

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Comment 1

One has been interacting with NGOs and GOs and we have and want to stop wondering there is a government and there is a non-government, as mentioned.

Now, I get a little confused about the definition of NGO. My question is to clarify the position, as to where and what is an NGO? Is a multinational corporation, which is doing some good social work, an NGO? Is a private sector doing schooling or health care an NGO? Where does NGO begin? Because it is a very simple thing to say, government and non-government. What's not, then the government is an NGO. Because you know, initially you have a lot of uncruelsome willing to NGOs, and the contribution to social funding in the issue of voluntarism since it has become a sort of big set up globally and nationally. I get a little confused about what we are really referring to when we are talking about this.

Comment 2

I think that the gentleman here has raised a rather important question because the whole issue of NGOs has come up to the surface, not that the NGOs are new, but the appellation itself, the dominant seems to highlight the phenomenon that has acquired increased salience in the past 20 or so years. And in fact other people refer to state or non-state also. And that may be a better prediction because local government, central government, and federal government. What non-governments are the so to speaks of grass root organizations or civil society organizations, which may reflect a better terminology. But I don't think that terminology is clearly of the essence. Yes, I mean, I think that hospitals are not NGOs for instance even though they may be working for non-profit. Universities, non-profit universities in the US, it is a private university in the public service, it is not an NGO, it is a university. Foundations are not NGOs. Could we call the Ford Foundation an NGO? No. Some people would. But Save the Children, OXFAM, Amnesty International is. But again, there are risks. Some NGOs depend so heavily on government for their subsistence, that in fact they may be non-state, but they are not really non-government. We were all surprised one day at NY University to learn that the international plamvarent federation, which is known as an NGO, receives 90% of its budgets from USAIV. Is it an NGO? I think that the appellation of NGOs, I think there are a whole world of NGOs

needs a lot more exploration and lot more definition but I think the fact remains that it is a very important movement with a certain contribution to make, to process, or governance.

Comment 3

Could I divert to the issue concerning the internal corporate government and of NGOs, and ask us distinguished panel by so many different countries, whether there is a consistency of view to what constitutes good internal corporate governance within NGOs. As I said, there are 3 different systems: one is the views of NGOs themselves; the second would be the views of the countries within which the NGOs operate; and final of my interest, those NGOs in developing countries which receive pay from the UK tax pave. If those three views are consistent, excellent. If they are not, where do we go?

Comment 4

I just would like to ask a question with reference to the text by Anthony Giddens, a well-known UK sociologist. He was saying that the gap between the poor and the rich is actually not becoming bigger. I was very surprised when I read this. I know that he is a very talented person but I was really surprised as it mentioned one of the reason why is because of the role and the growing number of NGOs in the last 30 years which is extraordinary. I am sure that the NGOs are extremely important in the world, I am not a specialist, but I would just like to know if you feel that the gap between the rich and the poor is growing, I don't think so, at least the role of the NGO would be to improve that differences.

Response by Mr. Iriyama

Thank you for excellent questions. When it comes to taxonomy and notions, it usually takes 2 or 3 days to ensure all different views and opinions, and you know there are such things, such as personal institutional definitions. So, obviously, there are maybe lots of so-called definitions, over the annals we are talking about, NGOs, NPO, CSO, whatever, you name it. And probably, to me, NGOs and NPOs are the same things. In being private non profit sharing. So from this particular viewpoint, the Ford Foundation is a good NGO. And Harvard University also is a good NGO. You have hundred freedoms to employ different definitions. But before we argue about some

truths, or some fundamental reality, before we go into that kind of discussion, we had better make it clear what we are talking about. I do not think my view of NGO and NPO is the only possible definition. But to the extent I know of, it is a relatively, widely accepted definition. Probably owing much to Leis Desi who did the comparative study of formal 20 countries. And, when it comes to views and opinions over any issues there is going to be a wide discrepancy.

Regarding the last question, whether or not the gap between the poor and the rich is widening or we are very wrong, you may recall the recent fierce argument over the book titled, 'Skeptical environmentalist' by Bjorn Lombourg. He is arguing there is no such thing as increasing divide between rich and poor. And global warming is not too significant an issue compared with other issues like water, poverty alleviation and so on. So, these are, to my mind, more to the where the definition, and methodology you are going to employ. So, if we try to answer it, to a question using the big word like civil society, sustainable development, or human rights, or global warming, or whatever you name, you are creating a difficult situation and not really trying to analyze and solve the situation. To remind you, that is my prejudiced opinion, and you don't have to agree with me.

Comment 5

I saw a couple of good comments, one is on corporate governance, an issue the gentleman raised. I would say if it is a membership-based organization, and the way you will recruit members is important in corporate governance and transparency. The way the issue and the NGO are called into order, sometimes its too hard and model many kinds of organizations in a society. Then funding. What is the most important element, most difficult in many cases? Mr. Bertucci has made a point. The accountability in terms of that and decision-making, could it afford government assistance, what time difference it has, increasingly voluntarism is missing. To my mind, there is too much legitimacy of these organizations, which comes from the genuine voluntary participation. Not that there has to be additional workers, there has to be more work to help student professional to be hired. But the sense of it must be voluntary. I am particularly disturbed that across the world, and in India too, this element is not only regarded as important. In fact, many NGOs are horrified when they hear common sense that one accusing is not as brilliant.

As I said, mine is to introduce to you the current context of what I think is necessary. And finally, the gap between the rich and the poor, well I suppose the economist conflict right of data it is for certain. The bottom line is going up, the rich mouths are now better. And the poorest people today definitely are better than what they were earlier. Perhaps the richest people are great further, but I will say, as long as you establish a certain humane, reasonable, and realistic bench mark, and if your ambition is to see that most people cross the plain, that does not answer this fractural arrangement, not a perfect one. But who says we live in a perfect world?

Comment 6

My experience in my country is that not every NGO have good governance. There are some concepts where there is just one annual report or little report. But the concept of accountability is still to be heard renewing in my country. And we do not have like people watch some act to what people do to make the mechanism work. That is worldwide troubles in mechanism to deal with NGO.

Comment 7

I share with the others the mature problem, and I think that is also the reason why this new CSO came into the picture. It probably captures some of the differences, although the definition would be, so in my state, I go for non-state organizations, or secret society organizations, because it can bowl better. Now I would like to look up on the accountability issue. NGOs have been criticized a lot about not being elected and so they don't have the right to remain the way government will demand for its citizens. I think it's in a way, representation is an impossible issue and NGOs would be mistaken with particular issues. I think that what's important is to emphasize that NGOs and other similar organizations represent diversity and society. And they don't need to worry about representation and such, the key thing is initiative and participation, and we cannot claim to be represented like the way politicians are. I think more and more demolysis not so much about only representation, but it's really about deliberating different platforms. And getting as many status as possible where citizens can deliberate the issues and concerns that tend to do with human welfare. That representation to be in on with tax paying in order to participate, and either tend to be an elected

oppression or it may have a constituency as such. Because I believe in constituency when somebody likes to agree with this guy, or yes somebody who stands at without an organization can say his piece, and there are a million people who identifies with that idea, but this is the consistency of that idea, but he was not elected, but it was the idea around which people identified with.

Comment 8

What was mentioned in the initial presentation, I would say the issue of the rule of law is an important issue as much as if we look at some of the partners or actors regarding governance. Government is very clear of rules for alteration. Private sector does, although we have problems in corporate governance. We are living with more book reading/rigging or elephant, but they are very clear of corporations, there are public corporations, there are limited corporations, and there are specific legal and regulatory regimes. When it comes to NGOs, there isn't any such thing. So, obviously when it comes to advocacy, that's another step. Advocacy, anybody can stand up, but when you create certain mechanisms for participation, obviously you have very clear rules of the game and have very specific legal or regulatory framework within which the NGO can fit so that they can participate either in decision-making, because if you invite, for example to a city council meeting, local city government meeting, NGOs, you invite an NGO which is representing one person only. Obviously it doesn't necessary contribute to saying way. When you are given a contract to an NGO you want to assure that NGO is non-profit etc, so I think it is still, they are still wild animals which need to be domesticated or the opposite. The final issue of this inequality in the meeting last year with Mr. Gidden, and somehow I think he is under expressed himself as Mr. Suraka mentioned. There is the base line of improvement, so let's say the standard of living of the average individual, even in the early days, is improving, but compared, the gap has widened. This means the statistics from the World Bank have confirmed, I cannot quote now exactly, that 95% of the population earns 5% of the resources, but the top 5% earns the 95%, so I think in relative terms, the gap has widened.

Comment 9

I think Mr. Bertucci is the number of very good teachers. First of all as

regarding the widening gap, it was 1 for 30 taking the top 5 to 20% and the bottom 20%. The rate in 1960 was 1 to 30, it became 1 to 60 in 1990, and became 1 to 75 in 1998. That is the latest statistics that I have, but whether the situation has improved since 1998 to 2002, I do not know. And the false, we still have about 20% of the world's population living under \$1 a day. Now whether the population of the world living under \$2 a day is 50% some people say, 40% as other people say, it's a matter of methodology and so on so forth, but it's still a very very large and alarming proportion. I still think inequality's far still more important in terms of governance than poverty itself because inequality is translated into even more a symmetrical relations of power. And therefore there is the ability of the top 10 % to control the political process. We see examples of this around the world. I think that in terms of NGOs that we were discussing, I think perhaps this is disguised in shawls, that rather than CVOs vs. NGOs vs. State vs. non state, etc, the taxonomy should put more focus on what NGOs do, and advocacy is definitely one of the best things they could do. But the danger of NGOs being co-opted by government and therefore coming, as easily representing civil society where in fact all they represent is, in fact another few governments itself. That is the danger, and in some of the developing countries there is also the danger of NGOs being co-opted by other international NGOs and transnational corporations. And that is also known to have happened. So, the situation is very muddy, but I ensure Mr. Narai and the tremendous assessment, hope that we still depend of the NGOs to do things governments cannot do. One final word, and that is, since we had Michael Deurise with us last year in Athens, but he is not here today, we need to be reminded of something that he wrote in his report. He said that we have this movement from government to governance, now we may be seeing a movement back from governance to government. But actually the concern expressed by Mr. Bertucci in the last analysis that the bottom line is, somebody has to be accountable. And the government, (which is elected hopefully but at least, can, within that with the responsibility can be pinned down) should be in fact the last one to have to answer to the people.