

# ***NGOs and NPISHs in Health Sector-Possibilities and Policy Options-An Expository Study in the Indian Context***

Dr. P.M.Mathew

Christ University, Bangalore, India

## **Abstract**

Health has been historically an area where NGOs and NPISHs have worked. This paper is a critical expository study of the Indian NGO and NPISH sector in promoting health care. The paper also brings out case studies of few successful health NGOs in the country. Of late NGOs in India have played the role of advocate for health policy change. Unfortunately their role as watchdog on performance of health services has been weak. Overall impact of NGOs on the health services has been only moderate at best. Distribution of NGOs is biased towards cities, except certain religious NGOs, that go specifically to difficult areas. Even the health NGOs have not come out of the welfare and curative mode of thinking and have not taken up preventive and public health programmes on a large scale. Some NGOs have built very good hospital services. The CMC Vellore and the Arvind eye hospital Madurai are case studies included in this paper. Others have developed good community development programmes while some others have done excellent field research. Examples considered are that of SEWA-Rural, CINI, SEARCH and Ghadchiroli, KEM hospital Pune. Unfortunately good NGOs having large scale operations have been few and far between. Many health NGOs have come up that have doubtful quality and sometimes suspectful motives. Successful NGO models must be replicated by the Government in wider area. A more humane and cost effective approach should be followed by NGOs. They should concentrate more on hilly, tribal and desert areas. Good NGOs must blend in to the role of providing leadership and co-creating a vision for the health of the nation. Initiatives by few health care NGOs in supplementing Government schemes under the National Rural Health Mission is briefly analyzed in the paper. The case study of NRHM Orissa that has successfully established partnership with civil societies including NGOs in delivering Reproductive Child Health services through mother NGO (MNGO) to the marginalized population of the un-served and underserved areas is discussed as a successful experiment.