

## องค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนและรัฐในนโยบาย

### สาธารณะไทย:

### คุณลักษณะ บทบาท และความสัมพันธ์

### *Non-governmental Organizations and Public Organizations*

### *in the Thai Public Policy: Their Characteristics,*

### *Roles, and Relations*

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### บทคัดย่อ

ในปัจจุบัน องค์กรพัฒนาเอกชน (NGOs) ได้มีบทบาทมากขึ้น ภายในกระบวนการนโยบายสาธารณะไทย งานวิจัยนี้ศึกษาคุณลักษณะบางประการของ NGOs โดยเปรียบเทียบกับคุณลักษณะขององค์กรภาครัฐไทย รวมทั้งศึกษาบทบาทและความสัมพันธ์ขององค์กรทั้งสองประเภท นอกจากนี้ งานวิจัยมุ่งเน้นศึกษาเปรียบเทียบประเด็นนโยบายสองด้าน คือด้านสิ่งแวดล้อมและสวัสดิการสังคม

โครงการวิจัย ใช้แบบสอบถามเป็นเครื่องมือในการเก็บข้อมูลจากองค์กรภาครัฐและ NGOs ที่มีขอบข่ายการปฏิบัติงานในประเด็นนโยบายด้านสิ่งแวดล้อมและสวัสดิการสังคม โดยใช้มุมมององค์กรของผู้ปฏิบัติงานภายในองค์กรที่

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ศึกษา และทำการวิเคราะห์เปรียบเทียบองค์กรและนโยบายสองประเภทนี้  
เกี่ยวกับคุณลักษณะ บทบาท และความสัมพันธ์ขององค์กร

งานวิจัยพบคุณลักษณะเชิงบวกของ NGOs เช่น ความมีจิตสำนึกเชิง  
สังคม ประสิทธิภาพ ประสิทธิผลของการปฏิบัติงาน ความผูกพันของผู้ปฏิบัติงาน  
กับองค์กร และความรู้สึกถึงการได้รับผลตอบแทนสูงในการปฏิบัติงาน รวมทั้ง  
การมีบทบาทสูงขององค์กร ในกระบวนการนโยบายสาธารณะ นอกจากนี้  
การระบุดังคอร์ปชั่นภายใน NGOs ยังต่ำกว่าภายในองค์กรภาครัฐ อย่างไรก็ตาม  
ในขณะที่ทั้งสององค์กรต้องปฏิบัติภารกิจร่วมกันภายในนโยบายสาธารณะ  
ความแตกต่างด้านลักษณะองค์กร และทัศนคติ เช่น ความแตกต่างในการมุ่ง  
เน้นการปฏิบัติงานไปยังผลประโยชน์ของประเทศ กับผลประโยชน์ของท้องถิ่น  
เป็นเหตุของความขัดแย้งระหว่างองค์กรทั้งสอง ลักษณะร่วมที่พบอยู่บ้าง  
ระหว่างสององค์กร เช่น การมีจุดประสงค์เชิงสังคมที่หลากหลายเหมือนกัน  
น่าจะเป็นจุดที่ทำให้เกิดความร่วมมือประสานงานระหว่างกันได้ ทั้งนี้ เพื่อให้  
องค์กรทั้งสองประเภท ได้เสริมบทบาทซึ่งกันและกันภายในนโยบาย  
สาธารณะ สำหรับนโยบายสองประเภทหลักที่ศึกษา พบว่ามีความขัดแย้ง  
ระหว่างองค์กรภาครัฐและ NGOs ในนโยบายด้านสิ่งแวดล้อม มากกว่าใน  
นโยบายด้านสวัสดิการสังคม โครงการวิจัยได้พยายามอธิบายปรากฏการณ์  
ดังกล่าวไว้ที่ช่วงท้ายของรายงานผลการวิจัย

## **Abstract**

*There has been an increase in the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the Thai policy process. This study examines some of their characteristics by comparing them to those of public organizations. Their roles in public policy as well as their relationship with public organizations are also studied. This study focuses further attention on two policy types--environment and welfare.*

*A survey on public organizations and NGOs involving in the environmental and welfare policy areas, through the perception of the organizations' employees, is used as the method of data collection. Comparative analyses are performed on two organizational and two policy types with respect to some characteristics and roles of the organizations in the policy process.*

*The study results found many positive characteristics of NGOs, such as their high level of altruism and civic consciousness, effectiveness, efficiency, commitment and high sense of reward among their employees, as well as their active roles in public policy. Less corruption is reported from NGOs than from public organizations. However, while the two organizations share tasks in the policy process, differences in organizational characteristics and attitudes, such as their different focus on national versus local interests, likely contribute to conflicts between them. Few shared traits, such as their multiple social goals, could be the focal point in the effort to build a relationship between them, so that they can complement and supplement each other's role in public policy. In terms of the two policy areas, environmental policy area exhibits a high level of conflict in public organizations and NGOs' relation. A more pleasant work atmosphere in the form of more cooperative effort is found in the welfare policy area. An attempt to explain such empirical finding is offered at the end of the study report.*

## **Introduction**

Today, the roles of non-state actors have increased considerably throughout the public policy process. Particularly in the Third World countries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as part of the civil society, have helped aggregate demands in policy formulation and public policy implementation. Those roles could be viewed as privatization and coproduction of public policy (Savas, 1987; Brudney & England, 1983). Despite the growing importance of the civil society, there has hitherto been a lack of empirical research regarding public organizations in relation to NGOs. It is the intention of this study to examine comprehensively and empirically the nature, structure, and roles of NGOs within the Thai public policy process, by comparing them to those of the public sector which used to have a monopolistic role in public policy.

Earlier studies have geared their attention toward the comparisons of state and non-state organizations. Some studies compare public organizations to business, for-profit organizations. Generally, public organizations pick up social functions that are not performed by their private counterpart, such as income and resource distribution, due to the market failure. With different sets of objectives, state and for-profit organizations also differ with respect to certain characteristics, such as operating efficiency, effectiveness, competition, internal control, external control or accountability or public scrutiny, personal reward or work satisfaction, legal and financial constraints, and operational flexibility (Rainey, Backoff & Levine, 1976; Perry & Rainey, 1988).

Other studies did theoretical surveys on NGOs. Uphoff (1993) makes a theoretical comparison of bureaucratic/public

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organizations, market-oriented organizations, and voluntary associations in terms of their structure and roles. Bureaucratic organizations possess and exercise coercive power, which is appropriate for assuring compliance, such as the enforcement of environmental preservation. For-profit organizations will operate to produce goods and services while preserving the environment only as long as such actions generate greater profit than costs to them. Not-for-profit, voluntary organizations operate by ways of agreement, understanding, and social pressure. In the similar vein, Daft (1989) discusses three means of control in organizations: bureaucratic, market, and clan. The clan control strategy, which is used mostly in nonprofit organizations, relies on values, commitment, tradition, shared benefits and trusts among organizational members.

#### ***Roles and Inter-relation among organizations in the public policy process***

With inter-relation among different types of organizations in the public policy process, the line that separates the publicness between state and non-state organizations become increasingly unclear. Bozeman (1989) sees the publicness in all organizational types because they are all affected by political authority. The publicness, according to this study, is viewed from the perspective that all organizations -- public, for-profit, and nonprofit alike -- affect the public or society in some ways (direct or indirect), and in the short term or in the long term.

Various theoretical reasons explain such inter-relation and their publicness in nature. Most organizations, through their stages of development and progress, tend to require re-organization. To prevent over-bureaucratization which can produce too much tardiness and inefficiency, governmental organizations privatize and decentralize certain tasks to private organizations and local

governments (Daft, 1989). Musgrave and Musgrave (1989) and Stiglitz (1988) suggest the economic possibility for the non-state sector to participate in many kinds of public service delivery or policy implementation, which is mainly due to the exclusion and/or rival consumption in the nature of most public goods. Savas (1987) explores various means of privatization. Interestingly, public service delivery by voluntary organizations is considered one particular type of privatization. The increase in the role of NGOs can also counter-balance and cross-check the role of public and for-profit organizations. Sangiampongsa (1998) views the behavior of these latter two sectors as, sometimes, that of collusion type in the system of state corporatism. The roles of NGOs represent a higher level or a more direct way of political participation of the non-state sector in a representative democracy (Clark, Heilman, & Johnson, 1995/1996). The cooperative effort between the state and NGOs throughout the public policy process is nowadays necessary in order to avoid confrontation and conflict. Discussion on the new kind of governance by such methods as minimizing the state's roles, inter-organizational networking or public and private partnership is commonly found in modern days' public policy literature (Brudney & England, 1983; Rhodes, 1996; Fredericksen & London, 2000; Grubbs, 2000). The cooperation between the state and non-state sectors in public program implementation should result in social capital, leading, in turn, to program success (Tyler, 1994-1995; Brown & Ashman, 1996). In policy formulation, NGOs usually take the role of policy advocacy, trying to influence the decision making of elected officials (Lowry, 1995). Rinqvist's study (1995) shows a successful influence of environmental groups on a strict pollution control policy. In policy implementation, NGOs' services increase consumers' choices while supplementing the median level of governmental services.

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With a greater number of both state and non-state organizations, information and technology tend to be more developed and shared among the two sectors. Nyland (1995), Berman and West (1995), and Hayes (1996) found non-profit organizations to be flexible, effective, innovative, and altruistic in operation, which help them gear effort to certain groups with low visibility. NGOs also comprise a source of jobs for the society (Meyer, 1995).

People are involved heavily in public policy sometimes due to their altruism and civic consciousness. Altruistic people voluntarily set up or join philanthropic organizations. Some NGOs, usually through environmental movement and actions, focus their roles in environmental, ecology-related issues with an objective to pressure for a sustainable resource use (Pongsapich, 1995). Specifically, ascription of responsibility (AR) comprises a source of motivation for prosocial acts (Schwartz, 1970 & 1973; Heberlein, 1971). Most of the time, prosocial acts take place as people bring the responsibility in pursuing such acts toward themselves rather than pushing it to others. Sangiampongsa (1995) found that there is also the perception of costs in pro-environmental behavior, a form of prosocial behavior, as another factor that determines environmental behaviors.

All organizations have flaws; and NGOs receive criticisms on certain aspects. They are commented for their lack of accountability, since they are not dependent on the legislature and usually do not face a very high degree of supervision or control from other organizations (Gates & Hill, 1995). This is contradictory to public organizations that are supervised more extensively by legislators and independent organizations. NGOs are also known to develop specific effort and roles, sometimes in the form of focusing attention on limited issues or too narrow in scope of issues and too limited problem areas, such as gearing services to

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very particular groups of people or to certain locations. This can have adverse effects, as a more complete understanding of public policy issues and problems may require a broader, more general scope of vision, activities, and effort (Hayes, 1996).

In Thailand, NGOs started to have active roles in the environmental policy issue, at the same time that the environmental degradation as well as natural resource depletion have become a national concern starting from the past few decades. Environmental movement has become particularly significant and received public attention, as part of its success could be witnessed, such as campaigns to prevent construction of Nam Choan Dam and Kaeng Krung Dam (Hirsch, 1997; Jumbala & Mitprasart 1997; Thabchumpon, 1997). In environmental politics and movement, both NGOs and grassroots, people's organizations are active in articulating their interests while communicating their desire to the authority. Occasionally, confrontation, conflict, and sometimes violence take place between NGOs and governmental agencies such as pollution control agencies and public enterprises.

Along with their role in environmental policy area, NGOs also have some contribution in social welfare policy implementation. Together with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare as well as other related agencies, such as certain divisions and departments of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, many NGOs such as Duang Prateep Foundation and Foundation for Children also deliver welfare services to the disadvantaged. Unlike western welfare states in European countries and the U.S., Thailand has traditionally relied on families and friends for such welfare as caring for the young, the elderly, and the disabled (Vatikiotis, 1996). As such, social welfare services from the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, albeit increasing steadily, has rarely been sufficient. Perhaps, the large number of NGOs working on welfare issues are the result of inadequate governmental services.

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The stage of the present study is set from the help of earlier studies regarding positive aspects and criticisms of NGOs and public organizations. Emphasis is geared toward the comparison of NGOs and public organizations' roles in environmental and welfare policy areas, in which the Thai NGOs have been particularly heavily involved. Ripley and Franklin (1986) categorize public policy into four separate kinds. The environmental policy, with its main concern in the protection of the environment and ecology, is placed in the protective regulation category, while the social welfare policy is placed in the redistribution category. Both types of public policy comprise two most controversial and coercive kinds. With regulatory objective administered by the state, people are required to act or not to act in certain ways, such as limiting the amount of released pollution. For the redistribution policy, resources are compulsorily transferred from the wealthy to the less wealthy, through taxation, mostly for the purpose of welfare programs. From the input of NGOs in these two policy areas, more knowledge is gained from the comparisons of their characteristics and roles to public organizations. Specifically, the comparisons will be geared toward the following aspects.

**1. Organizational characteristics.** Due to the non-state and voluntary nature of NGOs, some characteristics should be different between public organizations and NGOs operating in a policy area. The characteristics to be examined empirically are, for instance, efficiency, effectiveness, corruption, and organizational goals.

**2. NGOs' roles in the public policy process.** The extent of their roles are compared to that of public organizations in corresponding policy areas. Also, their relationship is examined.

**3. Altruism and civic consciousness of NGOs.** These characteristics are also compared to those of public organizations. With voluntary nature in the operation of NGOs, a high level of altruism is expected.

The differences and similarities between the two organizational types should have some effects on the Thai public policy.

### **Method and Data**

The organizations' characteristics, roles, and altruism are assessed and become the data for the study through the perception of individuals who work in NGOs and public organizations. Being the staff, they should be valuable in reflecting and revealing the aspects of inquiry as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Model of the study.

		<b>Types of organizations</b>	
		Public organizations	NGOs
<b>Policy areas</b>	Environment	Quadrant 1 n = 60 Mean (DVs) = SD =	Quadrant 3 n = 60 Mean (DVs) = SD =
	Welfare	Quadrant 2 n = 60 Mean (DVs) = SD =	Quadrant 4 n = 60 Mean (DVs) = SD =

n = number of respondents / samples;

Mean (DVs) = Means of dependent variables;

SD = Standard deviation.

The sample size for this study comprises 240 respondents, divided into four sub-samples of organizations. Sixty sub-samples were randomly selected from employees involving with program implementation in environmental public organizations, such as Air Quality and Noise Management Division, Bureau of Energy Regulation and Conservation, and Fishery Planning and Policy Division (Quadrant 1 in Figure 1). Sixty sub-samples were randomly drawn from employees involving with program implementation in welfare public organizations, such as Center for the Elderly's Social Welfare, Payathai Shelter for Girls, and Center for Job Training for the Handicapped (Quadrant 2 in Figure 1). Sixty sub-samples were randomly selected from employees involving with program implementation in environmental NGOs, such as Green World Foundation, Friends of Asian Elephants, and Recycle Paper for Trees (Quadrant 3 in Figure 1). Lastly, sixty sub-samples were randomly drawn from employees involving with program implementation in welfare NGOs, such as Center for the Protection of Children's Rights, Duang Prateep Foundation, and Foundation for Women (Quadrant 4 in Figure 1).

The study uses a survey instrument as the method of data collection. The instrument comprises fifty-two items of statements / questions, which quantitatively assess variables, becoming dependent variables. Each of the 52 items has the measurement scale of one to seven. Variables are composed from the items by a series of summation among groups of items. These dependent variables, their measurement, and their meanings, as listed in Table 1, enter a series of two-way analyses of variance. The two independent variables in each analysis are organizational types (Organization), varying between public organizations and NGOs; and policy types (Policy), varying between environment and welfare.

**Table 1** Variables, Measurement Scale, and Meanings

Variables	# of Items	Measurement Scale		Meanings
		Maximum	Minimum	
Formal	3	21 (High)	3 (Low)	The level of organizational formalization.
Commit	3	21 (High)	3 (Low)	Commitment of employees in the organization.
Reward	4	28 (High)	4 (Low)	Sense of personal reward among employees.
Effective	2	14 (High)	2 (Low)	Organizational effectiveness / Goal achievement.
Efficient	2	14 (High)	2 (Low)	Operational efficiency / Cost effectiveness.
Accountable	4	28 (High)	4 (Low)	Accountability of the organization to society / External control / Public scrutiny.
Flexible	2	14 (High)	2 (Low)	Operational flexibility / Extent of adaptability.
Multiple	2	14 (Multiple)	2 (Not multiple)	Extent of an organization's multiple goals.
Conflict	2	14 (Conflicting)	2 (Not conflicting)	Extent of an conflicting goals of an organization.
Interest	2	14 (National)	2 (Local)	Focus of an organization on national versus local interests.
Vague	3	21 (Vague)	3 (Clear)	Vagueness of organizational goals.
Corruption	1	7 (High)	1 (Low)	Corruption in an organization.

(Table 1 continued)

Variables	# of items	Measurement Scale		Meanings
		Maximum	Minimum	
Relation	3	21 (High)	3 (Low)	Relationship between public organizations and NGOs.
Roles	3	21 (High)	3 (Low)	Extent of organizational roles in public policy.
Limit	2	14 (High)	2 (Low)	Work limitation / Constraints of an organization.
Perception	3	21 (Good)	3 (Not very good)	Perception / Attitude toward NGOs.
Relation- Society	3	21 (Good)	3 (Not very good)	Relationship between the organization and the society.
Innovation	2	14 (High)	2 (Low)	Extent of innovation / Initiation / risk taking of an organization.
Behavior	2	14 (High)	2 (Low)	Prosocial behaviors of organizational employees.
AR (Ascription of responsibility)	2	14 (Responsible)	2 (Not responsible)	Extent of AR.
Cost	2	14 (Perceive cost)	2 (Not perceive cost)	Perception of costs or burden in prosocial behaviors.

### Result

Twenty-one factorial ANOVAs were performed with respect to 21 dependent variables. One significant interaction effect between Organization and Policy was found with respect to Interest ( $F(1, 236) = 4.95, p < .05$ ). Two interaction effects were found to approach significance ( $F(1, 236) = 3.65, p = .057$  for Accountable; and  $F(1, 236) = 2.98, p = .085$  for Corruption).

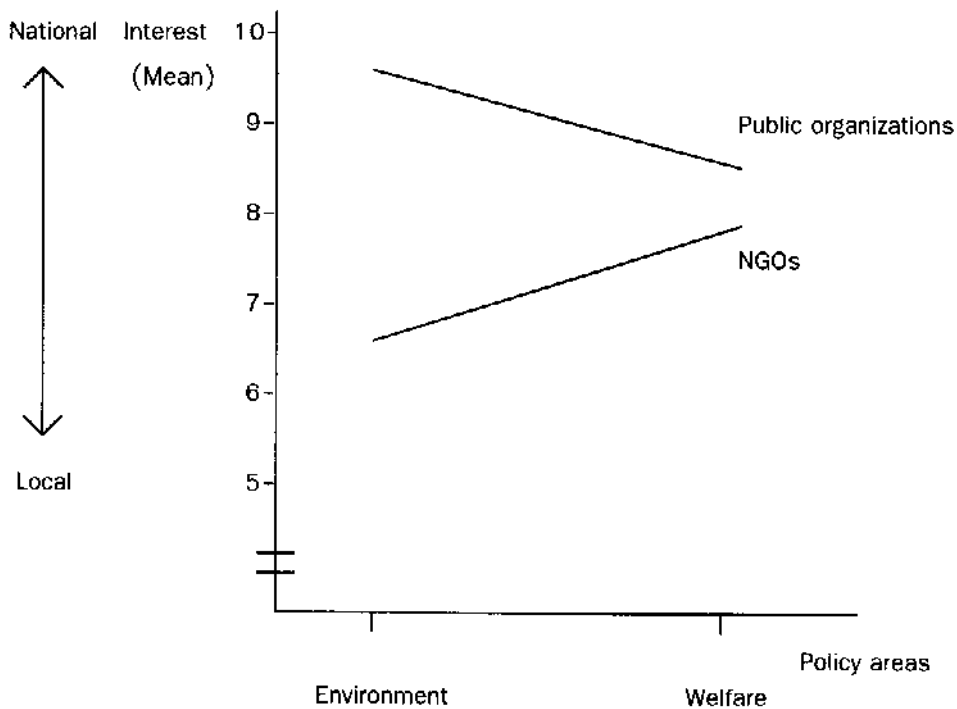
**Figure 2.** Interaction between Organization and Policy with respect to Interest.

Figure 2 shows an ordinal interaction between organization and policy with respect to Interest. Public organizations in both environmental and welfare policy areas place a higher emphasis on national interest than do NGOs. However, this difference is significantly higher in environmental policy than in welfare policy, as reflected in the simple main effects tests.

$(F(1, 236) = 20.79, p < .05$  and  $F(1, 236) = 2.04, p > .05$ , respectively. These results suggest that within the environmental policy area, NGOs clash with public organizations in that public organizations focus more on national interests while NGOs focus more on local interests.

Figure 3. Interaction between Organization and Policy with respect to Accountable.

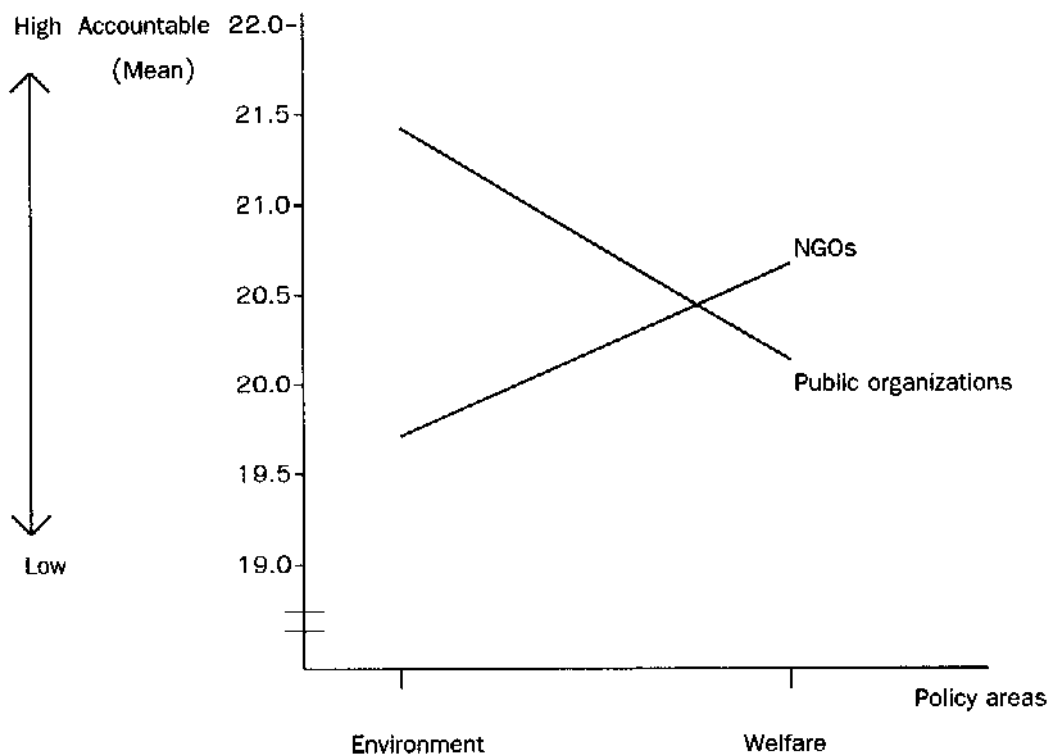


Figure 3 shows a disordinal interaction. In environmental issue, public organizations reported a significantly higher degree of accountability or external control than do NGOs, with a corresponding simple main effect of  $F(1, 236) = 5.23, p < .05$ . In a welfare policy issue, although NGOs reported facing a somewhat higher accountability than do public organizations, the simple main effect does not show a significant result ( $F(1, 236) = .17, p > .05$ ). With these results, public organizations must operate with a particularly high degree of public scrutiny in the area of environment.

**Figure 4.** Interaction between Organization and Policy with respect to Corruption.

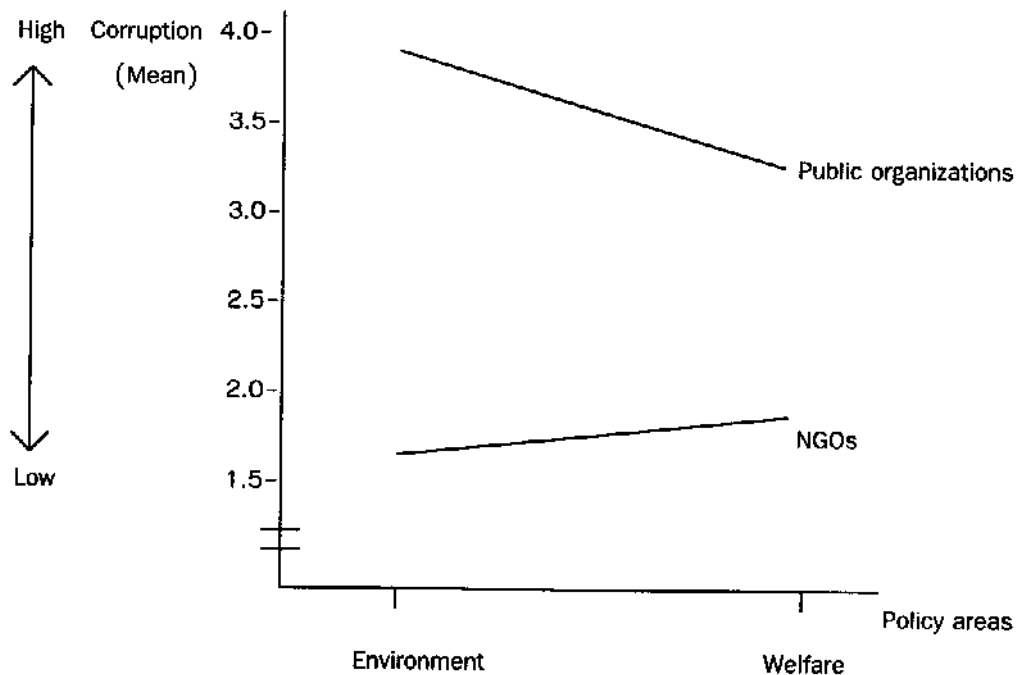


Figure 4 shows another ordinal interaction with respect to corruption. A much higher degree of corruption is reported from public organizations than from NGOs in both policy issues, in correspondence with a highly significant organization main effect with respect to corruption ( $F(1, 236) = 78.81, p < .01$ ), as reported in Table 2. The simple organization main effect tests show significant results at both policy areas ( $F(1, 236) = 56.24, p < .01$  for the environmental policy and  $F(1, 236) = 25.80, p < .01$  for welfare policy). Nevertheless, Figure 4 graphically shows a particularly high incidence of corruption in environmental public organizations.

Table 2 shows a total of sixteen significant main effects and one approaching significant main effect of organization, along with organizational group means with respect to each dependent variable. Fifteen of these main effects are highly significant



beyond the .01 level. Public organizations and NGOs differ significantly from each other particularly in the incidence of corruption, the extent of conflicting goals of organizations, as well as their perspectives toward NGOs and toward relationship between the two organizations.

**Table 2** Significant Main Effect of Organization in Factorial ANOVAs, with F Values and Group Marginal Means for each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variables	Means (Organizations)			Dependent Variables	Means (Organizations)		
	F	Public	NGOs		F	Public	NGOs
Formal	7.30**	16.92	15.84	Relation	22.38**	13.37	16.10
Commit	8.49**	16.71	17.88	Roles	11.61**	14.62	16.35
Reward	4.11**	22.73	23.62	Limit	9.10**	10.51	9.57
Effective	9.45**	10.74	11.45	Perception	22.85**	14.58	16.91
Efficient	14.91**	9.98	11.10	Relation-			
Conflict	47.45**	9.69	7.37	society	5.77*	16.28	17.22
Interest	17.90**	8.98	7.23	Innovation	13.41**	8.81	10.06
Vague	12.38**	9.67	8.40	Behavior	8.60**	10.86	11.74
Corruption	78.81**	3.63	1.79	Cost	3.13 as	5.96	5.20

\* p < .05    \*\* p < .01    as Approaching significance

All significant policy main effects are displayed in Table 3. Results of ANOVAs exhibit very high F values beyond the .01 level in all dependent variables.

**Table 3** Significant Main Effect of Policy in Factorial ANOVAs, with F Values and Group Marginal Means for each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variables	F	Means (Organizations)	
		Environment	Welfare
Reward	7.96**	22.55	23.79
Effective	12.31**	10.69	11.50
Vague	12.06**	9.66	8.41
Relation	10.25**	13.81	15.66
Perception	13.82**	14.84	16.65
Relation- Society	21.45**	15.85	17.65
Behavior	5.14**	11.64	10.96

\*\* $p < .01$

Zero-order correlations were also pursued, indicating some interesting results in some pairs of variables. These results could supplement those of factorial ANOVAs. For instance, organizations expressing work limitation tend to report a high level of conflicting goals (Pearson Correlation  $r(\text{Limit, Conflict}) = .21, p < .01$ ). Correspondingly, in the results of two-way ANOVA, public organizations reported a higher degree of work limitation and more conflicting goals than do NGOs. There is a negative correlation between conflicting goals of an organization and the level of effectiveness or a reported goal achievement in an organization (Pearson Correlation  $r(\text{Conflict, Effectiveness}) = -.21, p < .01$ ). Public organizations exhibit both conflicting goals and low level of effectiveness or goal achievement. Also, reported active roles in public policy tend to conform with a high level of initiation and risk taking (Pearson Correlation  $r(\text{Roles, Initiation}) = .30, p < .01$ ). From the two-way ANOVAs on these variables, NGOs reported a

high level in both characteristics, in comparison with public organizations. In addition, organizations reporting a high relationship between public organizations and NGOs tend to have positive attitude and perception toward NGOs (Pearson Correlation  $r$  (Relation, Perception) = .47,  $p < .01$ ).

## **Discussion**

### **Public Organizations and NGOs in Public Policy**

With the current terminology regarding governance, such as privatization, decentralization, and more limited role of the state (Rhodes, 1996; Hayes, 1996), the present study provides empirical findings regarding NGOs' roles and characteristics. Employees in NGOs seem to show a high commitment to their organizations. They also express a sense of rewarding work experience. NGOs seem to operate efficiently and effectively. They have a much less reported incidence of corruption. This trait, in particular, is somewhat promising and attractive for most Third World countries where corruption in the government is widely known. NGOs also reported a very active role throughout the policy process. They are more innovative and risk taking than are public organizations. They also reported having a close and productive relation with society, usually with more concern with local interest, as opposed to national interest. They see themselves as an important player in the public policy process. Their altruism is clearly shown in their prosocial behaviors and a low perception of cost in such behaviors. These findings indicate rather positive characteristics of NGOs.

These empirical findings should be added to the literature of previous research. Earlier studies on for-profit and voluntary organizations suggest the traits of efficiency, risk-taking and

innovation, effectiveness, and clearer goals in these organizations as compared to their state counterpart (Raiman, Backoff, & Levine, 1976; Vakil, 1997). In policy implementation, the operation of non-state sector can take a burden off the government in functions that could be performed by the non-state sector. Particularly when societal needs arise, such as the time of increased incidence of HIV / AIDS epidemic, the need for new nonprofit organizations were high, due to the unfamiliar nature and course of illness, its public perception, and types of people and families living with AIDS and HIV (Chambre, 1995; Lowry, 1995). Berman and West (1995) suggest that the increase in the need of emergency homeless shelters provided by nonprofit organizations is due to a high work load of community organizations, rises in unemployment, the scarcity of housing for low-income people, and the insufficient city funding for housing programs. Their study also found higher satisfaction among the homeless in the use of shelters provided by nonprofit organizations than those of state organizations. Rinquist (1994) shows an active advocacy role of environmental groups in influencing the direction of state's water pollution policy, while counter-balancing the role of the mining industry. Brown and Ashman (1996) found a cooperative effort between state and non-state actors in African and Asian countries to result in social capital, leading, in turn, to public programs' success.

However, with many differences in characteristics and roles between public organizations and NGOs, conflicts, rather than cooperative effort, are bound to occur. Firstly, the organizational attitudes and emphasis regarding national and local interests differ significantly. Public organizations in this study reported to pay more attention to national interests than do NGOs. In fact, this finding should not be surprising, as NGOs are known to be

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particularistic, while public organizations seem to be more universal in their scope of operation. NGOs, by their nature, tend to develop a specialist role and a focus on specific sets of public problems, issues, groups, or locations of operation (Hayes, 1996; Pongsapich & Kataleeradhabhan, 1994). Many NGOs in Thailand operate only in certain localities. Some focus their operation on special groups, especially those with low visibility in society and public policy issues, such as autistic children, persons with multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy or cerebral palsy, the alcoholics, drug addicts, or ex-mental patients. The state, on the other hand, usually has to be concerned with a broader scope of issues. This difference in operational focus could easily lead to differences in attitudes, opinions and actions. For example, working on environmental issues from a national perspective and a local perspective might differ considerably. In fact, the debate on national versus local concern itself seems to be one important part of many environmental issues in Thailand. Effects of dam construction and natural gas pipelines from a national perspective and interest could contradict with local interest. While such projects can be illustrated to benefit the nation as a whole, they can also be shown to damage the livelihood of local people.

Secondly, the extent of perceived relationship differs considerably between the two organizational types. NGOs tend to report a higher level of working relationship and, hence, a cooperation or willingness to cooperate. This difference might be due to the fact that public organizations used to have a monopolistic role in public policy. Part of that mentality perhaps still persists nowadays among public officials, making them feel less need to cooperate with NGOs. On the other hand, probably feeling as if they are given an opportunity to step into a new

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territory of the public policy process, NGOs tend to be more willing to cooperate.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the perception regarding the significance in the roles of NGOs is different between NGOs and public organizations. As one might expect, NGOs would likely and do, in fact, see themselves and their role as significant throughout the public policy process. However, public organizations tend to see NGOs' role as less significant. Such view from public organizations could irritate NGOs, possibly producing conflicts among themselves as working partners. It is also worthwhile to note that reported positive relationship between the two organizations goes along with perceived significance of NGOs.

Foley and Edwards (1996) discuss two possible roles of the civil society. The first role is its cooperation with the state. According to the finding of this study, less incidence of corruption, more altruism and civic consciousness, effectiveness, efficiency, active roles, as well as enthusiasm could be expected from NGO's operation, as compared to the state's operation. These characteristics could well help NGOs supplement and complement the role of the state. However, a more aggressive role of the civil society is that of a counter-weight or counter-balance to the state's roles. This study found a relatively high incidence of corruption in the state sector. It also found a high public scrutiny or external control faced by public organizations particularly in environmental issues. The scrutiny faced by state sector possibly comes from the counter-balancing role of the civil society, whose role has become stronger in Thailand. The second type of roles is perhaps necessary for the process of democratization and the development of governance, since it could give a more assurance to a more transparent and corruption-free state. Unfortunately,

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one side effect could be confrontation and conflict between the state and civil society.

A few specific incidents could illustrate the counter-balancing role of NGOs. A network of thirty NGOs has been active in monitoring the well-known case of medical supply scandal, whereby medical supplies were procured at highly inflated prices for corrupt purposes. The logging scandal, in which Thai logs were believed to be transported to Myanmar and sent back to Thailand as "Myanmar" logs as well as the seedling scandal – the inflated procurement costs for seedlings – were also closely monitored by some NGOs (Pongsapich, 1999; Shevajumroen, 2001, November 13). Some other NGOs are quick to take action when they have questions regarding the state's action. For instance, Friends of Elephants Foundation, the Air Pollution Prevention Foundation, and the Law Society were prompt to voice their concern in the Thai-United States Tropical Forest Conservation Fund, which was believed to allow the United States' much access to information regarding Thai herbs and medicines. They demanded a thorough, careful, and parliamentary deliberation on this issue ("Fund against Constitution," 2002, February 28). Also, Biothai, Jasmine Rice Action Group, and the Natural Resource and Bio-diversity Institute started an effort to secure a "Thai Jasmine Rice" trademark from the United States Patent and Trademark Office. They viewed state's action alone, such as that of the Department of Intellectual Property, as slow and insufficient to monitor the United States Government's attempt to adapt the breeding of jasmine rice to the U.S.' climate (Hongthong, 2001, November 27).

Despite the growing importance of the civil society along with the tendency to demonize the state while deifying the civil society, limitations as well as advantages of all organizations must

be realized. Public organizations possess the bureaucratic characteristics, some of which are empirically shown in this study, such as the inefficiency and tardiness of operation in such forms as low extent of initiation and inactive roles. Public organizations are also regularly viewed as coercive. These characteristics make public organizations sound authoritative and negative (Uphoff, 1993; Wapner, 1995). But law enforcement by state authority is at times unavoidable. Part of environmental policy, for instance, is by nature coercive in its effort to curtail some undesirable environmental behaviors. The market incentive can be used only when situations allow the application of price mechanism to encourage or discourage certain behaviors. Voluntary acts, such as pro-environmental behaviors, rely on altruism, mutual agreement, and social pressure. Results of voluntary acts, albeit sounding attractive and liberal, are slow and, at times and places, unreliable. Coercive forces employed by the state, such as its supervision or the imposition of fines for non-compliance to environmental laws and regulations assure more timely results (Uphoff, 1993).

Limitation of NGOs may also have certain adverse effects. Particularism, as empirically suggested in their emphasis on local interests, could result in an incomplete view and understanding of public issues. The lack of accountability could also be another problem in the operation of NGOs (Gates & Hill, 1995; Hayes, 1996). Public organizations face control mechanisms such as supervision from parliamentary committees and subcommittees as well as from independent organizations, such as the Administrative Court and the Human Rights Committee. They also depend on budget appropriation through the parliament generally as their sole financial source. This makes budget control automatically possible from the elected body toward public organizations. On the other

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hand, even though some NGOs receive some funding from the government, they generally can garner multiple funding sources, such as donation and contribution from their foreign and domestic affiliations. International organizations, such as UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO, have supported Thai NGOs. Foreign NGOs, such as Terre des Hommes, also provide funding and other assistance to their affiliated Thai NGOs (Pongsapich & Kataleeradabhan, 1994). Usually automatically seen as less corrupt, nonprofit organizations do not face the same degree of supervision. This present study finds a report of less organizational limitation or constraints as well as a lesser degree of external control particularly in the area of environmental issues on the part of NGOs, as compared to public organizations. In addition, NGOs are found in this study to be more innovative and risk taking. Such freedom to innovation, despite its values in certain aspects, could jeopardize the virtue of democratic accountability (Gates & Hill, 1995). Concerns are made regarding the extent to which their decision making and innovative acts are overseen by other external agencies, especially some sorts of elected bodies in order to assure their representativeness to the public. This study also found a close connection between the tendency to innovate and a high report of roles in public policy. NGOs reported more of both traits than do public organizations.

Recently, some specific demand to probe NGOs' activities started to emerge. Two particular incidents comprise the Anti-money Laundering Office's investigation into certain individuals in some NGOs as well as a special senatorial committee, which was set up to investigate the backgrounds of some NGOs concerning their finance, funding sources, and relation with foreign NGOs. Despite the NGOs' opposition, this could be the beginning pressure for NGOs' accountability to the public ("NGOs Turn to

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Senate," 2002, March 20; "Senate to Probe NGOs," 2002, April 6; "Activists Slams Senate Probe," 2002, April 9).

Toward a more optimistic note, despite their differences, public organizations and NGOs are also empirically shown by this study to be similar in few aspects. These few similarities might somewhat assure a more promising trend of cooperation as well as complement and supplement of roles among one another, as suggested by Foley and Edwards (1996). Both public organizations and NGOs are found to have multiple goals. This finding is also not surprising because both types of organizations operate without profit as their primary motive and, therefore, are bound to possess a variety of social objectives. In addition, the reported level of flexibility in operation does not differ between the two organizational types. Moreover, more similarities between them are found within welfare policy area, deserving further discussion.

#### **Public Organizations and NGOs in Two Specific Policy Areas**

The findings of this study also benefit from the comparison between welfare and environmental policies. Working in welfare organizations is reported as a more rewarding experience than in environmental organizations. Welfare organizations reported a higher level of goal achievement or effectiveness than do environmental organizations. Environmental organizations possess a higher degree of vague goals than do welfare organizations. There is a higher extent of working relationship between public organizations and NGOs in welfare organizations than in environmental organizations. People in welfare organizations seem to have a more positive attitude or perception toward NGOs than do those in environmental organizations. Welfare organizations also report a higher degree of relationship with society than do environmental organizations. Lastly, the higher degree of prosocial

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behaviors reported from people in environmental organizations than those in welfare organizations could be attributable to the environmental behaviors stated in the survey instrument.

The pattern of results from the comparison between the two policy types seems to indicate a much more pleasant working atmosphere in welfare policy area than in environmental policy area. Ripley and Franklin (1986) suggest a high level of conflict and hostility as the nature of both policies. The results of the present study using the case of Thailand tend to find a significantly higher level of conflict in environmental policy issues. In welfare policy, many NGOs, such as Plan International, Human Development Foundation, YWCA, and World Vision Foundation, see themselves as complementing the government's work, usually targeting their effort at women and children in distress, as well as the disabled (Ywin, April 7, 2002; "Sunday Brunch," 2002, May 12; Sukhyanga, 2002, January 31; Cummins, 2001, September 13). The conflict in the area of environment, on the other hand, has been witnessed for the past few decades of the Thai political history.

For Thailand, environmentalism is an integral part of politics. Within the environmental movement, coalitions of interests are formed to challenge the centralized decision making of the political elites. People who work in farmlands comprise a marginal, yet very large, grassroots portion of the Thai society. Through the democratization process, their political awareness and consciousness have grown, as they increasingly felt that their livelihood consisting of their way of life as well as their means of income earning by the use of local natural resources has become adversely affected. Blame on that effect was placed on the environmental degradation resulting from various governmental programs, such as those for forest reserves, national parks, and

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wildlife sanctuaries. Other often cited programs such as dam construction and recreational land use such as golf courses are generally believed by the marginal, local, grassroots people to benefit mainly the business sector of the economy (Hirsch, 1997). The environmental movement, then, took its course, as an alliance was formed among environmental and developmental NGOs, the academics, and the grassroots people themselves to articulate interests of the latter throughout the policy process (Jumbala & Mitprasat, 1997). Unconventional means such as protests, rallies, and encampments in front of the buildings of the authorities were used in order to acquire the political space and to make the demand of the alliance heard. For the past few decades, the roles of environmental NGOs have grown considerably, as more specialized groups were formed mostly as policy advocacy organizations. Many of them were sampled and surveyed for the present study. Their recent activities comprise successful movements to prevent the construction of Nam Choan Dam and Kaeng Krung Dam as well as the presently ongoing movement against construction of other dams and other governmental projects, such as waste water treatment facilities and natural gas pipelines.

NGOs' movement also generally illustrates their disagreement with the state in some environmental issues. For example, some NGOs, such as the Alternative Energy Group and Project for Ecological Recovery, do not see the need for new power plants, such as Bornok and Hin Krut, which represent the National Energy Policy Office's intention to increase the power reserves for the future. They express their belief that the current rate of energy production should be more than sufficient, given the on-going economic crisis, which has slowed down production and economic activities. Instead, they urge for the exploration of new and more

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environmentally friendly energy sources ("Power Plants: PM Needs," 2002, April 1; "Power Plant: Academics," 2002, January 19; "Students, NGOs," 2002, January 22). The concept of community forests proposed by some NGOs in early 1990s also contradicts the state's long-time belief of forests as the state's property. Some NGOs tend to see them as a common resource (Thabchumpon, 1997; "A Landmark Law," 2001, November 18). With the new opportunity given by the 1997 Constitution, the Community Forest Bill initiated by more than 50,000 people was proposed to the parliament in competition with the Bill proposed by the Royal Forestry Department (Hongthong, 2001, December 21). The state or the Royal Forestry Department believes that the idea of conservatism, which restricts the use of conservation forests, natural parks, and wildlife sanctuary, would benefit the whole country. Many NGOs, on the other hand, believe in the local rights to use community forests.

With NGOs' active advocacy role through the environmental movement usually against many governmental projects, the relationship between the two sectors is unsurprisingly less than harmonious. This can be empirically confirmed by this study. Firstly, the reported working relationship between NGOs and public organizations is less harmonious in environmental than in welfare policy areas. Secondly, there are more positive attitude and perception toward NGOs reported from welfare than from environmental organizations. There is also a report of higher degree of vague goals in environmental than in welfare policy areas. Vague goals are perhaps an implication of uncertainty with respect to directions and actions of organizations in charge of an issue. While in the welfare policy area, public organizations and NGOs do not differ in terms of their emphasis on national versus

local interests, they clash in the environmental policy area, with NGOs placing a particularly high emphasis on local interest. Dam construction and operation, for instance, mean more electricity-generation capacity and perhaps, in the long run, more efficient electricity generation for the whole country. However, for local people, such projects mean a requirement that there be a resettlement of people away from their original location, where dams are to be built and operated. NGOs usually argue for the emotional attachment among the grassroots, local people to their customary way of life, along with the sacredness of their original locations, which should be left undisturbed. Sympathizing with the local people, NGOs, henceforth, organize their activities via movements to help protect the local interests of the grassroots people, resulting in conflict and confrontation with the state. In terms of accountability or external control, these two organizational types also clash in the environmental area, not the welfare policy area. Public organizations reported facing a much higher extent of public scrutiny than NGOs in the environmental policy area. Possibly, part of the external control comes from the NGOs, in counter-balancing and cross-checking the role of the state, as suggested by Foley and Edwards (1996). Therefore, while Ripley and Franklin (1986) suggest that there is a high level of conflict in the nature of both policies, the present study finds a significantly higher degree of conflict in environmental than welfare policies and organizations.

What is it, then, about the nature of the Thai public welfare that produces a lower extent of conflict? Findings in this study probably do not go so far to answer that question. However, two suppositions will be tried here.

One, conflict does exist in the welfare policy area; but they are latent, suppressed, and bound to arise in the future. In the

western welfare system, its primary aim is to equalize income and wealth, usually through a relocation of limited resources (Ripley & Franklin, 1986). The end result comprises a society with a more equal opportunity among its members and, in turn, a lesser degree of social problems of other kinds (Heywood, 1994). In Thailand, one can cite endless indicators of inequality, despair, and poverty, along with other social problems as a result of economic and social inequality. Nevertheless, unequal access to the nation's resources, at least until present, seems to be an accepted social fact in Thailand, as reflected perhaps in a lesser extent of conflict in the welfare policy area, indicated by the present study. Crone (1993), states that in order for the welfare change to take place in Southeast Asian countries, political capacity and political will to do so must be in place. The political capacity largely depends on the political and economic structure of a Southeast Asian country. A broad political regime, whereby a variety of interests are sufficiently represented within the political structure -- interest groups, political parties, legislatures both at national and local levels -- will comprise an opportunity for the welfare change. Together, other elements of the pluralistic democracy, such as the presence of a strong civil society and empowered grassroots people, also contribute to the political capacity. The political will of political leaders who are in both the elected and bureaucratic institutions is also necessary, in that they must be motivated enough to challenge the present welfare situation and socioeconomic structure of a country.

Two, the lesser extent of conflict in the welfare policy area might be due to the fact that the environment and welfare as policy types are closely related or even perceived by the Thai as one same type of policy. In Thailand, perhaps similar to many other Third World countries, the grassroots, usually poor, and

marginal people comprise a very large portion of the Thai population. Had their livelihood along with their customary way of life been left unaffected or without the environmental degradation in many ways, no state welfare would have been felt necessary. The Thai families are of an extended kind, with more than one generation living under one roof. The welfare of such a society has traditionally relied on friends and families to care for their family members and friends (Vatikiotis, 1996). Therefore, the unaffected livelihood, to the grassroots and marginal people, could imply existing, sufficient means of living and means of welfare given by services of friends and families. As such, caring for environmental problems or, in other words, rebuilding grassroots people's livelihood by restoring the original environment will automatically care for the welfare issues. Midgley (1993) states that instead of borrowing models of social security programs from developed, western welfare states, Third World countries could benefit from searching for other different, innovative approaches. Perhaps, with a unique view of welfare and environmental issues as intermingled or closely related, an approach might be primarily to help resuscitate and sustain the natural environment. With a sustained livelihood of the people, most means of welfare in this country will be automatically present and operating on their own.

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