

# **Who will bear the torch tomorrow? Charismatic leadership and second-line leaders in development NGOs**

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CCS International Working Paper 9

## **Summary**

Competent leadership has always been considered vital in every organisation and there has been considerable research on mainstream leadership issues in the corporate sector and in politics.<sup>1</sup> But there has been very little research on leadership issues in the emerging sector of development NGOs. The issue of second-line leadership development<sup>2</sup> is an important one not only for the NGOs themselves but also for the aid industry, the poor and vulnerable people for whom they work and for society as a whole.

This paper investigates and analyses the question of NGO leadership in Bangladesh and UK and the problems NGOs encounter in developing second-line leaders. Through collection and analysis of data from primary and secondary sources, this document endeavours to relate existing 'leadership research' to the case of NGOs; assess the state of second-line leadership development in NGOs; and recommend possible strategies out for the future. The paper concludes that in spite of the exceptional qualities of many NGO leaders, there has been no systematic approach to the development of successful second-line leadership.

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## **Introduction**

### **Background**

In every organisation and shared effort, competent leadership has always been considered vital and there have been research on leaders and leadership from time to time in various sectors. "However, most attention is given to the visible and influential domains of leadership that form and direct society through the – often allied – powers of politics and of wealth creating businesses. The emerging domain of non-profit or civic leaders and leadership remains relatively unexplored and poorly understood" (Fowler, 2000: 1). Again, most of the research in business and politics has been done in the developed countries without giving adequate attention to the social development leaders in the non-governmental sector who do not aspire to political power, but work to improve the lives of the powerless in the society (Fowler, 2000).

Unlike government or for-profit sectors, NGOs have the distinctive mission of social change and they focus on people who have not been brought under either the government or private sector programmes. This mission and related characteristics create distinct management challenges for NGOs (Hailey, 1999). Appropriate leadership is crucial to face these challenges. Like other organisations, NGOs go through various stages of growth and change. There has been very little research to analyse the role and characteristics of NGO leaders at different stages of the organisation.

The characteristics and role of 'charismatic' founder leaders in NGOs and the concern of developing second-line leadership have been two crucial issues during the last ten years of my work with NGOs in the development field. Throughout my work in programme and partnership development and management, capacity building, and research and advocacy, NGO leadership in general and developing leadership capacities at different levels of organisations have been important concerns. Doing a dissertation as part of my M.Sc. at the Centre for Civil Society, provided me the opportunity to do the research on the issues. This paper is based on primary data collected from both Southern and Northern NGOs<sup>3</sup> and development experts, review of relevant secondary literature, and reflections on my own experiences.

## Rationale and focus

In spite of the successes of 'start-up' stage NGO leaders in the growth, diversity and quality of their work, most Bangladeshi organisations is yet to develop second-line leadership. There have also been anecdotal references to the 'charismatic leaders' that they try to maintain status quo through not letting others grow as potential future leaders, that they do not have enough confidence in others, and so on. Some people also say that the issue has not been a concern in most of the NGOs since the beginning. As indicated earlier, there is scarcity of research and literature in this field. Exploring the issues related to charismatic leadership and development of second-line leaders in NGOs is the focus of this paper.

“Like the religious leaders start their speech with 'as God has said in the holy book', each meeting in [the NGO] starts with 'as [the founder Chief Executive] has said...”

– Staff member of a national NGO in Bangladesh<sup>4</sup>

The work of Hailey and Smillie (2001) on NGO leadership is one of the very first systematic research in this area which is mostly focused on the characteristics of successful NGO leaders in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. All the organisations covered in the study are big NGOs with complex management structures. The study does not focus on medium sized, local and more membership type NGOs. Some of the practices and anecdotal evidences show that second-line leadership development has been a challenge for most of the development NGOs irrespective of size, focus and origin. The above quote from an NGO staff indicates how dependent that organisation is on its founder leader. Some other evidence includes:

- The founder leaders do most of the representations in external meetings and forum, and also get directly involved in all decision-making and day-to-day management. These indicate the absence of suitable alternative people in these organisations.
- Many founder leaders get scared when something goes wrong in their personal life (e.g. sickness). One such leader was heard to say to a partner Northern NGO saying, “what will happen to my organisation if I die tomorrow?”.

- Some NGO staff members are unwilling to express their opinion even on small issues without talking to their leaders. When a donor asked to revise the annual plans and budgets of a local NGO<sup>5</sup>, the staff members said, “we cannot do it because [the leader] prepared the annual plans and budgets before leaving for the current foreign tour which was several weeks even before the process started”.
- There have been a wide range of complaints from outgoing staff of NGOs about their leaders’ unwillingness to let potential staff grow for future leadership roles.

According to Fowler (2000), the knowledge gap in the study of leaders and leadership in NGOs may have important consequences for thinking, policies and practice in the development field such as

- It may set unwarranted boundaries around the concepts, frameworks and theories applied to understand how societies generate, appreciate and distribute leadership.
- It limits and may distort the picture of leadership that gives rise to the “actual configurations of civic institutions and organisational behaviours to be found across the world”. In a politically weak state with less accountability to citizens, such distortions may “give rise to highly questionable policy recommendations, expectations and programmes of external assistance”.
- The perspectives from the business sector increasingly become the reference points and ways to analyse, understand and improve the leadership in societies.

The third consequence may create a ‘monochrome, if not monolithic’ view of the business sector dominating the analysis of leadership. Some analysts argue that leaders in the Third Sector have to make more significant contributions to the organisations than those in the corporate sector<sup>6</sup>. Despite the lack of research on the reasons for the greater impact of the leaders in voluntary organisations, “the nature and quality of voluntary sector leadership is considered more likely to determine achievement than in other organisations” (Fowler, 2000: 5).

Developing second-line leaders (preferably from within the organisation) is a crucial issue in NGO management, but many experts observe that it is not happening in most cases. While developing second-line leaders is important for all organisations, it seems even more important for NGOs because:

- NGOs are value driven organisations and there is need to maintain an optimum level of continuity of their vision, mission and values. This can be done effectively through developing professionals from within the organisation to take future leadership role.
- NGOs are known as training grounds for social entrepreneurs with the potential to spread their values in the wider society. This can be done more effectively through creating leadership capacities within the organisation.
- Creation of capable second-line leaders will enable the founder leaders to get involved in more policy advocacy and long-term strategic work.
- The aid agencies have attached high priority to 'capacity building' in the developing countries – both in public and voluntary sectors. Leadership development is a key concern to investigate the capacity limitations in the voluntary sector in the South (IFCB, 1998).

There has been plenty of work on leadership in the business sector and in politics, but hardly any in relation to NGOs. This paper seeks to contribute to filling this knowledge gap, and indicates issues for further research.

The paper focuses on development NGOs working in the South, and in particular, Southern NGOs (SNGOs) <sup>7</sup> The reasons for the particular focus on SNGOs are: a) they are more dependent on external resources and vulnerable to the environments which are mostly inhospitable for their work making their "leadership more tricky and, potentially, at personal risk" (Fowler, 2000: 3); b) in a number of countries in the South, many of the founder NGO leaders are now approaching retirement making the development of second-line leaders and succession very critical issues; and c) my own experience of the leadership challenges through my work with local, national and international NGOs in the South.

The purpose of the paper is to investigate and analyse the question of NGO leadership and some of the problems encountered by NGOs in developing second-line leaders. With this end in view, there are the following specific objectives:

- Relate the existing 'leadership research' to the specific case of NGOs;
- Make an assessment of the state-of-the-art of second-line leadership development in selected NGOs;

- Analyse the factors for being able/unable to develop second-line leadership; and
- Suggest possible ways out for the future and indicate issues for further research.

There are three key queries in the paper: what happened, why and how, and what is the future.<sup>8</sup> In line with this framework, the following specific issues have been addressed:

- The main contemporary theoretical foundations for leadership, and how leadership theories apply to different contexts and sizes of NGOs;
- The main traits of the successful NGO leaders in the South and in the North;
- What happened among NGOs in developing second-line leaders, why and how; and
- Possible ways out towards developing capable second-line leadership and issues for further research.

Some issues and open-ended questions were used to prompt the discussion during the primary data collection.

## **Methodology**

***Selection of NGOs:*** Due to limitation of time and other resources, the SNGOs were selected from Bangladesh and the northern NGOs from among those with headquarters in the UK. The following three categories of NGOs were selected from Bangladesh:

- One NGO with a 'charismatic' male founder leader that is known to have developed second-line leaders. Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), which implements integrated programmes in more than half of Bangladesh, was selected for this category.
- One with a 'charismatic' founder leader that is yet to develop second-line leaders. Nari Maitree – working in Dhaka (the capital city) and a few other districts – was selected. It was founded in the 1980s and has been headed by a woman leader. It implements integrated development programme with the major focus on women and adolescents. It has a multi-donor funding base and it has been showing steep growth curve over the last half a decade. One NGO with a more

'membership-type' structure working as a full-fledged NGO since early 1990s (started as a local youth club in the mid 1980s). Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) in Chittagong was selected for this category. It has a relatively young team and works on selected themes e.g. disability, micro-credit, etc<sup>9</sup>.

## **Leadership, charisma and NGOs – an overview**

This part reviews the mainstream leadership literature mostly from business and politics. Although neither business nor politics provide an adequate grounding for suitable analysis and interpretation of NGO leadership, this perspective can help expand the boundaries of existing theories and the practices to which they give rise (Fowler, 2000). This part also compares the studies of leadership from political, economic and civic standpoints, and continues to identify the knowledge gap in the non-profit<sup>10</sup> or third sector research on leadership in general and NGO leadership in particular.

### **Leadership: definitions and concepts**

Machiavelli (1468-1527) is one of the earliest theorists of leadership who described certain effective techniques for manipulation and remaining in power (including deceit, bribery and murder) that gave him a bad reputation in the later centuries. However, he wrote in the context of Italy of his time, and what he described can now be seen in terms of 'power distance' (Hofstede, 1980). People have defined leadership in many different ways. Winston Churchill called leadership "*the intelligent use of power*". John Adair suggested that leadership is about "*holding people together as a group while leading them in the right direction*". ... John Harvey-Jones suggested that leadership was about "*getting extraordinary performance out of ordinary people*" (Hailey, 1999: 2). From all these definitions some of the key aspects of leadership can be summarised such as: ability to communicate basic rules that make organisations effective (Grint, 1997a), possessing and applying multiple intelligence (Mant, 1997), facilitating others to act together and to excel (Kouzes and Posner, 1995), ability to create followers (Wheatley, 1994), gathering and intelligently using power (Adair, 1990), setting personal examples (Drucker, 1990), and 'holding' and projecting a vision (Fiedler, 1967).

Two major characteristics of leaders emerge out of these aspects:

- the ability to create self-motivation among others without imposing things on them; and
- the ability to align and unite the behaviour of individuals and groups to a direction required for the success of the organisation.

The first characteristic, linked to personality traits and practices that followers value, has claimed a lot of attention. Some experts tried to find specific 'ingredients' of leadership (e.g. Kouzes and Posner, 1997 as quoted in Fowler, 2000). One may argue that once these ingredients are known, people can be trained and made leaders. On the contrary, other evidences suggest that other elements are required to make a leader such as s/he provides a valued purpose and a direction that people willingly follow – these are more linked to psychological needs of followers and to human relationships. This 'direction-giving' quality creates 'transformational' leadership (Burns, 1978).

Mant (1983, 1997) draws on Gardner's (1993) notion of multiple intelligence and argues it is one way to frame all the above aspects of leadership. Gardner talks about seven types of intelligence such as linguistic, logical, spatial, musical, bodily, inter-personal and intra-personal. Putting further emphasis on the inter- and intra-personal aspects, Goleman (1996) talks about emotional intelligence and asserts that the conventional perspective on intelligence as logical capacity (e.g. IQ) is too narrow; rather knowing oneself and relating to others is crucial for leadership. Mant expands further on this and argues that 'broad-band' intelligence including personal insight in relating to oneself as well as others and a practical understanding of the world is crucial for leadership. All these characteristics along with "undamaged psychological make up, generate trust and 'followership' around shared, valued goals and ideals". It is important to point out that "broad-band intelligence allied to psychological damage can also produce effective leaders, but with malign agendas that also create significant followership" such as Hitler (Fowler, 2000: 8). Inspirational guidance and value-based goal setting are particularly important for NGO leaders who are dedicated to social change because followership in NGOs does not come as a result of economic incentives and market rewards but as a result of "less tangible



foundation of cultural, socio-political values, norms and associated aspirations” (Fowler, 2000: 8).

### **Leadership studies**

The United States saw a current of growth in leadership theories during the last several decades. Some of the best known were put forth by the late Douglas McGregor (Theory X versus Theory Y, cf. McGregor, 1960), Rensis Likert (System 4 management, 1967), and Robert R. Blake with Jane S. Mouton (the managerial grid, 1978). What these theories have in common is that they all advocate participation in the leader’s decisions by his/her subordinates; however, the initiative toward participation is supposed to be taken by the leader (Hofstede, 1980, in ed. Pugh, 1997: 240).

Bryman defines leadership “in the context of a process of social influence whereby a leader steers members of a group towards a goal” (1992: 2). He also examines the main trends and approaches to the study of leadership (Table 1).

**Table 1: Leadership in historical perspective**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Approach</i>	<i>Core theme</i>
Up to late 1940s	Trait approach	Leadership ability is innate
Late 1940s to late 1960s	Style approach	Leadership effectiveness is to do with how the leader behaves
Late 1960s to early 1980s	Contingency approach	It all depends; effective leadership is affected by the situation
Since early 1980s	New leadership approach (includes charismatic leadership)	Leaders need vision

The large body of literature on the mainstream leadership contains the analysis of different dynamics and dimensions of leadership. To some theorists, leadership is dependent on the environment and circumstances suggesting that leadership

behaviour is influenced by external and organisational culture, tradition, and social and political elements (Hofstede, 1991). Much of the literature on leadership suggests that the successful leaders are highly pragmatic, flexible and capable of adapting various leadership styles depending on the needs of situation (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). As presented in the above table, many leadership theorists also focused on the innate leadership traits and skills of leaders in an effort to establish the personal and psychological qualities of leaders in order to distinguish them from non-leaders and followers (Lynch, 1993). The recent management literature emphasises the role of leaders as the heart of learning process. According to these theorists, leaders should be seen as designers, stewards, and teachers in a learning organisation (Senge, 1990 and Fowler, 1997).

Recently, there have been debates over the usefulness of maintaining a division between the views of leadership as a set of natural qualities or it can be nurtured. Because, while there may be inherited and innate qualities such as 'broad-based' intelligence and intellectual capacity, there are other factors for developing leadership qualities such as experience and learning from one's own life, formal education, etc. Thus, much of leadership qualities are "learnable, but a strong intrinsic potential is a definite asset" (Fowler, 2000: 10). As Peter Senge puts it:

"The ability of people to be natural leaders is, as near as I can tell, is the by-product of a lifetime of effort – effort to develop conceptual and communication skills, to reflect on personal values and to align personal behaviour with values, to learn how to listen and to appreciate others and others' ideas. In the absence of such effort, personal charisma is style without substance." (Senge, 1990: 359)

### **Leadership studies in business, politics and the third sector: a comparison**

The principal goal of the leadership research in business is to find and develop people who can improve competitiveness and generate economic value. While the key objective in such research is to find out why and how those people who are pre-eminent stand out in the creation of 'economic capital' and financial wealth, the efforts aim at prescribing models, methods and guidelines for potential leaders (Fowler, 2000). With such utilitarian purpose and the implicit intention to view leadership and

management very close to each other, leadership research in this sector tries to expose and teach how leadership can ensure business profit. While linking leadership with the economic performance, such research also looks at certain human elements and processes such as a leader's psychological characteristics, life shaping experiences, relationships, personal behaviour, etc. However, all these are geared towards the financial profit generation goal of business. An indicator of the dominance of the research and theories from this sector on leadership is the number of books coming to the market with own styles and approaches every year (Grint, 1997a).

The study of leadership in politics tries to investigate and explain an individual's success in terms of his/her "socio-economic origins, psychological characteristics, life-shaping experiences, significant relationships, personal behaviour and political ideology and agenda" (Fowler, 2000: 4). It seeks to analyse how these elements contribute to political leadership in certain contexts of time and place, and this is done in many cases from the perspective of a historian or a biographer. Political leadership may emerge from reactions against certain oppressions, and/or social and labour movements. The biographies of M.K. Gandhi<sup>11</sup> and Nelson Mandela (Sampson, 1999) are two examples. These studies seldom lead to "prescription in terms of dedicated programmes of individual formation and political advancement or selection" and, in this sense, "political leaders 'arise to the moment', they are seldom formally trained for such roles" (Fowler, 2000: 4).

There has been little research and knowledge on the third sector leadership or civic leadership. One indicator of this is the very few journals dedicated to the non-profit leadership and management. Biographies of civic leaders are difficult to find despite their "more substantial contribution to the society than commonly assumed" (Fowler, 2000). Their contributions have been significant in employment creation, contribution to gross domestic product and in size in comparison with industry groups (Salamon and Anheier, 1998).

The importance of NGO leadership is increasingly being recognised. Some recent initiatives include:

- The Aga Khan Foundation funded study on the growth of NGOs in South Asia looking specifically at leadership (Hailey, 1999).

- A Ford Foundation funded programme in the Philippines to develop a new generation of NGO leaders (CODE-NGO, 1998).
- The recent research initiated by Alan Fowler on what makes NGO leaders effective, when and how transitions take place, and who the successor generations are and how they are formed (Fowler, 2000).

Nevertheless, these initiatives are few, compared to the vast area of the NGOs and the rich experience of the leaders in this sector all over the world. Leaders and leadership in NGOs remain “an Achilles’ heel of capacity building initiatives, be it for social development or political-civic ends” (Fowler, 2000: 6). Simultaneously, it is also clear that there has hardly been any organised initiative so far to investigate the issue of developing second-line leaders in NGOs.

### **Charismatic leadership**

Max Weber’s view of leadership was based on his analysis of political authority and the means by which it exercises legitimate domination. He identified three types of legitimate domination<sup>12</sup> with charismatic domination considered the most powerful social force. Specifically, “charisma is ... the quality which identifies a particular person as a leader in the eyes of those around him” (Mommsen, 1974: 78). Such a leader is able to rally himself a retinue of devoted followers who “... accept his leadership because they believe in his personal qualifications as a leader per se, whatever his particular goals may be” (Mommsen, 1974: 78). For Weber, a major function of such a leader is to ensure that an anonymous bureaucracy does not dominate society, and that the political remains dominant over the bureaucratic (Beetham, 1974: 217).

A charismatic leader can gain the trust of a following. He brings “... the masses behind him by means of the machine” and the members of the constituency are “for him merely political spoilsmen enrolled in his following” (Weber, 1947: 107). With mass confidence, he has the independence and freedom to pursue his own convictions and introduce new social aims. All genuine leaders were perceived by Weber to have some charisma. This he considered necessary to maintain domination. Using their charismatic powers they could sell their goals and objectives to the people at large. This process transforms the personal emotional relationship between charismatic leaders and the followers into a stable and more routine one,

whereby charisma becomes routine (Mommson, 1974: 86). The qualities of a charismatic leader are "... passion, a sense of responsibility and a sense of proportion" (Weber, 1947: 115). They live and work for a cause in which they believe, are practical and have a down to earth view of how to achieve aims, and a willingness to accept responsibility for a policy and its consequences (Beetham, 1974: 95).

### **The leadership vs. management debate**

One of the conventional ways to differentiate between a 'leader' and a 'manager' is by their primary orientation and tasks (Hudson, 1995: 242). "Commonly, a leader is seen as someone who exercises influence over another in the attainment of organisational goals, whereas managerial functions, for example organising or planning, does not necessarily involve leadership skills" (Hailey, 1999: 3). According to Drucker (1955), leaders "lifted a man's vision to higher sights and performance to higher standards" while managers "confirmed day-to-day practices of the organisation". Expanding on this, Bennis and Nanus (1985) say that leadership is path finding while management path following. Management is concerned with "doing things right, whereas leadership is about doing the right things" (Hailey, 1999). Thus, leaders are concerned with inspiration, purpose, organisational positioning, strategy and the future while the managers are mostly concerned with the 'nuts and bolts' of management to achieve the shared purpose of the organisation. There have been criticisms against this kind of separation between the two and some theorists such as Lessem (in Graham, 1991: xvi) have argued that this approach is divisive; it does not emphasise the need to integrate both. According to Kotter (1990), leadership complements management instead of replacing it. He views leadership as a process that creates positive feelings among staff, inspires them and unlocks their potential.

### **NGO leadership**

As indicated earlier, "there is limited research into the leadership characteristics and managerial capabilities of key individuals, whether they run an NGO or a rural development programme" (Hailey, 1999: 3). In many cases, NGOs are not considered to be led by a senior team in the organisation rather they are seen to be 'owned' by one single leader. Some theorists tend to see leadership as a quality distributed at different levels of the organisation and, thus, everyone in the organisation has a leadership role to play at a certain level and at a certain period of

time. According to Grint (1997b) “leadership is a social or collective phenomenon” (p. 140). This latter aspect is particularly relevant for NGOs as they need to empower their staff to work with the communities (Fowler, 1997). Thus, the NGO staff at different levels of the organisation need to demonstrate their leadership through facilitation in order to develop leadership among the people they work with who are outside the organisational structure.

NGO leadership in practice appears closer to the contingency approach as opposed to the view that there is a best way of leading. According to this approach, leadership ‘depends’ on the respective context, the past and current status, and future goals of an organisation. One important element of this approach is the influence of ‘culture’ on leadership. As the research on leadership in business goes, various cultural issues (such as norms, conventions, standards, expectations, etc) have significant bearing on leadership (Hofstede, 1991). Culture is an important element for NGOs as well and it is made more complex by the typical combination of cultural influences from various sources such as from outside, from within the organisation and from abroad (Fowler, 1997). Many NGOs themselves are often forced for political and other reasons, to focus more on problems of poverty than social justice issues and this set of constraints is further linked to NGOs’ dependency on resources and their environments. NGOs’ high resource dependency leads to their vulnerability to external control and change (Hudock, 1995). Therefore, to cope with such dependencies, NGO leaders need to have a contingency approach.

The staff members in NGOs have not only to communicate the inspiration of leaders but also to uphold it from their respective levels in the organisation. For instance, to work with the communities, the front-line staff have to “grasp and articulate the image of a changed situation and society to those, the ‘client’s, who must similarly aspire to and eventually embody the change” (Fowler, 2000). This value-inspired aspect of leadership applies to leaders and all other staff in their respective position and situation. According to Wheatley (1994), the inspirational dimension of leadership has to “act as a force field, binding and directing within and beyond the organisation”. Thus, one may not be able to draw the dividing line between leadership and management very sharply in the case of NGOs if these organisations are internally empowering which implies significant delegation of authority (Fowler, 1997).

Some mainstream leadership theorists have seen leadership also in the context of an organisation's maturity. Schein (1992) argues that organisations are greatly moulded by the founder leaders at the beginning. While the founder leaders may continue to influence over many years, management and leadership styles vary in line with the maturity of organisations. While Greiner (1972) is one of the first theorists to talk about different stages of growth experienced by organisations in general, Korten (1990) hypothesised that NGOs evolve through four generational stages such as relief and welfare, community development, sustainable systems development, and people's movements. With an emphasis on the founding stage in shaping the future success, Avina (1993) proposes a four-stage lifecycle of an NGO namely, start-up, expansion, consolidation and closeout. Pointing at the high level of NGOs' dependence on charismatic leadership at the founding stage, Kaplan (1996) works out three phases of NGO growth: i) the pioneer phase, ii) differentiation phase, and iii) integration phase. At the founding stage, organisational systems, and decision making and relationships are mostly personal and informal. In a warm atmosphere, leadership is held in respect and the staff members are content to follow. Over time, as organisations grow and the staff become more experienced and specialised, needs for structures and procedures gradually become prominent. In many cases, staff in an NGO may no longer be happy just to follow the leader at this stage, commonly leading to a "crisis of confidence in the founder leadership" (Hailey, 1999).

## **NGO leadership – findings from primary sources**

This part presents the findings of the study mainly from primary sources making necessary linkages with relevant findings from the secondary sources. The findings have been organised around nine interrelated issues.

### **Growth, achievement and challenges of NGO leaders**

All the interviewed NGO leaders came to set up for their organisations following the realisation of urgent development needs among the communities. These include the need for long-term development work following the 1971 War of Independence in Bangladesh; demand from the urban poor for specific services on health, education and income generation; and realisation from cultural activities focused on social problems..

Some leaders, also driven by ideas about personal liberation and creativity, saw NGOs as vehicles to develop the individual's potential and ideas. Some – particularly in NNGOs – tried to see the national country staff taking the leading role and responsibilities to develop more ownership at local level. To them this has also been a symbol of expression of personal potential of national staff. Most of the leaders grew, as they worked, mostly through a combination of trial and learning, and formal training mostly on management related issues.

Some of the challenges that they faced include leading and managing the evolution of their organisations which were small at the beginning; determining the focus at different stages and difference of opinion within the organisation; pressure from the local power structure and political parties; and the initial suspicion of the communities such as a perceived religious agenda of NGOs. For NNGO leaders, dealing with multicultural teams, and differences and diversities were two main challenges. Their efforts to develop more national leaders were severely criticised because 'liberating one may threaten others'. Some of the challenges and frustrations they faced in developing (national) second-line leaders are:

- opposition from non-national staff due to a sense of personal insecurity.
- willingness to let go and to transfer authority.



- difference of judgements between leaders and others.
- lack of confidence to seize opportunities, take on responsibilities and make some mistakes (and learn from those).

It may be noted that most of the interviewed staff seemed to have informal knowledge of the stories and background of their organisations.

### **Perception about NGO leadership: charisma and other issues**

Charisma is perceived as a set of focused magnetic qualities that make a leader accepted and followed by the people without questioning. If we look at any of the historical movements, we see someone bringing the ideas and taking them through. Thus it is a set of personal qualities that makes people interested in the ideas about the great possibilities about the future. It is a set of personal characteristics, ideas, magnetism that ensures loyalty from others (e.g. Jawaharlal Nehru in India).

Professionalism and charisma are not perceived opposite to each other as “successful charismatic leaders have to continue to change over time in keeping with the needs/demands of situation and acquire necessary competence”. Charismatic leaders are sometimes lonely people; after some time their professionalism (e.g. managerialism, attention to details, etc) may wear out and they may fail to achieve the spread and depth in the organisation, and in turn they may become unfit for the leadership role.

Charismatic leadership is necessary at the beginning of an NGO followed by transformation towards more professionalism. At the beginning of a successful NGO, charisma is higher and professionalism is lower, while at later stages professionalism is higher and charisma is lower. A leader’s responsibility is to transform. If s/he tries to maintain charisma forever, leadership capacity is not built in the organisation and the organisation faces difficulty.<sup>13</sup>

As to comparison between NGO leaders and leaders in other sectors, the respondents said that NGO leaders have to be always conscious about responding to social needs. About the environment of NGO leaders the view was: unlike organisations in other sectors, NGOs live in a more protected environment. Both politicians and business leaders are constantly scrutinised, challenged and ‘attacked’.

Habitation of NGOs in kinder and less searching environment also limits NGO leaders' growth, competence, and other capabilities. SNGOs and NNGOs have different types of protection. SNGOs work in their own environment and can have a lot of support from own people; many of the founders are considered as 'gurus'. On the other hand NNGOs, in spite of their better funding protection, suffer from lack of immediacy with the environment they work in. While the SNGOs suffer from the weak governance mechanism, NNGOs are under the dual pressure of the impulse from the South and the pressure from the governance (sometimes due to the lack of 'developing' the governance).

In general, the influences on the NGO leaders come from the events and incidents in early life such as the Renaissance, liberation movements (e.g. setting up of BRAC), education, family values and practices, etc. For one of the leaders, apart from the Renaissance and Asian liberation movements, the influencing figures have been Nehru and Gandhi. For him, Nehru provided the ideas of solidarity, citizenship, potential of people in the South (e.g. people in the South can do things themselves), while the ideas of self-respect, non-violent movements for liberation and change, etc came from Gandhi.

### **The NGO leaders: as seen by themselves and others**

During interviews, the NGO leaders were asked to characterise their own leadership style and the other staff members were also asked to comment on the same of their leaders. Table 2 summarises the leadership characteristics as seen by the respondents:

**Table 2: Characteristics of NGO leaders as seen by themselves and others.**

<i>Leaders as seen by themselves</i>	<i>Leaders as seen by other staff</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultative and builders of vision through involving others.</li> <li>• Effective communicators, and upholders and promoters of the organisation, not of themselves.</li> <li>• Open minded to change and implementers of change, and committed to quality.</li> <li>• Democratic and learning oriented.</li> <li>• Acceptance to others and know how to approach policy level.</li> <li>• Think and network globally but act locally.</li> <li>• Motivator, listener and tolerant.</li> <li>• Receptive to the views from others while do not wait eternally for others if something seems right to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not only leaders but also professional managers.</li> <li>• Risk takers, listeners, learners, innovators, patient, flexible and do not dominate.</li> <li>• Good communicators and diplomats.</li> <li>• Motivators and guides while friendly, caring and supportive with staff, and have a lot of confidence in them.</li> <li>• Open minded (and encourages) to criticism and do not dominate.</li> <li>• Respect and value for others especially for frontline staff and the poor people.</li> <li>• Strong sense of ownership of the organisation and maintain a good balance between 'hard' and 'soft' style of management.</li> </ul>

One of the second-line leaders (who is a potential leader of the NGO in the future) put forward the following characteristics of his own leadership style: participation, listening and observation, going to people once in a while, respecting people, not using abusive language, toughness without being harsh, and belief in human potential. On the contrary, his characteristics as described by other staff are: not an innovator, a good diplomat, good at keeping things in mind and a potential consolidator of the organisation. They also said that he is yet to be tested as a full-fledged leader. None of the staff members had any negative comment about the NGO leaders while they had a number of complains and criticisms about the potential second-liners whom they considered more as managers than as leaders. Each of the

founder leaders was found to have gained enormous trust and confidence from others in the NGOs.

### **Developing the second-line: what happened?**

To all the respondents, it is essential for NGOs to develop not only second-line but also leadership at different levels for succession. In their view, leadership should multiply leadership. The general view of the majority was that there has not been systematic approach to developing the second-line in most of the NGOs. Specifically about their own organisations, they said that developing the second-line has been an urge since the early days although most of them could not do it due to various constraints. According to the national NGO, it has been essential to meet the future leadership needs of the organisation to uphold and achieve the mission keeping the needs, demands and challenges of time in perspective. The urge for institutional capacity building and achieving donor independence started in that organisation in the early 1970s (i.e. soon after the initiation of its more development oriented work following the 1971 war). In one of the medium sized NGOs, realisation and urge about developing the second-line came in the mid-1990s realising the fact that there will not be anybody within the organisation to help if the previous problems with other NGOs, government offices or the local power structure repeat. According the NNGO leader, the urge to develop second-line leadership did not come at the beginning in any of the organisations he worked with. But once the issue came to the forefront, it was taken seriously. In one of his previous NNGOs, the current Chief Executive (CEO), the Asia Director, several Country Directors and many key staff were recruited and groomed under his leadership.

The general view is that the picture is mixed. Countries with a large number of NGOs have more options to choose from, leaders may come from within respective NGOs. Countries with a low density of NGOs may not have the potential to have second-line leaders from within. For instance, the Philippines has more discussions about this than Bangladesh. So far, most of the NGOs have taken just an oblique view to succession. It depends on personal initiatives (mostly of the founder leaders), Board (governance) situation e.g. how strongly the founder leaders control the Board, etc. Succession is not an open discussion yet among NGOs and limited investment has been made into developing second-line leadership.

According to Fowler, “it is not uncommon to find an effective NGDO [Non-Governmental Development Organisation<sup>14</sup>] leader without a strong second cadre or successor generation. There is also the consideration that a leader may not want a too strong, younger second cadre because it poses a threat to their own leadership position. Such insecurity would be a prima facie indicator of insecurity and hence of possible psychological ‘damage’. Inevitably, this is an unwelcome precondition when it comes to leadership transition and organisational regeneration.” (Fowler, 2000: 11)

Some of the general staff were quite critical about what happened. As they said, NGOs have developed working managers not second-line leaders. They continued:

a) second tier was created, “to maintain power through creating groups of staff around each of them, and divide and rule through using the factions”; b) mechanisms are not in place to develop ‘human care’ attitude among the current second-liners; and c) one common concern of staff is “what will happen” after the current (founder) leader. One of the mid-level staff said, “a common joke in the organisation is that on the following day of [the founder leader’s] departure we will come to work wearing helmets to protect ourselves from the stones of rival staff groups”. According to Fowler (2000), only “a few NGOs have “well developed schemes to identify and invest in the necessary experiential exposures to their staff: what business would refer to as career planning and development” (p. 10).

### **Developing the second-line: achievements and constraints**

As to achievements, most of what were put forth were general management capacity building initiatives for staff at different levels. There was only one example where the potential future leaders were given necessary exposure and adequate freedom to leadership role, to ‘make some mistakes’ and learn from those. Some of the common achievements mentioned include:

- Donor funded institutional capacity building projects, exposure visits and training of staff on thematic issues (e.g. gender planning);
- Work division, decentralisation and delegation.
- Creation of readers’ circles and other ways of formal and informal sharing and learning.
- Identification of interest and potential among staff, and providing them required input (such as training) and responsibilities to see how they do.

- Promotion of staff from different levels, and gradual growth of staff capacity in the areas of strategic planning and networking.

The NNGO leader, in most cases, created 'space and opportunities' for people instead of guiding them through (by 'holding their hands'). To him, to develop second-line leadership, one has to remove the bureaucratic barriers. On the contrary, bureaucracy can also be a kind of protection for some people as it provides the 'safety net' of rules and regulations. While talking about the challenges and constraints, he said that the efforts to develop more second-line and national leaders were seen by many as tyranny because liberating one may threaten others. While he pointed at the general challenges and frustrations mentioned earlier, some of the specific challenges and constraints he faced in this are the following:

- Promoting someone for leadership may mean 'depriving' someone else. In such cases, one has to apply own personal judgement (a kind of arbitrariness) that may cause discomfort and frustration among some members of staff.
- The issues of fairness and unfairness rise very strongly, and a leader faces the challenge of judging how much 'unfair' s/he can be for the greater 'fairness' for the future.

According to the national NGO leader(s), one of the main challenges in developing alternative leaders has been the loss of potential leaders as they left to join other development organisations. The positive aspect of this apparent loss of staff is that "the organisation has been providing trained human resources for the NGO movement in Bangladesh". Right now many NGOs are being led by ex-staff of that NGO. Some other common major constraints mentioned by almost everyone in the SNGOs were:

- Staff are good at implementation but they lack presentation and communication skills, and confidence while they also do not get the scope to share ideas and learning with others. These are mostly due to the pressure of implementation.
- Lack of appropriate training opportunities and resources for competitive remuneration and other staff benefits. These along with lack of personal commitment by some potential staff result in high turn over.
- Lack of visionary thinking among staff coupled with the inability of some leaders to disseminate their visionary thoughts among the 'followers'.

- Unpredictability of the future in general; while some NGOs made contributions to other organisations to develop second-liners, but did not look at themselves much.
- Psychological blocks around issues such as the Governing Body and, resource dependent.
- Lack of leaders' confidence, professional capacity, exposure to other organisations / sectors, and extreme sense of 'ownership' leads to repulsion of 'new blood' in NGOs which in turn blocks the development of second-line leaders.

In spite of all the challenges and constraints, the unanimous view was that a strong second-line provides ample time to leaders for reflection, policy work and strategic thinking leading towards sustainability of the organisation and its impact<sup>15</sup>.

### **Developing the second-line: external factors**

Both presence and lack of donor financial support for developing the second-line topped the list of the SNGO respondents. A few said that there was no pressure from any donor to develop second-line leadership. The NNGO leader: a) received a lot of support from the partner organisations in the South, while faced resistance from the overseas head office and regional offices mainly due to the sense of personal insecurity of the staff there; b) received a lot of encouragement from the CEOs who allowed ample flexibility and 'controlled chaos'; and c) sensed some scepticism from other NNGOs about the appropriateness and success of the approach of national capacity building and national leadership development initiatives.

### **The future: leadership issues**

One set of respondents' views can be summarised as: a) NGOs require different styles over time which may not be coming from the same person – 'clones' of today's leaders may not be required in the future; b) how far the 'clones' of the current leaders are required is an issue to see over time; and c) it is also important to see who defines the situational characteristics of the future leaders. The views of the founder leaders were:

- The future leaders should have appropriate leadership personality to prevent potential factions in the organisation, they should be more consensus-oriented

(instead of power), and they should play facilitators' role at different levels of the organisation to uphold and achieve the mission which should remain the same over time.

- The future leaders have to have high acceptance, have to be 'better' than the current leaders and more flexible in dealing with the rapidly changing environment. They also have to be impartial and remain above politics (to manage the potential factions in the organisation).
- There is no major threat in developing the future leaders as all staff members are involved in everything; tensions may arise if 'outsiders' or 'juniors' are brought in to the overall leadership role.
- The next generation will need to deal with the pressure from the environment such as local leaders and politicians. Development is a political process and NGO leaders have to play important role without getting involved in party politics.
- Future leaders have to have a twofold approach to programmes e.g. basic needs fulfilment, and policy advocacy to ensure rights and entitlements for the poor.
- Today's leaders have to leave a 'virtuous spiral' for the future.

Although all the NGO leaders were quite optimistic about the future and had plans for appropriate leadership capacity building along with succession planning, they were also aware of some threats such as: a) there may be a lack of dynamic leadership; b) donor reluctance to fund such activities; c) potential psychological factions among the second-liners and consequently among other staff; and d) difficulty in dealing with the issue of political identity of NGOs.

### **The future: other organisational issues**

All the founder leaders envisioned their respective NGOs to remain one organisation in the future and keep growing while all the respondents had the common view that a 'clone' of the current organisational set up may not be required. Some of the specific plans for the future include: a) reduction of external resource dependency through local resource generation to facilitate development of second-line leaders; b) the organisations will continue to grow and innovate while there may be needs to merge some programmes; c) the governance structure has to have better mix of disciplines and the members will need to involve and contribute more; d) the organisational structure will need to play more facilitating roles; and e) more consolidation of



programmes may be required along with enhancement of the sense of 'ownership' among staff.

The view of the NNGO leader may summarise a major part of the future organisational issue of NGOs: not a monolithic organisational structure or leadership style – these must be more situational. In the changing environment there will be needs for new organisational arrangements (e.g. merger, acquisition, mutation, etc), new ideas, changes and so on. An NGO has to constantly develop its staff, governance, donors and other constituencies to prepare for the changes over time. One SNGO staff said that if the NGO fails to develop appropriate leadership for the future, the organisation may be taken over by the government.

### **Recommendations for developing second-line leadership**

When asked what an NGO should do to develop second-line leadership, the respondents made the following recommendations:

- Staff capacity building at different levels leading towards more delegation of authority and responsibility.
- Understanding and analysis of respective national heritage along with a sense of history and change (social, political, etc) – i.e. knowledge of the evolution of own history – along with consciousness about the context and environment.
- Creation of space for second-liners to develop without 'holding their hands' to guide them, rather allowing them to 'make some mistakes' and learn from those).
- See second-line leadership development as a long-term process so that necessary adjustments and changes can be made in the process e.g. when there are shocks from resource dependency and other factors in the environment.

### **Discussion, conclusions and recommendations**

This part presents a discussion on the linkages of the study findings with the existing leadership theories presented in the previous chapters. It also draws some conclusions based on the findings from both primary and secondary sources, and the

discussions. It ends with a set of recommendations for the development of second-line leaders in NGOs and for further research.

## **Discussions and conclusions**

If we compare the findings with the definitions and characteristics of leaders and leadership (discussed in the second part of the paper), each of the NGO leaders are found to possess most of the leadership characteristics to a large extent. They conform to the two major traits of leaders i.e. they are able to: a) create self-motivation among others around them, and b) align and unite the behaviour of individuals and groups to a direction required for the success of the organisation. As already indicated above, NGO leaders demonstrate a combination of the various approaches and core themes of leadership over time with a major share of the contingency approach. This is further linked to their ability to ensure survival, growth and diversification of their organisations while constantly responding to the changing needs of the poor and vulnerable.

The founder leaders also demonstrate a strong flair for experiment and learning. Quoting Korten (1990), Lovell (1992) characterises BRAC as a learning organisation and says that its “extraordinary success in rural development has been attributed to this basic feature of its operational mode”. They also maintain that:

“BRAC ‘learns as it goes’ through a responsive, inductive process, and that programs grow out of village experience because BRAC is strongly participative” (Lovell, 1992: 4).

Each of the founder leaders was found to have charisma to various degrees, and neither themselves nor other staff members found this as a negative aspect of their leadership. Young (1995) can be referred to in this connection who says, “successful international associations feature a special brand charismatic leadership”. Commenting on charisma, he points at “leaders who can inspire, encourage, support and set examples”. The NGO leaders in the study have been able to create effective followers who accept their leadership because they believe in their personal qualifications as leaders. In the eyes of the other staff in those NGOs, the leaders also have very good managerial capacities along with strong sense of ‘ownership’ of the organisations (comparison can be made with Akhter Hameed Khan<sup>16</sup> in Khan,

1999). Without directly blaming the founder leaders, everyone talked about the inability of the organisations to develop appropriate leaders for the future. As presented earlier, most of the respondents feel that those NGOs have developed effective second-line managers, not leaders.

Dependency on the founder leaders was clearly visible in every organisation. In one hand this may be due to the long tenure of the founders and not allowing the staff from the second-line to take some major leadership role so that they can equip themselves for future leadership role while the other staff also gain confidence in them. According to Chambers (1997), these leaders can achieve a lot of things through their “guts, vision and commitment” but their power is a disability that hinders organisational effectiveness. He also argues that such leaders are “vulnerable to acquiescence, deference, flattery and placation”. As they are “not easily contradicted or corrected”, they may get easily tempted “to impose their own agenda, block change and deny the realities and perceptions of others” (Hailey, 1999). On the other hand, the time bound nature of leaders in NNGOs has the potential to limit long-term ‘charismatic domination’ and push to develop or attract alternative leadership.

Although there have been references to the detrimental role of these leaders as ‘charismatic autocrats’ or the ‘guru syndrome’, these leaders are the people who – dealing successfully with various political, financial, developmental and managerial challenges – have made their NGOs “exemplars of a new type of organisation that is beginning to change the face of South Asia” (Hailey, 1999). Overall, the job of an NGO leader is complex. According to Fowler (2000: 12), “it involves making correct external and internal value-based ‘readings’, reaching sound judgements and producing the right decisions” about “specific features of a multi-layered socio-political environment”, “inspirational civic agenda”, and appropriate organisation “to bring about the envisioned change”. Emphasising the need for multiple intelligence and qualities such as “constant, conscious practical attention founded on broad-based intelligence, personal insight, interpersonal skill, intuition and agility”, he proposes the following definition for NGO leadership:

“The art of sound judgement and process of achieving self-willed social change through others within and beyond the organisation”.

According to Hailey (1999: 2), these leaders are able to “balance their values and aspirations, with technical competencies and environmental analysis”. Based on his recent research on NGO leadership in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, Hailey concludes that the leaders of successful NGOs (all of whom have been leading their organisations since the start-up stage):

“are pragmatic, rational, and aspirational. ... have aspirations to help the poor, a desire to build sustainable communities, and a set of values that believe strongly in participative, inclusive approaches to development. They recognise the importance of communicating with individuals, motivating teams and building coalitions. They are rational knowledge-based leaders who are willing to take the best from science and education, to apply contemporary skills and competencies, and continue learning and relearning. ... they have also developed an understanding and insight into the environment in which they work. They have the analytical ability to react [to] changing circumstances, to apply appropriate judgement, and respond to the moment” (Hailey, 1999: 10).

In the words of Uphoff (1998: 50), these leaders are effective because of their “conviction and consistency regarding the potential of the rural people”, while Fowler (1997: 75) points at their “adherence to moral principle” and their “enduring, consistent drive, rather than charismatic personality”. But, in spite of all their qualities as founder leaders of successful NGOs, those organisations are yet to develop successful and ‘tested’ second-line leadership.

Finally, the existing theories and concepts of leadership are not adequate to address the critical issues of development of societies where NGOs operate. To be complete, current leadership theories need to look at the issues relevant to NGOs from within the sector.

## **Recommendations**

The study makes the following recommendations for developing second-line leadership in NGOs and areas for further research. These are mostly based on the discussions with the respondents, analysis of the secondary information, and my own experience.

- Continuous appropriate capacity building at different levels of NGOs to encourage more delegation of authority and responsibility.
- Understanding and analysis of organisational heritage and context by all staff members and linking these with the causes of poverty and vulnerability.
- Creation of a sense of history and change (social, political, economic, etc) among staff. In other words, developing the knowledge of the evolution of personal and organisation's own histories – along with a consciousness about the context and environment.
- Creation of space for second-liners to develop without 'holding their hands' to guide them, and allowing them the room to 'make some mistakes', get 'tested' and learn from those.
- See second-line leadership development as a long-term process so that necessary changes and adjustments can be made over time particularly when there are shocks from the environment.
- Try out time-bound leadership tenure with strong positive role played by the governance structures.

As to further research, there should be in-depth studies on the aspects related to NGO leadership such as: a) capacity building, b) sustainability, c) gender, d) resource dependency, e) good governance, f) succession, g) formation of the leadership and management styles of the leaders (i.e. where they derive their styles from and how), h) how NGO leaders extend leadership to the communities, i) social innovation and creation of social capital, and j) power and control over various processes (e.g. financing, staffing, governance, etc) in NGOs.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on the author's M.Sc. dissertation at London School of Economics. The author is grateful to all the respondents of the study who, in spite of their busy schedule, gave time and information. In addition to giving me time and views as a respondent, Dr. Alan Fowler shared ideas and methodologies of his upcoming research on NGO leadership. Ms. Pauline Wilson and Mr. Ton van Zutphen gave valuable ideas at the conceptualisation and methodology formulation stages. He is thankful to all of them. Dr. David Lewis, Centre for Civil Society, London School of Economics, gave continuous guidance and encouragement throughout the dissertation work and preparation of this paper afterwards. The author is deeply indebted to him.

<sup>2</sup> Leadership developed to take over from the founder and/or current leader(s) in an organisation. These people are not necessarily the second-line managers. They have to have the specific leadership qualities.

<sup>3</sup> An NGO founded in a 'developed' country in the North and work in more than one developing country in the South. It is also known as International NGO.

<sup>4</sup> An NGO founded in a developing country and works in many parts of a country. Some of these organisations work in more than half of a country although may not necessarily cover half of the poor population of the country. Such an NGO has an annual budget of minimum £25 million.

<sup>5</sup> An NGO founded locally (in a developing country), and working in and around the same area (such as in and around the district of its founding). An NGO in this category has an annual budget of not more than £150,000.

<sup>6</sup> "While unofficial power arrangements certainly exist in work organisations, they appear to be more fully developed in the voluntary organisation, since the latter is characterised by looser structural arrangements. And this looser structure would appear to be related to another important consideration: in voluntary organisations, the leader is more likely to have a strong impact than in more structured organisations, because there are more possibilities for variation in the voluntary setting". (Hall, 1991: 152-153)

<sup>7</sup> A Southern NGO is one founded in a developing country in the South and works in the South.

<sup>8</sup> Apart from the issues focused in this paper, the study also collected data on various crosscutting issues for NGO leadership such as gender, resource dependency, organisational learning, sustainability and good governance. Findings on these issues have not been presented/analysed in this document to maintain the average volume of CCS International Working Papers. There will be separate publications on those issues in the near future.

<sup>9</sup> “Everybody knows about everything in YPSA and they have strong personal stake in the organisation”, commented one of the donors of YPSA. At the initial stage, the start-up group of staff committed not to get married until the organisation is 15 years old to be able to give more time and attention to the organisation, and to set examples of delayed marriage which is important for population control in a country like Bangladesh. The first staff member got married in 1999!

<sup>10</sup> Non-profit, Third Sector and Civic Organisations – these three terms have not been taken as interchangeable in this paper. The first two originate from the ‘theories about configurations and functions of society’s institutions while the third from political science and the notion of civil society. This study focuses on the leaders and leadership in the formally structured, non-governmental development organisations – a conceptually ambiguous area – where the notions of Third Sector, non-profit and civic can all apply (extracted from Fowler, 2000: 1).

<sup>11</sup> Reference is made to the internet-based biographical, political and philosophical sketches of M.K. Gandhi in <http://www.meadev.gov.in> and <http://www.mkgandhi-sarvodaya.org> (downloaded on 25 July 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Weber identified “... three pure types of legitimate domination: ‘legal domination’ by means of bureaucratic administrative techniques; ‘traditional domination’ by means of an administrative staff consisting of men who are personally dependent on the ruler; and ‘charismatic domination’, that is the rule of a charismatic leader by means of retinue unreservedly devoted to him as a person endowed with unusual qualities ...” (Mommsen, 1974:73).

<sup>13</sup> A comparative political example was cited by the interviewed national NGO founder leader: the effectiveness of the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Mujib in Bangladesh in the 1960s and his failure as a leader later on.

<sup>14</sup> NGO and NGDO have been used interchangeably in this paper.

<sup>15</sup> Fowler summarised the reasons for the current situation of second-line leadership development in the following way: "... financial. Leadership investment is typically treated as a cost that must be covered by overheads. But, to satisfy funders' expectations, overheads must be kept down. ... Coupled to this are uncertainties of organisational continuity stemming from project-based development finance. Third is attitudinal. People are expected to be capable of doing the job they are hired for and then 'learning by the seat of their pants' as opportunities for personal growth present themselves. In other words, individual leadership capability evolves or it doesn't as the case may be: a form of 'natural selection'. ...Finally, there is fear of 'poaching'. Lack of adequate investment in NGDO leadership, when set against rapid expansion in the number and size of the NGDO community, is creating a large gap between supply and demand of competent people. ... These factors give rise to a perception and experience that leadership development is a high risk, negative sum game mitigating against investment. (Fowler, 2000: 10-11)

<sup>16</sup> Founder of the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla Rural Development Model in Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan), and the Orangi Project in Pakistan.

<sup>17</sup> IFCB is the International Forum for Capacity Building at Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), New Delhi, India.



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