programmes, schemes and projects to create the awareness in transforming the lives of at-risk communities. Focus on the most vulnerable communities and people like aged, weak, handicapped is done by the NGOs members. Setting and Committing to Minimum standards of selp help is done by the NGOs.
- 3) NGOs namely Sildubi Dolphin Club are encouraging rural women through Self Help Groups (SHGs) in availing micro finance/ loan and thus it is providing the women a platform to discuss their problems collectively including the problem of flood and how to deal with it. Researcher has observed that women are more prepared to face the flood before it strike to their family's economy and thus they keep some amount of rupees e.g Rs.2000/- to deal with problems which will arise during the time of flood.

- 4) Provision of safe drinking water—installation of tube well or other pipe water arrangement is done during the time of flood in Rangirghat GP as it is close to Block Head Quarters. Materials for making temporary latrines are visible only in case of Rangirghat G.P.as it is close to Block Head Quarters.
- 5) First Aid medicines especially for water borne diseases; treatment with like paracetamol, Chlorine tablets, Oral re-hydration powder etc. are found to be provided in both the communities. This is mainly done by Health Department.
- 6) Fast food items like satoo, beaten rice, bread, biscuits, beans etc is preserved as ready food during flood time mainly by the tea and ex- tea garden communities.
- 7) Temporary Cooking utensils like stoves are kept for flood time and it is practiced by all the communities in both the villages etc.
- 8) Provision of energy for lighting and cooking such as lantern, torches, LPG gas cylinders are found in well to do families and not in poor families.
- 9) Tents, plastic sheets etc are provided by the Government during the taking temporary shelter due to flood.
- 10) The housing condition of flood affected people in both the villages is not good and they hardly go for construction of any permanent structure and continue to live in unsanitary condition. Few of the families have constructed pucca houses in Rangirghat Village after raising the plinth level although it is affected by flood every year. This is due to the training provided by the NGOs and its closeness to block head quarters.
- 11) It is learned from the FGD that community based flood management techniques are getting more systematic in these villages due to the introduction of Gram Sabha being conducted by GP offices as per the instruction of Government of Assam. As such it is helping CBFM to take a structured shape.
- 12) Gender sensitization in flood management which were lacking in recent years are gaining ground due the increase in the level of education among women in these communities.

In Assam, an appropriate flood management strategy evolved gradually during the decades of the fifties to seventies of the last century. It started with the National Policy on Floods in 1954 and culminated with the report of the National Commission on Floods in 1980. In between there were the reports of the High Level Committee on Floods, 1957, the Ministers' Committee on Flood Control, 1964 and Ministers' Committee on Flood and Flood Relief, 1972. Discussions and reports since 1980 have veered round the knowledge base provided and the strategy indicated in the 1980 report. The researcher tried to outline the elements of the strategy which are relevant to the present work are explained. It is based on the study conducted in aforesaid four revenue villages with help of structured interview schedule, PRA, focused group discussion etc.

Flood management has to be viewed not in isolation but within the broad framework of economic and social development in society for obtaining the best possible utilization of its land and water resources. The role of social worker is manifold as it encompasses its applicability and usefulness for pre, during and post flood management situation. Management of floods should be a part of the overall plan for management of the water resources and rural development. The thrust, therefore, is towards an integrated approach to flood management.

The researcher found that there is a need for non-structural measures and need for a Community Approach through the use of social work intervention. The inherent inability the communities can best be explored with the help of social work intervention. Embankments is constructed to provide complete protection against very severe floods in the research area coupled with dim prospects for the introduction of other structural measures in the next ten years implies that it is hard to provide complete immunity against floods as was demanded by people during my field visits to the study areas. People have to be told clearly that they have to live with floods.

Given the above reality, best possible efforts people are making to minimize people's sufferings and damages to their property and crops etc. through non-structural measures as (i) flood insurance, (ii) restructuring of cropping pattern, (iii) construction of community centres like schools or Panchayat Ghars on raised platforms for providing shelters to people during floods, (iv) timely deployment of adequate number of boats, (v) dissemination of flood forecasting and warning

information etc. The efficacy of these measures has increased a community approach of flood management.

It is found that there is a need for a basin approach to flood management is emphasized since local approaches might conflict with the larger interests of the basin as a whole. For example, people living in a particular area would like to be provided complete protection against floods, unmindful of any adverse effects which might result elsewhere in the basin. Moreover, only a basin approach can take care of the predominantly inter-state or international nature of the flood problem in Assam. Establishment of effective basin authorities would require the Union Government to muster sufficient political courage to exercise the powers conferred on it by Entry 56 List I (Union List) of the Indian Constitution, for “regulation and development of inter-state rivers and river-valleys to the extent to which such regulation and development under the control of the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in public interest.” But the required political will has not been forthcoming so far. Thus community based flood management and its coping strategies have a greater role to play.

## **6.8 Some of The Challenges for NGOs While Dealing With Floods:**

- **Weak Coordination:** Inadequate coordination among Government officials and Civil Society humanitarian personnel results in weak response and suboptimal performance, as well as differences in the quality of inputs provided by different NGOs.
- **Brief time-spans for relief interventions:** Many NGOs provide relief in the first 15 to 60 days, shut down the operations and move away without any linkage to long term rehabilitation and recovery of the disaster-affected communities.
- **Neglect of remote and inaccessible flood-affected areas:** Inadequate physical access to the affected communities and officials hampers assessments, information coordination.



- **Tendency to rush to the epicenter of disasters:** While the epicenters require special attention, it is also equally important to ensure that the peripheral areas impacted by disasters are not neglected or ignored while formulating intervention strategies.
- **Inadequate adherence to humanitarian standards and good practices:** In general, there is a growing realization that global instruments setting minimum standards in flood response have not been contextualized to India.
- **Inadequate Transparency and accountability to donors and flood affected communities:** The process of disaster relief is sometimes seen as a charitable humanitarian activity which does not require the practice of transparency and accountability towards donors and disaster-affected communities.
- **Neglect of Rural-Urban Diversity and Primacy of Attention to Rural Areas:** The humanitarian assistance is still primarily targeted towards rural areas and the diverse needs of vulnerable urban poor are often not addressed adequately.
- **Lack of clear exit strategy during transition:** Most often, the scope and timeline of the response is not defined. When an NGO withdraws from the area, the communities are left to fend for themselves.
- **Advocacy Role of NGOs – “Do No Harm Approach”:** Developmental projects, if not formulated with a comprehension of disaster risk and vulnerability profiles at the local levels, can increase disaster risk and vulnerability of people, assets, environment and their livelihoods.

## **6.9 Opportunities Provided by The NGOs:**

Setting up a Functional GO-NGO Coordination Platform during nonemergency times will ensure that appropriate coordination happens during response operations and development interventions.

- GO-NGO institutional arrangements need to be made in order to collaborate in developing the roadmap for short, medium and long term operational strategies and plans.
- Common accessibility to disaster affected areas can become a reality if GO-NGOs engage with local bodies, district and state level disaster management focal points right from developing DM planning and operational strategies.
- Focus on the most vulnerable needs to be the approach for responding to disasters as well as reducing disaster risks. Updated information should be maintained to support this.
- Setting and Committing to Minimum standards by GO-NGO: Ready and user-friendly instruments for humanitarian standards need to develop.

## **6.10 Conclusion:**

In efforts to reduce the flood risks, well designed public communication campaigns by NGOs and PRIs contributed enormously to educating the public and to conveying the intended message over a large geographical area to a vast and diversified audience. Raising the awareness of communities on flood hazards and risks they (Community) are exposed to and what they can do at the individual, household level to mitigate or minimize those risks can transform them from being passive to active participants of wider flood risk reduction scenario. Initiatives in various forms; IEC (Information, Education and Communication) materials development and distribution, organising cultural shows and sector specific activities like school flood safety programmes etc. One of the key factors contributing to the wide acceptance of the public awareness campaign by NGOs and PRIs is the successful mobilization and collaboration of the key flood management actors in the study area. All major stakeholders from government officials to community focal persons were involved in the process.