

# Organizational Change & Development in Civil Society Organizations (CSOs): HR Perspective on Sustainability & Effectiveness

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*This paper explores the role of human resources (HR) in managing organizational change within civil society organizations (CSOs), with a focus on strengthening their capacity for adaptation and long-term sustainability. It emphasizes the importance of adopting a change management approach underpinned by organizational development (OD) principles to address the operational and strategic challenges that CSOs face in an evolving social landscape. Using case study methodology, this study involved an in-depth organizational diagnosis of 11 CSOs actively working on Sustainable Development Goals over two weeks. It argues that strong leadership is essential for initiating and guiding change, while stakeholder engagement fosters buy-in and ensures that the needs of all parties are considered.*

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## Introduction

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and non-profits, play a significant role in addressing India's most pressing social challenges, from poverty alleviation and education to healthcare and environmental sustainability. By working closely with marginalized communities, CSOs advocate for equitable access to resources and rights, promoting inclusive social development that complements government efforts (Mann & Ranjan, 2020; Ghosh, 2020). Historically, the rise of CSOs in India accelerated in the post-independence era, particularly from the 1980s onward, when a wave of grassroots movements and social activism began addressing local challenges like land rights, labor rights, and environmental justice (Chaudhuri, 2021). These organizations now form a critical part of India's development ecosystem, bridging the gaps in social services

and enabling voices from marginalized communities to be heard in policy discourse (Kapoor & Srivastava, 2019).

However, CSOs operate in complex, resource-constrained environments marked by frequent fluctuations in funding, stringent regulatory requirements, and evolving community expectations (Tiwari et al., 2021). Limited resources and dependencies on external funding sources, such as grants, government aid, and corporate donations, often make these organizations vulnerable to changes in financial landscapes and regulatory environments (Pathak et al., 2019). Furthermore, heightened demands for transparency and accountability put additional pressure on CSOs to enhance their organizational capacity and maintain public trust (Bhaduri & Ranjan, 2020). These challenges highlight the need for robust organizational frameworks that allow CSOs to adapt, sustain operations, and continue creating social impact despite external pressures.

OD frameworks and change management strategies, especially from an HR perspective, are essential tools for CSOs to navigate these multifaceted challenges. OD frameworks focus on improving organizational efficiency, flexibility, and effectiveness by addressing structural and cultural aspects, helping organizations build resilience and responsiveness (Cummings & Worley, 2019). Change management, which involves planned and systematic approaches to facilitate organizational transitions, complements OD by enabling organizations to respond proactively to external

shifts in funding, regulation, and social needs (Gilley et al., 2016). Together, OD and change management approaches help foster a supportive organizational culture that prioritizes learning, innovation, and collaboration—key elements for long-term success (Herold et al., 2017).

This paper draws insights from an empirical study conducted with 11 CSOs in Maharashtra, India, examining how HR-led OD strategies empower these organizations to remain resilient, mission-driven, and adaptive. The study highlights how leadership development, strategic HR planning, and stakeholder engagement collectively contribute to effective change management and capacity-building efforts, enabling CSOs to enhance their long-term sustainability and social impact (Sengupta & Das, 2020). By adopting a holistic, HR-focused approach, CSOs can strengthen their organizational foundations, ensuring they remain agile and capable of addressing India's evolving social landscape.

## **Literature Review**

CSOs face a unique set of challenges that stem from their financial dependency, limited human resources, and increasing regulatory compliance pressures. These organizations, driven by social missions and embedded in dynamic and often unpredictable environments, must continuously evolve to remain effective and responsive to community needs. A key challenge for CSOs is financial dependency, which results from reliance on grants, donations, and government aid. This financial model ex-

poses CSOs to vulnerabilities related to economic shifts and changes in donor priorities. Moreover, limited human resources—both in terms of workforce capacity and specialized skills—restrict operational efficiency and impede scalability or diversification of services (Pathak et al., 2019). Additionally, the increasing burden of regulatory compliance further stretches already limited resources, necessitating significant investments in both financial and HR capabilities to ensure continued compliance and maintain public trust (Bhaduri & Ranjan, 2020).

**This adaptive capability allows CSOs to respond dynamically to shifts in funding, regulatory landscapes, and community needs.**

In the light of these challenges, CSOs must adopt a proactive approach to organizational change, embracing frameworks that facilitate both growth and stability. OD offers a systematic method for aligning organizational structures, updating operational policies, and building a culture that encourages continuous learning and innovation. This adaptive capability allows CSOs to respond dynamically to shifts in funding, regulatory landscapes, and community needs (Cummings & Worley, 2019). Furthermore, through OD, CSOs can balance the urgency of addressing immediate social needs with the long-term goal of sustainable development (Buchanan & Dawson, 2018).

Change management within CSOs is an ongoing process of adaptation, requir-

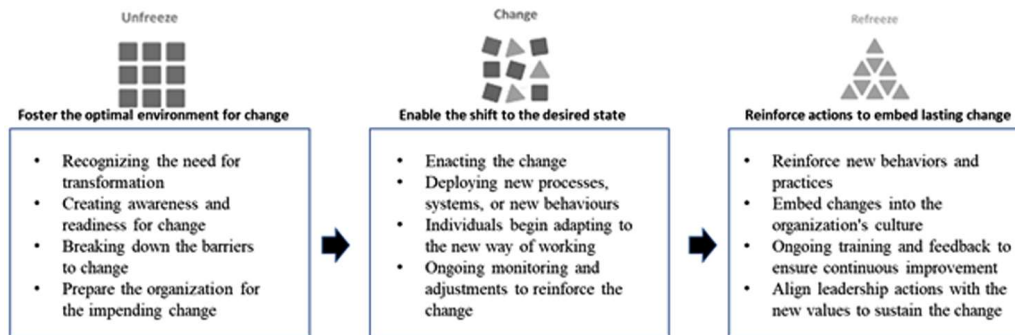
ing a cohesive approach that integrates strong leadership, strategic HR planning, and capacity-building initiatives. Leaders play a crucial role in guiding the organizational vision, rallying support from diverse stakeholders, and embedding a culture that values collaboration, transparency, and adaptability (Schein, 2017; Appelbaum et al., 2017). This collaborative culture is necessary to secure employee and community buy-in, ensuring alignment with the CSO's mission and goals. Effective change management also necessitates transparent decision-making and communication strategies that mitigate resistance to change. As part of the change process, CSOs must actively engage stakeholders—including employees, community members, donors, and partners—in shaping and supporting organizational transformation (Mack et al., 2019). Through clear communication and participatory processes, CSOs can reduce resistance and foster a sense of ownership among all parties, which is essential for the success of long-term change initiatives.

**Effective HR planning aligns staffing, performance management, and professional development with the broader organizational mission and strategic goals.**

For CSOs, human capital is central to creating meaningful and lasting impact. However, the constraints of limited resources make it challenging for many organizations to invest adequately in training, development, and employee retention. Robust HR practices that incorporate recruitment, continuous training, and

strategic retention are therefore critical to CSOs' ability to address complex social challenges effectively (Saks, 2019). Effective HR planning aligns staffing, performance management, and professional development with the broader organizational mission and strategic goals (Kira & Pekkola, 2018).

**Fig. 1 Lewin's Three-stage Model of Change**



Source: Adapted from The Origins of Lewin's (1947) Three-Step Model of Change

Kurt Lewin's three-stage model of change (Lewin, 1947) - unfreeze, change, and refreeze - provides a valuable framework for understanding and managing organizational transformation within CSOs. The unfreeze phase focuses on creating awareness of the need for change, which is particularly relevant for CSOs that operate in dynamic environments with limited resources. In this stage, leaders must prepare stakeholders, including staff and community members, for the upcoming changes by addressing resistance, fostering understanding, and aligning organizational priorities with evolving external and internal challenges. For CSOs, this stage is crucial as it sets the foundation for engaging all parties in the transformation process, ensuring that the organization can adapt to shifting funding landscapes, regulatory requirements, and community needs.

The change phase involves the actual implementation of new behaviors, practices, and processes, aligning with the continuous innovation that CSOs must undertake to remain effective. During this phase, CSOs introduce new operational strategies, whether in service delivery or stakeholder engagement, requiring both strategic leadership and inclusive decision-making. The final stage, refreezing, ensures the sustainability of these changes by embedding them into the organization's culture and daily practices. This phase includes reinforcing the new behaviors, monitoring progress, and ensuring that the changes are maintained over time. Lewin's model provides CSOs with a structured approach to navigating change, enhancing organizational resilience, aligning internal practices with mission-driven goals, and fostering long-term sustainability in the face of external pressures and resource constraints.

## **Research Methodology**

This study is part of the ‘Unfold’ initiative, a collaborative research effort led by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), aimed at exploring the organizational dynamics within Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The initiative seeks to understand the internal functioning of CSOs, particularly in the context of their human resource (HR) practices, governance structures, and leadership strategies. The research was carried out through a two-week field program, involving 37 participants who were placed within 11 diverse CSOs across Maharashtra. These organizations focus on a wide range of social issues, including healthcare, women’s empowerment, education, and community development.

During the field program, we worked with experienced CSO leaders and their teams. The methodology employed a combination of qualitative research techniques, including interviews with key stakeholders, direct observations, and thematic analysis. These tools enabled the research teams to gain a comprehensive understanding of how the CSOs manage their HR functions, such as staff recruitment, training, performance management, and stakeholder engagement. Additionally, the teams examined the leadership approaches and governance frameworks that these organizations use to drive their missions forward. Through this process, the study identified both the challenges and opportunities these organizations face in managing human resources and organiza-

tional change. By analyzing these aspects, the research offers valuable insights into the best practices for enhancing the sustainability and operational effectiveness of CSOs, contributing to the broader goal of strengthening civil society in India.

## **Leadership Development & Strategic HR Planning**

Leaders in CSOs play a critical role in shaping the strategic direction and setting the tone for their organizations. Many of these leaders emerge from grassroots movements and maintain strong, personal connections to the causes they champion. This deep-rooted involvement enables them to build significant trust with communities, donors, and partners, which is essential for ensuring that the CSO’s mission resonates with local needs and that its activities remain relevant. Trust, in turn, is a key factor in the legitimacy and long-term sustainability of CSOs (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2021).

CSOs should consider implementing strategic human resource (HR) practices aimed at developing a second line of leadership. By mentoring and training second-line managers, CSOs can distribute leadership responsibilities more equitably, thereby allowing senior leaders to focus on high-level strategic planning and community engagement, while also ensuring greater organizational resilience and continuity (Raj & Pal, 2021). This strategy not only reduces the risks associated with leadership dependency but also helps cultivate a more robust and adaptable organizational structure.

**Table 1 Organisations: Their Areas of Work**

Organization	Areas of work
Bal Anand	Established in 1984, Bal Anand provides access to sheltering and rehabilitation of orphaned, abandoned, and destitute minors through adoption. It also provides shelter to special children.
CanKids	Originally part of the Indian Cancer Society, Cankids embarked on its journey in 2004, committed to ensuring that no child suffers due to financial constraints when seeking treatment. It offers healthcare and support services as an NGO.
CORO	Initially focused on promoting adult literacy in Mumbai's slums, CORO was founded with the vision of empowering marginalized communities to address their own challenges. Over the past 25 years, CORO has transformed into a grassroots-led organization, predominantly governed and shaped by Scheduled Caste and Muslim women and men.
Creative Handicraft	Creative Handicraft, a Fair Trade Organization, was established in 1985 with a mission to empower women. It has grown into a prominent organization dedicated to transforming lives through fair trade practices.
Khula Aasman	Originating as a project at the TISS in 2009, founded in 2013 on the belief in the transformative power of art, aims to foster social change through creative expression, dedicated to engaging marginalized communities. It collaborates with survivors of trafficking, children in conflict with the law, prisoners, and others, providing them a platform for self-expression through various art forms.
Muskan Foundation	Muskan Foundation, founded in 2007 by Mrs. Dipti Gandhi, a WHO-trained low vision consultant, began with just two children in a small veranda in Bandra. By 2009, it was registered as a public trust, specializing in services for children with multiple disabilities.
MYNA Mahila	Founded in 2015 by Suhani Jalota, through raising awareness about menstruation and offering affordable sanitary products. Myna directly reaches women in need by manufacturing high-quality, low-cost sanitary napkins and implementing a door-to-door sales approach. Myna overcomes the stigma associated with periods, encouraging conversations to break the taboo.
NASEOH	Established in 1968, NASEOH (National Society for Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped) has been dedicated to creating comprehensive rehabilitation opportunities for persons with disabilities, aiming to facilitate their integration into mainstream society.
Silver Innings	Since 2011, Silver Innings has been accredited for the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA), UN Programme on Ageing in New York. Their focus lies in reintegrating seniors into mainstream society, enabling them to live with dignity.
Family Service Centre (FSC)	Established in 1955, FSC is dedicated to supporting families facing adversity. It operates family-centered and community-oriented programs designed to provide preventive, non-institutional services to those in need..
YUVA (Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action)	YUVA is a voluntary organization founded in Mumbai in 1984, dedicated to empowering vulnerable groups and addressing human rights violations. It is fostering the formation of people's collectives to engage in development discourse and promote self-determined collective action within communities.

Source: Primary Dat

### **Clear Governance Structures**

A key strategy for enhancing organizational sustainability and operational efficiency is the establishment of clear governance structures. Governance frameworks that define roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes ensure that CSOs operate with a high degree of accountability, ethical behavior, and alignment with strategic goals. By fostering clear organizational boundaries, these frameworks enable transparency and the effective allocation of resources, thereby reinforcing organizational integrity and credibility among stakeholders (Schein, 2017).

Our research suggests that CSOs should promote active participation of the board of directors as their involvement in strategic planning and HR oversight plays a critical role in shaping a leadership culture that prioritizes long-term goals, ethical decision-making, and transparent practices. Effective governance provides a foundation for addressing key HR issues, such as leadership succession, performance management, and accountability, ensuring that these CSOs remain responsive to both internal needs and external expectations.

### **Financial Sustainability & Mobilization**

Financial sustainability remains one of the most significant challenges for CSOs, given their heavy reliance on external funding sources such as donations, grants, and partnerships. The unpredictable nature of these funding streams

makes it essential for CSOs to develop comprehensive and diversified fundraising strategies that reduce their dependence on any single source of income. In particular, establishing partnerships with government agencies, foundations, and corporate donors can help CSOs build more stable and sustainable funding bases (Bhaduri & Ranjan, 2020). By diversifying their financial sources, CSOs can reduce financial vulnerability and ensure that they are able to continue their work in the long term.

In addition to diversifying funding sources, CSOs must invest in strengthening their internal financial management capabilities. Regular financial management training for board members and staff is critical to building the capacity for budgeting, financial reporting, and ensuring compliance with regulations. These practices enhance accountability, foster trust with donors, and create a transparent organizational culture that can attract new funding opportunities (Singh et al., 2020). Furthermore, collaboration between CSOs can enhance resource mobilization efforts, allowing organizations to share resources and reduce administrative costs through joint fundraising initiatives and pooled funding.

### **Stakeholder Engagement & Community Relations**

Effective stakeholder engagement is critical for CSOs to ensure that their goals align with the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve. Many CSOs adopt micro-community structures, such as self-help groups (SHGs) or youth

collectives, which allow for greater community participation in decision-making processes. These structures facilitate social cohesion and foster community-led development, which strengthens the legitimacy of the organization and increases the likelihood of program success (Björkman & Svensson, 2019). By engaging local stakeholders in a meaningful and ongoing way, CSOs ensure that their interventions are relevant, context-specific, and have the support of the community.

**From a human resources perspective, stakeholder engagement should be based on principles of participatory management.**

From a human resources perspective, stakeholder engagement should be based on principles of participatory management, which empower both internal and external stakeholders to contribute actively to the organization's goals. CSOs should establish transparent communication channels, feedback mechanisms, and regular consultations to ensure that stakeholders feel valued and that their input is taken seriously. This participatory approach can enhance trust, reduce potential conflicts, and increase the overall effectiveness of CSO programs (Buchanan et al., 2017). In turn, HR practices such as community-focused employee training and collaborative workshops can strengthen relationships and ensure that the organization remains responsive to the evolving needs of its stakeholders.

## **Capacity Building & Knowledge Management**

Capacity building is essential for enabling CSOs to improve their operational efficiency and respond effectively to the evolving needs of their communities. Many CSOs prioritize continuous training programs for their employees, focusing on areas such as project management, community engagement, and impact evaluation. These programs enhance staff competence, contribute to higher employee morale, and reduce turnover by fostering a sense of belonging and investment in the organization's mission (Jacobjan et al., 2020). Moreover, when employees feel adequately trained and empowered, they are more likely to perform at their best and contribute to the long-term success of the organization.

Knowledge management is another critical component of organizational development for CSOs. By systematically documenting case studies, best practices, and lessons learned, CSOs can create a repository of institutional knowledge that can be used to inform future projects and decision-making processes. These practices not only preserve organizational memory but also promote innovation and organizational learning (Rogers, 2019). Additionally, knowledge management facilitates cross-organization collaboration by providing a platform for sharing insights, lessons, and strategies, which enhances the overall impact of CSO programs.

### **Technology Adoption & Digital Capacity**

The adoption of digital technologies is increasingly important for CSOs that seek to enhance their operational effectiveness, improve data management, and expand their outreach capabilities. However, many CSOs face barriers to technology adoption, such as limited resources and low digital literacy among staff. Nevertheless, investing in digital skills training can significantly improve the efficiency of CSOs by streamlining processes such as data collection, analysis, and reporting, as well as enhancing communication with stakeholders (Mergel, 2018). Digital tools can also improve transparency and accountability by providing real-time data on program outcomes, which is essential for maintaining donor confidence.

From an HR perspective, fostering a digital-friendly culture within CSOs is key to ensuring successful technology adoption. This involves not only training staff on digital tools and platforms but also creating an organizational environment that encourages the use of technology in everyday operations. Leaders play a critical role in this process by championing digital transformation and demonstrating its potential benefits. By integrating technology into their daily activities, CSOs can improve their productivity, better track their impact, and ultimately strengthen their relationships with donors and communities (Bharadwaj et al., 2019).

### **Strengthening Leadership Development & Succession Planning**

Leadership development and succession planning are fundamental for ensuring the continuity of an organization's mission and operations. For these CSOs, it is essential to cultivate future leaders through mentoring, coaching, and tailored professional development programs. These initiatives help create a leadership pipeline that can absorb leadership transitions seamlessly, minimizing disruptions to operations and fostering continuity in strategic initiatives (Wang et al., 2021). In particular, a strong second line of leadership—prepared and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge—ensures that these CSOs are not overly dependent on any one individual, which can threaten long-term sustainability. This approach aligns with the broader HR function of succession planning, contributing to the creation of a resilient leadership structure that bolsters organizational agility and adaptability. Moreover, leadership development fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among staff, which is vital for staff retention and organizational effectiveness.

### **Fostering a Culture of Continuous Improvement**

Building a culture of continuous improvement is crucial for CSOs seeking to enhance their operational efficiency and program effectiveness. A culture of continuous improvement encourages adaptive management, enabling these CSOs to adjust their strategies and prac-

tices in response to changing circumstances or emerging challenges. Human resource practices that support this process include the implementation of performance evaluation frameworks, feedback mechanisms, and regular review sessions to assess progress toward strategic goals (Rainer & Puth, 2020). These mechanisms help identify areas for improvement, highlight successes, and ensure that all staff members are aligned with the organization's mission. Furthermore, providing regular learning and development opportunities—such as training workshops, seminars, and cross-functional collaboration—can enhance staff competencies, improve morale, and increase overall organizational effectiveness. This culture not only improves operational outcomes but also promotes a sense of ownership and engagement among employees, further boosting organizational performance.

### **Leveraging Knowledge Management & Collaborative Partnerships**

Knowledge management is an important tool for enhancing organizational learning, innovation, and adaptability in CSOs. By systematically capturing and sharing insights, lessons learned, and best practices, these CSOs can improve decision-making and ensure that knowledge is not lost during leadership transitions. Creating a centralized knowledge repository allows for better program design, facilitates the sharing of successful strategies across teams, and improves overall operational efficiency (Cornwall & Brock, 2016).

Collaborative partnerships with other organizations can further amplify impact by pooling resources, sharing knowledge, and fostering mutual learning. Such partnerships will enhance the capacity of these CSOs to deliver high-quality programs and expand their reach. Moreover, by engaging in networks of like-minded organizations, these CSOs can contribute to collective impact initiatives that address systemic challenges in their communities, thereby creating sustainable and transformative social change.

### **Improving Communication & Stakeholder Engagement**

Effective communication is central to building and maintaining trust with all stakeholders, including donors, community members, employees, and volunteers. These CSOs must develop communication strategies that segment target audiences, craft clear messages, and utilize a variety of communication channels to reach stakeholders effectively. Regular feedback loops and participatory decision-making processes help ensure that stakeholders remain engaged and invested in the organization's work (Lewis, 2019). Transparent reporting and communication about program outcomes and organizational challenges also contribute to stronger relationships with donors and partners. By fostering an open and inclusive dialogue with stakeholders, these CSOs can create a more supportive environment for their initiatives, gain critical insights, and better align their efforts with community needs and expectations.

### **Recommendations on HR Strategies**

To enhance the long-term sustainability and operational effectiveness of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), it is crucial to adopt a strategic, multi-dimensional approach that emphasizes leadership development, governance optimization, financial diversification, and community engagement. A fundamental area for improvement is the development of leadership capacity, specifically the cultivation of a strong second line of leadership. This can be achieved through targeted mentoring, structured professional development programs, and formal succession planning initiatives. By ensuring the succession of leadership roles, CSOs can mitigate the risks associated with over-dependence on individual leaders, thereby promoting organizational resilience and continuity. Furthermore, the active involvement of the board of directors in strategic planning and human resource oversight is vital. A board that is engaged in fostering a governance culture characterized by transparency, ethical decision-making, and long-term strategic alignment ensures that the CSO's internal processes are consistent with its mission and values, strengthening its legitimacy among stakeholders and enhancing organizational trust (Raj & Pal, 2021; Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2021). This governance framework not only supports stability in the short term but also lays the foundation for sustainable development and responsiveness to future challenges.

Financial sustainability remains a persistent challenge for CSOs, given their heavy reliance on external funding sources, such as grants, donations, and government support, which can be subject to fluctuations and shifting donor priorities. In light of this, CSOs must develop more diversified and robust funding strategies to mitigate the risks associated with financial dependency. This includes cultivating strategic partnerships with governmental bodies, private foundations, and corporate donors, as well as investing in strengthening internal financial management systems. Regular financial literacy and management training for board members and staff are essential to build the necessary capacity for effective budgeting, financial reporting, and compliance. Strengthening internal financial practices will not only improve accountability but will also enhance organizational credibility, which is crucial for attracting and retaining donors (Bhaduri & Ranjan, 2020; Singh et al., 2020). Additionally, collaboration with other CSOs in joint fundraising initiatives or pooled funding arrangements can further optimize resource mobilization, reduce administrative overheads, and improve financial efficiency, thereby enabling these organizations to allocate more resources to their core programs and activities.

Moreover, the active and meaningful engagement of stakeholders, particularly the communities served by CSOs, is essential for aligning organizational activities with local needs and ensuring the relevance and impact of programs. Adopting participatory management practices, which encourage community in-

involvement in decision-making, enhances both the legitimacy and effectiveness of CSO initiatives (Björkman & Svensson, 2019). The creation of micro-community structures, such as self-help groups or youth collectives, fosters local ownership and strengthens the CSO's relationship with its constituency. Equally important is the ongoing investment in capacity building, which enables CSOs to improve operational efficiency, enhance staff competencies, and respond more effectively to evolving social challenges. Knowledge management systems that facilitate the capture and sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and institutional knowledge further enhance organizational learning and innovation (Rogers, 2019). In addition, integrating digital technologies into operational processes can significantly improve organizational transparency, data management, and communication with stakeholders. The adoption of digital tools not only streamlines internal workflows but also strengthens external accountability by providing real-time data on program outcomes, which in turn bolsters stakeholder confidence and donor support (Mergel, 2018). By strategically implementing these integrated approaches, CSOs can foster resilience, optimize their operational capabilities, and position themselves for long-term success in an increasingly complex and resource-constrained environment.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study highlights the pivotal role of human resource-focused organizational development strategies in

ensuring the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). From a human resources perspective, aligning organizational culture, stakeholder engagement, and capacity-building efforts with the strategic goals of the organization is fundamental to achieving both operational success and sustained social impact. This alignment ensures that CSOs can mobilize their human capital effectively, fostering a cohesive and motivated workforce that is equipped to tackle contemporary challenges. By investing in HR-led strategies that prioritize adaptive leadership development, financial sustainability, and knowledge management, CSOs can not only enhance their operational efficiency but also expand their resource base and operational reach. The integration of these HR-focused strategies allows CSOs to improve organizational resilience and agility, thereby enhancing their capacity to contribute meaningfully to the social development agenda, particularly in addressing critical issues such as poverty, education, healthcare, and community well-being.

Our study primarily focused on the unfreezing phase of Lewin's Change Management Model, examining how CSOs prepare for and initiate change. By exploring the dynamics of this critical phase—such as raising awareness about the need for change, addressing resistance, and preparing individuals for transformation—we gained valuable insights into how CSOs can effectively disrupt existing structures and mindsets. This stage is pivotal for setting the foundation for a successful transformation process.

However, this represents just one part of the overall change journey. Further research could investigate the remaining two phases—change (or transition) and refreeze—to offer a more comprehensive understanding of how Lewin’s model can be applied to end-to-end change management within CSOs. Future studies could explore how CSOs manage the implementation phase, where new practices, systems, or behaviors are introduced, and how they address challenges during this transitional period. Additionally, the research could focus on the refreezing phase, which involves solidifying and institutionalizing these changes to ensure that they are integrated into the organization’s culture and operations, ultimately making them sustainable in the long term. A deeper exploration of all three phases would provide invaluable insights for CSO leaders, enabling them to better navigate the complexities of organizational change, foster greater adaptability, and ensure that transformations are not only achieved but also sustained.

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