



Review Article

The Crucial Role of NGOs in Crisis Response: A Case Study of Essential Contributions of Jalaram Seva Trust (JST) (Hapa-Jamnagar)

Krishna Dattani*¹ and Dr. Vishwa Deuskar²

¹Research Scholar, JG University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

²Assistant Professor, JG College of Commerce, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

Corresponding Author: *Krishna Dattani

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Abstract	Manuscript Information
<p>This research paper examines the crucial role played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in handling various crises like natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies, healthcare crises, or any such disruptive events. The study delves into the multifaceted ways NGOs operate during crises, emphasizing their functions, outcomes, adaptability, the vital support they provide, raising awareness campaigns, advancing sustainable development, and protecting human rights. This study illuminates how NGOs demonstrate flexibility, focus on their operations, and adapt to the evolving needs of crises, which makes them effective in their roles. Here, with a specific emphasis on their response during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many businesses came to a halt and people's incomes were severely affected, NGOs played a major role. Exemplified by the case study of Jalaram Seva Trust (JST), which played a crucial role in aiding those whose livelihoods were impacted, particularly the middle and lower-middle classes, who were provided meals and essential assistance by JST. This research underscores the significance of strong collaboration between governments, local authorities, and volunteer networks for better crisis mitigation and recovery. As illustrated by the NGO, JST has proven to be indispensable during times of COVID-19 crisis by offering direct support to vulnerable populations and contributing to overall community resilience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ISSN No: 2583-7397 ▪ Received: 19-12-2023 ▪ Accepted: 15-01-2024 ▪ Published: 18-01-2024 ▪ IJCRM:3(1);2024:63-66 ▪ ©2024, All Rights Reserved ▪ Plagiarism Checked: Yes ▪ Peer Review Process: Yes
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Keyword: NGOs, Crisis management, NGO roles, Community resilience, Community development, social media, JST, Social justice, Sustainable society

Introduction

Defining NGO

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are unique organizations that provide assistance when things go wrong, such as during emergencies or disastrous events. They work to improve communities, even if they are not affiliated with the government. They seek to strengthen and improve communities

over time. It is referred to as "community development." Therefore, NGOs do not just offer immediate assistance in times of need but also focus on long-term solutions to assist communities in developing and being better equipped for the future. NGOs are crucial in difficult times because of their community-centered approach.

Developing Community Well-being Through Research: An objective of the NGOs

The objective of NGOs is to seek the welfare of society and solve problems in the community and society. The welfare of the community can be achieved with the implementation of government development programs. (Neelam *et. al.*, 2006) ^[4] The research endeavors to delve with a special emphasis on community development. By doing so, we seek to uncover effective strategies and best practices that NGOs employ in their mission to enhance community well-being. Additionally, we emphasize the value of community input, feedback, and participation in NGOs' work, as this research aims to gain knowledge from NGOs' experiences and insights with the ultimate objective of not only appreciating their significant contributions but also contributing to the community.

Role of NGOs

Non-governmental organizations or voluntary organizations' role is to support the government to tackle the problems. As they are closer to the community and motivate people to work as people's voices. They put people's demands before the government. They participate in planning because of their firsthand experience and communication with people. (Neelam *et. al.*, 2006) ^[4]. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) serve as a key link between governments, international organizations, and local communities. They act as effective advocates for change, advocating social justice, encouraging resilience, and pushing to acquire a more fair and sustainable society. "The Integral Role of NGOs in Emergency Response and Relief During Crisis Situations" NGOs play critical roles in all aspects of crisis management, which include preparedness, quick response, and recovery. Their diverse strategy ensures that communities receive assistance and support in a timely manner.

1. Preparation phase / Before Crisis

NGOs should engage in preventive activities that reduce recognized hazards and strengthen crisis management preparations. While recognizing that some crises cannot be prevented, prepare crisis management teams. This comprehensive strategy comprises both risk prevention and response preparedness, which establish non-governmental organizations as primary responders.

2. Response Phase/During Crisis

As crises arise, the response phase necessitates the quick and coordinated actions of NGOs. They use their agility and expertise to provide rapid support and immediate insight into the issue, which is critical for an effective response. Engaging with community networks enables them to gather, analyze, and share information, allowing rapid response.

3. Recovery Phase/After Crisis

The recovery phase necessitates a sustained effort to restore normalcy. NGOs help with long-term planning and support, as well as infrastructure and livelihood reconstruction. Their presence ensures positivity that communities may recover,

rebuild, and regain stability. The paper identifies four main functions:

- (1) Information dissemination,
- (2) Disaster Planning and Training,
- (3) Collaborative Problem Solving and Decision Making, and
- (4) Information gathering, which is then mapped onto the three crisis management phases of preparedness, response, and recovery to describe how a range of social media tools may be used to enhance crisis communications. Case examples of international organizations and governments using social media for crisis management are shared. The paper proposes a framework to enhance government use of social media for crisis management that encompasses the need for a mandate, differentiated guidelines, and three key capabilities to be developed. (RPO 2013) ^[5].

Insights from the Recent Crisis the COVID-19 Pandemic: Navigating Challenges and Community Resilience

The results of the study showed that the five greatest challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic are: limitations of direct contact with people; restrictions on movement and travel; a change in active lifestyle; boredom and monotony; and finally, uncertainty about the future. (Dominika Maison *et. al.*, 2021) ^[2] Pandemics and natural disasters both disrupt social and organizational practices and call for resilience in society. Information systems can foster and enhance the resilience of people, communities, and organizations by strengthening their ability to adapt to uncertainty, enabling a transition towards an appropriate restoration of order in society. COVID-19 has caused significant disturbances at all societal levels. The impacts range from national lockdowns to social distancing and self-isolation. Everyday practices and business processes are severed or have been halted. Resilience is needed. (Mihoko Sakurai *et. al.*, 2020) ^[3] Studying a condition with more than 50 lasting symptoms is crucial for a better understanding of the pandemic's effects. Prospective research on COVID is vital for effective patient management and minimizing healthcare resource strains. (Christian Lenz *et. al.*, 2023) ^[1]

Empowering Communities: A Case Study on Jalaram Seva Trust (JST)

In the world of charitable endeavors, the Jalaram Seva Trust (JST) in Hapa-Jamnagar stands out as a beacon of hope with remarkable positive vision. Their multifaceted programs encompass healthcare, social welfare, disaster relief, and employment opportunities, all with the shared goal of uplifting the community. The research seeks to illuminate the true influence of JST's programs, which explore social cohesion, community development, and program enhancement through the eyes of those who have benefited from JST's goodwill.

JST's Mission

JST's aim is to uplift community development, promote social cohesion, and ensure that as few people as possible in the area sleep hungry. Their primary focus is providing two meals to those who can come and delivering tiffin meals to families who

have lost a family member, regardless of caste. At times of natural calamities, they stand ready to deliver food packages in accordance with the local authorities' guidelines. The members of the NGO are committed to a continuous journey of self-improvement and program enhancement. In addition, they seek to provide effective solutions, enhance performance, and overcome difficulties, all while analyzing operating constraints, resource limits, and maintaining sustainability.

Why JST is Relevant/Ideal Case Study for the Research

Jalaram Seva Trust (JST), which covers healthcare, social welfare, disaster assistance, and job opportunities, serves as an ideal case study for this research due to its multifaceted approach to community improvement. In addition, the study allows for insights into the dynamics of charitable work and practical strategies for overcoming challenges and improving nonprofit organizations. JST's story perfectly aligns with the research's core objectives, emphasizing the necessity of community-driven initiatives, adaptation, and the necessity of NGOs for long-term positive change.

JST's pivotal role in food aid distribution and overcoming challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jalaram Seva Trust (JST) played a vital role in providing daily food assistance to thousands of individuals facing hardships. It is believed that one-third of a person's income is usually allocated to fulfilling necessities. However, during this challenging time, organizations like JST remained in direct support, making it possible for families to have two square meals a day. To make this happen, JST adhered to Jamnagar Municipal Corporation (JMC) and Collector Authority guidelines, followed necessary protocols by collaborating with such local authorities efficiently, and served the population in need even in the most underserved areas. This kind of support is essential during these tough times, which not only offers immediate relief but also enables some savings. Despite the immense impact of their food distribution efforts, it was not without challenges. JST volunteers had to ensure that there were no disruptions caused while delivering meals, so the collector office facilitated green passes (ID cards) for JST volunteers, which allowed them to manage meal distribution efficiently. JST worked in coordination with concerned officials so the volunteers could serve meals in designated area zones. Volunteering teams played a crucial role, and the donors who supported JST made a significant impact. About 10,000 people were dependent on organizations like JST, which shows the strength of teamwork. As the government took care of the medical field, NGOs like JST became essential for food support during these tough times, and the mission of ensuring that nobody sleeps hungry was indeed fulfilled. JST even managed to set up a vaccination center, which highlights how NGOs played a significant role while ensuring that the government's requirements were met. Like JST, many other NGOs have also been a substantial source of support in any such situation. The success of this mission was made possible through teamwork,

careful attention to safety and hygiene, and the government's support and flexibility.

JST's inspiring COVID-19 Impact, Strategies, and Recognitions: The impact of JST's efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic

1. Alleviating Hunger

JST's food assistance program played a vital role in accomplishing its mission of ensuring that 'nobody sleeps hungry'. Alleviating hunger and enhanced food security affected thousands of individuals. This impact became a lifeline for families facing economic hardship.

2. Financial Comfort

During the economic uncertainty caused by the epidemic, JST's assistance gave major financial relief to families. As they alleviated the financial load on individuals struggling to make their living by assuring two daily meals.

3. Enhanced Resilience

By satisfying a basic need—access to food—JST strengthened community resilience. That impact was not only about providing short-term ease, but also about assisting communities in recovering from the obstacles they encountered.

Some valuable strategies and lessons that can be learned from JST's experiences

1. Adaptability

JST's ability to adapt to changing community requirements during a crisis is an invaluable example. It emphasizes the need of remaining adaptable and flexible to changing difficulties and requirements.

2. Transparency and Donor Support

JST's openness about their work, as well as the assistance they got from donors, played critical to their success, which highlights how being clear and open can lead to strong support from generous people.

3. Strong Volunteer Engagement

JST's strong volunteer teams played a crucial role in the success of food assistance program and its distribution. Such experience displays that NGOs are vital during tough social situations.

JST's Remarkable Recognition & Awards for Exceptional Social Service during the COVID-19 Pandemic

JST received a well-deserved recognition for its remarkable efforts in supplying two meals daily to over 4 lakh needy people over a period of 4 months in accordance with local authorities' regulations.

Corona Warrior Award from Zee 24 Kalak

JST was honoured with the prestigious Corona Warrior Award from Zee 24 Kalak for its exceptional contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reliance Vice President Dhanraj

Nathvani and Member of Parliament (MP) Poonamben Madam presented the award from Jamnagar.

<http://www.oecd.org.ezproxy.haifa.ac.il/governance/risk/The%20role%20of%20S>

Gujarat Gaurav Din Recognition

On May 1st, 2023, during Gujarat Gaurav Din, JST was recognized for its dedicated social service and invaluable contributions during the challenging times faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The award was presented by the Chief Minister and received from the Governor, Shri Acharya Devvrat. These honors demonstrate JST's unwavering commitment to serve the community during a critical time and also highlight the impact and importance of its mission. These are well-deserved honors for their tireless efforts and commitment.

Conclusion

JST's incredible journey not only showcases its dedication but also exemplifies the essential role that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play during critical times. In a time when basic necessities were at stake, organizations like JST made a real difference. Their unwavering dedication, adaptability, and the enduring support of donors and volunteers demonstrate the significant impact that NGOs may have. Through their actions, JST highlights the importance of NGOs being pillars of strength in times of adversity, indicating that these organizations are not just essential but important when it comes to community development and pushing constructive change during difficult times. JST's story serves as a shining example of the transformative potential that NGOs have in building a better future in the darkest of times.

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