

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF NON-RESIDENT NEPALI ASSOCIATION (NRNA)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Task Force on the Sustainability of Non-resident Nepali Association (TF) was formed in July 2007 under the chairmanship of Mr. Ram Thapa, Vice President, Europe, to consider issues pertaining to the long-term sustainability of NRNA and present recommendations for its institutional development. A list of the members of the TF is presented in Annex 1.
- 1.2 The increased number of the National Coordination Councils (NCC) is a testament to the increasing influence of NRNA in Nepali diaspora (NRNs) around the world and the recognition among NRNs of the need for a global organization representing them. It also means an increased diversity of voices within NRNA and the consequent challenge to NRNA to recognize the unique characteristics of each NCC and to address their needs for operational autonomy while maintaining ties with its global body, International Coordination Council (ICC). This represents a critical balance which NRNA will have to achieve if it is to continue to be influential and sustainable. A strong institutional foundation, careful selection and management of projects reflecting the aspirations of the NCCs and an enhanced capacity to manage its work in an accountable, transparent manner are crucial for the success and sustainability of NRNA. A voluntary organization such as NRNA cannot achieve its objectives without dedicated volunteers who are also committed to its mission and programs. This report summarizes the sustainability issues raised by the members and recommends for discussion those actions that NRNA needs to consider for its institutional development. The recommendations presented are only at the conceptual level for NRNA to discuss and approve. Once this process is completed, detailed working papers will have to be developed for facilitating the implementation of the approved recommendations.
- 1.3 The recommendations in this report envision the development of a balanced, dynamic and sustainable NRNA. However, the TF recognizes that the effectiveness and impact of the recommendations presented below will be known with any certainty, and can only be measured, after the recommendations are implemented. We recommend that the recommendations adopted by NRNA be reviewed frequently with reference to their objectives and implementation and be adjusted as necessary to ensure that the organization remains true to its mission and responsive to the aspirations of the NCCs it represents.

2.0 Requirements for Sustainability

- 2.1 The TF considered the following as the minimum requirements for a dynamic and sustainable NRNA:
 - ❖ *Clarity of mission and purpose*
 - ❖ *A comprehensive statute of the organization and organizational structure focused on NRNA's mission and goals*
 - ❖ *Organizational structure with a clear chain of command and specifications of the roles and responsibilities of all its officers and members*
 - ❖ *Programme-selection and -adoption methods to which all NCCs buy in*
 - ❖ *Sustainable sources of revenue and a sound and transparent financial management system*
 - ❖ *Support of volunteers who are committed to its mission and objectives*
 - ❖ *Consensus-based decision-making*

3.0 Clarity of Mission and Purpose

Comments

Clarity of mission and purpose is crucial for the success, credibility and sustainability of any organization. NRNA's mission statement is provided in its constitution. However, the mission statement in its present form seems to have been interpreted variously by NRNA's office bearers and others.

TF Recommendation

NRNA's officers as well as ICC and NCC members should promote a thoughtful discussion of the mission statement within their respective constituencies. Based on the outcome of these discussions, an explanatory or expository note on each component of the NRNA mission statement should be developed and adopted as the final and definitive interpretation of the mission statement. All NRNA and NCC office bearers should refer to these interpretations in organizational policy development and their public statements.

4.0 Comprehensive Statute of the Organization and Organizational Structure

Comments

The NRNA constitution, which was drafted after the First NRNA Conference in 2003, is currently being revised. It is intended to define the relationship between NRNA and ICC members and the NCCs and also to specify their respective roles and responsibilities. The organizational structure of a voluntary organization like NRNA needs to be flat (horizontal) rather than vertical or hierarchical. Open, uninhibited communication between all levels (top-down and bottom-up) is a must. It will need a strong secretariat with highly competent salaried staff to manage its day-to-day operation.

TF Recommendations

4.1 Organizational Structure

Some of the recommendations below may have already been incorporated in the revised constitution.

4.1.1 The General Assembly (GA) should be the apex body of the organization. It will consist of the following members:

- *Officers and members (country representatives) of the IC. The officers will be selected by ICC as is presently the case.*
- *Presidents of NCCs*
- *Co-coordinator of NCCs*
- *NCC members nominated to be participants in the GA*

4.1.2 The powers and responsibilities of the GA should be as stated in Articles 13 and 14 of the draft NRNA constitution.

4.1.3 NRNA will be headed by a President. The President of NRNA should preside over the meetings of the GA. The President or his authorized representative should have the right to approve voting rights in the GA of NRNs from countries where NCC has not been formed.

4.1.4 *The International Executive Committee (IEC) should be the executive body of NRNA with the responsibility of implementing and monitoring its policies and plans. NRNA's IEC should comprise the following:*

<i>President *</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Vice Presidents -- one from each region*</i> ◆ <i>Middle East</i> ◆ <i>Asia Pacific</i> ◆ <i>Europe</i> ◆ <i>Australasia</i> ◆ <i>Americas</i> ◆ <i>Africa</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>International Co-coordinator*</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Joint International Co-coordinator#</i> <i>(Joint Member-Secretary)**</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Treasurer*</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>1</i>
<i>Women's representative*</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Spokesperson#</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Youth Representative*</i>	<i>1</i>		
<i>Total 14</i>			

* *Elected by GA.*

Appointed by the president.

***Salaried staff who will also serve as the Head of the NRNA Secretariat.*

4.1.5 *From among the six vice presidents, the president should designate the longest-serving vice president as the Senior Vice-President who, in the absence of the President, will perform the functions of the President.*

4.1.6 *Each Vice-President should be assigned specific coordination responsibilities relating to one of the following areas:*

- (a) Project planning , development, review and monitoring*
- (b) Resource mobilization and investment*
- (c) Communication and publications*
- (d) Human resources (knowledge-sharing, transfer of technology and skill , youth and sports)*
- (e) Conferences and Secretariat*
- (f) Labour and Foreign Employment*

4.1.7 *The Vice Presidents should have the prerogative to select his/her team members in consultation with the IEC and to form sub-committees for specific tasks or purposes.*

4.1.8 *The NRNA Secretariat should be an integral part of the IEC. The Secretariat should support the IEC in discharging its duties and establishing relationships and regular communication with NCCs and the government and other agencies in Nepal and abroad.*

4.1.9 *NCCs are the foundation of NRNA. The NCCs should have the authority to develop their plans and programs independently. However, NCCs should be allowed to request NRNA's support for its plans*

and programs, in which case such plans and programme must accord with NRNA's own plans, policies and programme. The IEC should consider project proposals from NCCs but not adopt or approve projects without formal, documented consultation with all NCCs. The consultation procedures will be developed by the Secretariat and ratified by the IEC.

5.0 Programme Priorities

Comments

There exists a lack of clarity between NRNA-adopted projects and investment projects by individuals or by NRN groups. There are some misgivings about the process that NRNA uses in adopting projects and the responsibilities that NRNA assumes as a result of such adoption.

TF Recommendations

- 5.1 *NRNA should adopt charity projects only. The adoption process should require the proposing NCC to develop and present a business plan for the project by the proposing NCC. It should also require the identification of a champion of the specific project. NRNA should not adopt any project without the financial commitment and relevant logistical support from a majority of NCCs. Once a project is adopted, it should be implemented seriously with a delivery deadline.*
- 5.2 *All ICC members should assume collective responsibility to deliver any (charity) project adopted by NRNA. If the champion of an adopted project fails to lead the project, another NRN should take over the responsibility and move it forward. The success or failure of the adopted projects defines whether NRNA is a serious organization dedicated to the service of Nepal and Nepali people.*
- 5.3 *Investment projects are undertaken by individual NRNs or groups of NRNs and not by NRNA. NRNA may facilitate the processing of such projects within the Nepali government bureaucracy. The responsibility to deliver these projects lies with the investors. These projects are good for NRNA as they may be viewed as NRN contribution to Nepal, but NRNA should not be placed in a position where it is held accountable if these projects are not implemented on time or fail to materialize or produce dubious results.*

6.0 Sustainable Source of Revenue and Sound and Transparent Financial Management

Comments

No organization can sustain itself without a reliable source of revenue to support its operational expenses. NRNA needs to generate income to support its secretariat and subsidize the travel expenses of its officers when necessary. Financial planning and management will require an estimate of the operational costs of the organization. It is expected that NRNA's operational costs will increase rapidly after its registration.

TF recommends the following options be considered:

- 6.1 *The Treasurer should submit to the GA a budget estimate that includes projected revenue and expenditures for every two years and obtain its approval. Budget allocation to various expenditure items should be explicit. This will help in raising funds. Audit report should also be submitted to the GA. This will enhance the transparency of financial management and promote accountability.*
- 6.2 *Special membership categories such as Life Membership or Senior Membership should be introduced to boost membership and revenue.*
- 6.3 *NCC's should be asked to contribute 25% of their earnings from membership fees to NRNA.*
- 6.4 *Ask NRNs, who are using the name or sponsorship of NRNA, directly or indirectly, to expand their interests or business in Nepal, to pay a specific fee, based on their authorized capital or net profit, to NRNA.*

- 6.5 *Mobilize donations from multinational companies and NRN-owned businesses to support the establishment of "Fixed Deposit" or "Certificate of Deposit" funds so that NRNA can use the interest earned to meet its administrative and operational costs. Donors should be recognized for their generous contribution.*
- 6.6 *Collect trust fund from individuals. For this, NRNA will have to consider the following:*
- *Amounts contributed by individuals to this trust fund should not be spent. This amount should remain intact and only the interest earned from the investment should be used.*
 - *Balance from interest should be proportionately credited back to the contributor's account after the end of the year.*
 - *Contributors should be awarded a certificate indicating their contribution (initial amount and the balance remaining from interest earned).*
- 6.7 *A multi-functional NRN building should be built in Nepal as a business investment by interested NRNs. This building will serve two purposes: (1) to provide office space to the NRNA Secretariat and (2) to generate revenue by renting space (rooms) to offices and businesses; and (3) provide return to the investors .*

7.0 Support Volunteers

TF Comments and Recommendations:

Institutions like NRNA cannot progress and achieve its objectives without the commitment and dedication of its members, supporters and well-wishers. Our experience so far with volunteerism is encouraging. NRNA should encourage the spirit of volunteerism, respect volunteers and recognize them for successfully completing the tasks assigned to them.

8.0. Promote Open and Honest communication

Comments

Open and honest communication between the main partners of NRNA is crucial for its success and credibility. NCCs should be actively involved in the major decision-making process.

TF Comments and Recommendations

After consultation with NCCs, develop communication- and information-dissemination procedure and follow them across the board.

Annex 1

Members of the NRNA Task Force

1.	Mr. Ram P. Thapa, Vice President, Europe	Coordinator
2.	Mr. Naresh Koirala, ICC, Canada	Joint-Coordinator
3.	Mr. Prakash Pun, ICC Treasurer	Member
4.	Mr. Bhim Poudel, ICC, Qatar	Member
5.	Mr. Deepak Khadka, ICC, Australia	Member
6.	Mr. Jiba Lamichhane, ICC, Russia	Member
7.	Mr. Mukesh Singh (ICC USA)	Member
8.	Mr. Ram Babu Nepal (ICC, The Netherlands)	Member
9.	Dr. Hemant Dabadi, NRNA Secretariat	Member-Secretary